

Editorial Comment, Correspondence, Queries,
Literary Notes, etc.

Professor Robertson's Ideas of Improving Country Schools.

THE following extract appeared in the *Montreal Weekly Witness* of the 26th of November, 1901, and in connection with the suggestions made by Judge Warburton in his recent series of articles in this magazine, we think Professor Robertson's ideas are well worth study on the part of our readers:—

"Prof. Robertson, the Dominion Dairy Commissioner, is greatly interested in promoting what he believes will be a great improvement in the class of education to be given to children attending rural schools. The idea is to give them an education not merely from books, but to show them from the actual work of nature the causes and result so that they may get a thorough grounding in a matter that in after life will be of practical benefit.

'The idea is this,' said Prof. Robertson to an interviewer, 'at each of the rural schools there should be a garden in connection with it. They could learn for themselves the various requirements of plants and soil, and would be trained to form a habit of examining for themselves. In England the improvement of rural schools has made a marked improvement in the practical education of the children. There a garden attached to the schools is part of the training. Before leaving schools the pupils have been made competent to follow up rural pursuits successfully. Competent teachers trained at agricultural colleges should be added to the teaching staff to help out this method of education.

'I hope ere long to see a large number of rural schools, each with a garden, attached to train children into a knowledge of plant life and a love of managing plant life. At first that might be begun by having a competent itinerant instructor to visit ten schools, giving half a day's time to each. A further need of Canada where teachers are actually engaged in teaching a rural school is a place where they can be fitted for this work to give the better class of education. Short courses in instruction are provided in Germany, and in a few places in England. Such would be the most valuable help which education in rural schools could have. Later on agricultural colleges would be the very greatest benefit for teachers in rural schools.'



For the information of many people who have applied for a complete series of the articles written by Judge Warburton on Our School