

## NATURE STUDY — JANUARY.

It must not be thought that there is nothing in Nature to study during winter. The very absence of insect life will call forth the question, Where have the insects gone? (Many caterpillars are in cocoons, and perhaps the teachers or pupils are keeping these cocoons in a cool place awaiting the bright sunshine of spring; butterflies, moths, and many other insects laid their eggs and died; some bees and wasps are sleeping in warm places, the house-flies are awaiting warm days in sheltered nooks and crevices, etc.)

The few birds that remain with us will suffice to call more particular attention to these, because of their fewness and their tame habits, such as the chickadees, woodpeckers, blue jays, and others. The English sparrow in towns and villages will give a good opportunity to study at least one bird thoroughly. Where do they live? Where are their nests? Of what are they built? What do they eat? How is the male distinguished from the female? (The male is brighter colored because of a white bar on the wings, and the black throat and breast). Note their habits also on the street of picking up stray bits of food, of flying in flocks, of quarrelling, and of their utter fearlessness, which allows you to come close to them.

Have you "Wood's Natural History?" If you have, interest the children in its illustrations and stories of animals, in order to get them to appreciate animal life, to teach kindness to our domestic pets, and to learn what wild animals are to be found in the forests of this country, how these are fitted to withstand the cold by the growth of a new warm covering of hair or fur, and how this covering is shed in summer so that the heat will not be felt too much.

Have the children keep a record of the temperature from the thermometer, which should be placed just outside the door. Let these records be taken three times a day—at nine o'clock, at twelve and at four; and at the close of each day make up the average daily temperature, and at the close of the month the average monthly temperature. Let each child keep the day's record in turn.

Name some of the effects of increasing coldness—thicker ice on lake and river, deeper snow in the woods, higher snow drifts about dwellings and fences. Show that this snow and ice are forms of water by melting them. They are stored up to be poured out in floods at the approach of spring. Mark on the floor at noon the line toward the north that the sun reaches through the window facing the south, and then see during the following days whether the light advances toward the north or goes toward the south. Fix a point where

the sun rises or sets—a hill, a tree, a building—to see how the sun advances toward the east at rising, and toward the west at setting, as the month advances.

The forms of snowflakes, the frost-pictures on the window panes, the breath, frozen as soon as it leaves the nostrils, on a frosty morning, the icicles hanging from the roof on the sunny side of the building—these and many other illustrations of how nature works during the cold season, may be brought to the children's notice and used to train their powers of observation as well as to enliven the reading, geography and other lessons.

For the REVIEW.]

Some Questions on Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*.

1. What were your impressions on reading the book for the first time? Perhaps another reading or two may have changed some of them; if so, tell about the changes.
2. What parts of the story pleased you most; tired you most; amused you most; disappointed you most; disgusted you most? etc., etc.
3. Each of you select half-a-dozen of what seem to you the most striking passages. Bring them to class and read them, and see how many will recognize them and be able to tell in what connection they occur.
4. Some say that the humour in the book is too subtle to be appreciated by young people. Show, by quoting specimens and commenting on them, that these critics are mistaken.
5. Macaulay tells us that the book "rapidly obtained a popularity which has lasted down to our own time, and which is likely to last as long as our language." What is there in the book to account for this?
6. Goldsmith says in his prefixed advertisement: "There are a hundred faults in this Thing." What sort of faults do you think he meant? Point out some of them.
7. There is a passage in one of the later chapters in which the author seems to be making a sort of apology for some of his faults. Try to find it, and, when you do, state what you think of it.
8. Which of the stories in the Bible does the Vicar's story remind you of? For both of them a capital motto may be found in a passage just six words long in Chapter XXX.
9. "The daughters and the mother slightly domineer over the father of the family; he lets them, like a good fellow; and now and again delivers himself at most of an innocent jest." Quote or refer to passages bearing on these statements.