

movement, the object of which is to educate in its true meaning—*i.e.*, draw forth and cultivate the faculties of youth—by means of the innumerable common objects of nature which surround us on every side and are always at hand to teach their own lessons.

During the last half decade there has been a most decided awakening on this subject; years ago many of the public schools of England had their natural history societies; the universities in the Old World and here all have their professors of various branches of biology, all of whom have done and are doing grand work; but that is not Nature Study.

Nature Study, to be successful and to take its most useful place in education, must deal with the beginnings of things and is for young people, they cannot be too young. It is particularly suitable for the lowest grades of scholars but commends itself equally to the most advanced. It is essentially kindergarten work, and kindergarten work is essentially Nature Study. The imaginary objection to the wider adoption of this study has sometimes been raised that there are neither text books prepared nor a staff of trained teachers sufficiently equipped with special knowledge to undertake its direction. In reply, I claim that no written text books are necessary and no special advanced training is required in the teacher. An elementary knowledge coupled with a love for nature and an appreciation of general principles will at first suffice. Frequent opportunities for increasing this knowledge will be provided while directing the students. These latter must be made to feel the humility of the teacher when investigating the vast field of nature; above all, to inspire confidence and call forth original mental effort, the superior knowledge of the teacher must be kept in the background; freest and fullest discussion must be allowed and encouraged. No dogmatic dictum must be uttered, which cannot be proved by demonstration. A modest acknowledgment that the teacher does not know, coupled with an invitation to a student to investigate a matter together with the teacher, will, I feel sure, do more to stimulate effort than any help in the shape of unearned information which the student should have been able to work out for himself from the objects examined.

Objects for study abound without stint in all places and at all seasons of the year—spring, summer, autumn or winter, it is all the same—for Nature itself is the book and every commonest object inside the school and out is a text for a sermon—the very wood of the school-room floor, of the desks or the furniture, the chalk used on the black-board, even the speck of dust floating in the sunbeam, the light itself; outside, the drop of rain, the flake of snow, a stick, a straw, a stone, a fallen leaf, a twig of any tree, a winter bud or a piece of bark, a bird,