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NATURAL HISTORY IN SCHOOLS.

We have had some experience in the way of explaining singular questions asked by young people relative to points of Natural History. The cause of this is easily explained. Books on Geology, Zoölogy and Botany, are generally expensive, and in many cases not within the reach of every ambitious young man or woman. We would advise beginners who are fond of zoölogical studies not to dabble in more than two branches of the science at one time. The study of Geology, Mineralogy and Crystallography combine and will not place the student in a quandary. The Mammalogy of this country constitutes a subject of great interest, and there are some instructive discoveries to be yet made, especially among the small rodents. The student who can take up this subject will find plenty of new facts to add to the present human knowledge. Ornithology and Oölogy go together, and although the natural history of birds have been pretty well worked up, still there is the interesting and almost new study of Oölogy from which it is probable to obtain many embryological features new to science. Again, there are probably some reptiles and fishes of whose æconomy we know little or nothing. We remember about thirty years ago communicating with the late celebrated Naturalist, Louis Agassiz, relative to a viviparous fish (*Cyprinoid*) which we discovered on the south side of Lake Ontario. A short time after this *Saran* discovered another species belonging to the same genus in California. Such instances alone should suffice to instill into the mind of the student acuteness and energy. By perseverance, many new things can be obtained. Moreover, it invariably occurs that the discovery of a new form is followed by that of another closely allied. It was only the other day that we had brought to us, a rare bat (*Vesper-tillio Novaboracensis*), a pretty little creature,

whose body is covered with reddish brown hairs. It was caught at Lancaster, Ont. The New York bat is rare in Canada; we took one asleep in daylight at Toronto, in 1846. It was suspended by its feet from a branch of a low tree, in the Hon. Mr. Allan's, Moss Park. This specimen was sent to the late Professor Agassiz, who informed us that the occurrence of this species at Toronto corrected a former statement of his regarding the geographical range of the animal, which was placed at a more southern latitude. The delightful study of Entomology in which great progress has been made of late years in the United States and Canada, can be combined with Botany, as it is necessary that the Entomologist should have some knowledge of the plants growing in his neighborhood. It is therefore important that these branches of Natural History should be taught in our Common Schools, at least the rudiments should be instilled into the minds of the young at a time when it can be enjoyed as a pleasant change in their daily exercises. We contend that a man cannot properly or intelligently fill the position of Judge, Barrister, Professor, Poet or Editor without some knowledge of Zoölogy. Many news writers can discuss and give clear and profound dialectics on subjects interesting to the general public in a secular way, but we believe that the additional knowledge of this nature would enable them to propound and elucidate matters which would produce the best results among the multitude. Why follow the old hum-drum system of education? The wide views of this progressive age calls for reform, therefore extend the advanced knowledge to the rising generation. Why should the systems of a semi-intelligent age be continued when better results can be attained? Give the young a knowledge of all new phenomena of nature that they may understand it, and become better men and women. Pay good