

[For the Teacher in the School Section].

LOCAL "NATURE" OBSERVATIONS.

THIS sheet is provided for the purpose of aiding teachers to interest their pupils in observing the times of the regular procession of natural phenomena each season. First, it will thus help the teacher in doing some of the "Nature" lesson work in the Course of Study; secondly, it may aid in procuring valuable information for the locality and Province. Two copies are intended to be provided for each teacher who wishes to conduct such observations, *one* to be attached to the school register, so as to be preserved as the property of the section for reference from year to year; the *other* to be sent in with the Return to the Inspector, who will transmit it to the Superintendent for examination, and compilation if desirable.

What is desired is to have recorded in these forms, the dates of the *first* leafing, flowering and fruiting of plants and trees; the *first* appearance in the locality of birds migrating north in spring or south in autumn, etc. While the objects specified here are given so as to enable comparisons to be made between the different sections of the Province, it is very desirable that all other local phenomena of a similar kind be recorded. Each locality has a *flora*, *fauna*, *climate*, etc., more or less distinctly its own; and the more common trees, shrubs, plants, crops, etc., are those which will be most valuable from a local point of view in comparing the characters of a series of seasons.

Teachers will find it one of the most convenient means for the stimulation of pupils in observing all natural phenomena when going to and from the school, some of the pupils radiating as far as two miles from the school room. The "nature study" under such circumstances would be mainly undertaken at the most convenient time, thus not encroaching on school time, while on the other hand it would tend to break up the monotony of school travel and fill an idle and wearisome hour with interest, and one of the most valuable forms of educational discipline. The eyes of a whole school daily passing over a whole school district would let very little escape notice, especially if the first observer of each annual recurring phenomenon would have his or her name recorded in the "Nature Record" book of the school as the first observer of the phenomenon for that year. The observations would be accurate, as the facts would have to be demonstrated by the most undoubted evidence, such as the bringing of the specimens to the school when possible or necessary.

To all observers the following most important, most essential principles of recording are emphasized. Better *no date*, NO RECORD, than a WRONG one or a DOUBTFUL one. Sports out of season, due to very local conditions not common to at least a small field, should not be recorded except parenthetically. The date to be recorded for the purposes of compilations with those of other localities should be the *first* of the *many* of its kind flowering immediately after, etc. For instance, a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis in a sheltered cranny by a southern window in January would not be an indication of the general climate, but of the peculiarly heated nook in which the chrysalis was sheltered; nor would a flower in a semi-artificial, warm shelter, give the date required. When these sports out of season occur, they might also be recorded, but within a parenthesis to indicate the peculiarity of some of the conditions affecting their early appearance.

A *few* accurate observations at first, if followed by larger lists each succeeding year, will be considered creditable to teachers and schools.