

understand their surroundings; for what things are so common as air, water, heat and soil. The proper understanding of these will enable the pupils to more easily comprehend the facts of geography, physiology, and other subjects that are taught. I realize that this would involve having in each school simple apparatus to carry on the work. The cost would not be great and the interest taken by the pupils and the value derived from two such lessons each week would more than make up for it.

Let me pass on to what we may call the general method of treatment of nature study. It is so wide and is of such a nature, it may be said that each teacher must be a law unto himself. Certain it is, that the method to be employed must be almost as informal as are the topics to be studied. It would prove fatal to the subject to set down hard and fast rules for its treatment. It may be truthfully said that the feeling and disposition of the teacher towards the work counts for more than any formal method. What the teacher requires more than method is a love for nature; this love, combined with a reasonable amount of knowledge and with a desire to get more, will doubtless bring success. This does not mean that children are to be taught by the teacher. The former are to find out facts for themselves under the guidance and direction of the latter who must always keep her knowledge in the background. It is a golden rule that the child must not be told what he can reasonably find out for himself.

We frequently hear it said that a child is a born naturalist. This statement I consider extreme. It is quite true, I think, that childhood is the age when most enthusiasm can be produced; when the mental activities are seeking to be satisfied. In later life we become set in our ways and notions, and it is more difficult to produce an impression upon us. Our own experiences, however, will teach us that a child may live daily surrounded by nature without learning to interpret what he sees. The direction of a teacher is necessary. How many people there are who are quite familiar with mosquitoes and with the "wrigglers" of a water barrel, but who never for a moment connect the two and who are surprised when they are told that both are stages in the life history of this insect. We must take care then that children do see; and by well directed and judicious questioning we must assist them to interpret what would otherwise have no meaning for them. Mere contact with nature or with natural objects is insufficient.

If nature study teaching consisted in setting before the pupils a number of facts in nature to be memorized, or a number