

### On the Value of Nature Studies.

[From the English Education Report.]

It is sometimes forgotten that one of the most natural and fruitful methods of education is to train the powers of observation, and to build up intellectual and scientific interest around the natural objects of daily experience. Children are naturally interested in flowers, trees and animal life, and, in country schools, an observant teacher, who is fond of such objects, and who has properly prepared himself for studying them, can find in such "Object Lessons" a far more powerful instrument of early education than can be drawn from the less attractive institutes on which the town teacher has to rely. Care should, therefore, be taken in training teachers to show them that much that will give life and interest to their teaching is ready to their hand in the country district. A country school fails if it misses the opportunity of showing its scholars how much skill and knowledge underlie the operations familiar to them in their daily life, and of teaching them to feel pride in practical work well done, and intellectual interest in the principles involved in doing it.

### The Product of the Maple.

It will be interesting to Canadians to read the following brief "resumé" of an article in a leading Scotch magazine on "The Maple Sugar and Syrup Industry of Canada." "In wheat, butter, eggs, cheese, pork, bacon, beef and fruit, Canada is fast ousting all competitors from the English market. Canada, that a few years ago was looked upon as land of snow, ice and barrenness! But there is still another product distinctly Canadian, and grown in no other country in the world, save in the State of Vermont, and that is maple-sugar. Canada thus has this important industry, still in its infancy, in her own hands, and it only remains for the product to be placed on the English market to create a demand for all the surplus she has to spare. Unfortunately adulteration is practised to a great extent by unscrupulous manufacturers and dealers, especially in the United States, . . . only last spring one of the largest dealers in Montreal showed me a tub full of one-pound bricks of new maple-sugar. On breaking a brick in two it was found that the outside was coated with a thin layer of new sugar, the whole of the inside being—well, I don't like to say how many years old. . . . The best quality of the syrup has a delicious delicate flavor, and a much larger amount can be enjoyed than of either golden syrup or honey, the only two syrups that can be compared to it. While these two clog and nauseate the appetite if partaken of too freely, maple-syrup has no such effect. I have seen it eaten as a soup from a soup-plate. As it is slightly laxative, it is largely partaken of as a spring medicine."

### PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

#### Use of Trees.

We find that children very early like to think for themselves. So we should give them a chance. To be familiar with the uses of trees is a good chance. To get good results such lessons should be assigned and be kept at the front for several days or weeks.

- What trees are used for clothing?
- What trees are used for fruit?
- What trees are used for furniture?
- What trees are used for building?
- What trees are used for ship building?
- What trees are used for medicine?
- What trees are used for ornamenting grounds?
- What trees are used for groves?
- What trees are used for shade?
- What trees are used for fuel?
- What trees are used for paper?
- What trees are used for bean poles?
- What trees are used for carriages?
- What trees are used for axe handles, etc.

#### Primary Teaching.

The first six years of a child's life are spent in the home, surrounded by mother love, and his actions have been controlled entirely by those who thoroughly understand him. At six he is transplanted into another element, and as a plant's most critical period is when it is transplanted from one soil to another, so this beginning of a new life is the most critical in the child's education.

The first school year is the one in which the child's habit of study is well established or forever ruined. It is here he is either started upon a healthy educational growth or stunted in a manner that he can never thoroughly overcome. How important then that primary teachers be thoroughly trained for their work, carefully selected by the Board of Education and well paid for doing this important work. On a recent visit to a large botanical garden we noticed one house where only tender plants are grown, where the greatest care is observed to keep an even temperature, and where the gardener—the man in charge of this primary room in the plant-world—is an expert and receives the highest wages. The same should be true of our primary teachers. We hope the day is not far distant when inexperienced teachers must get their experience somewhere else than in the primary room.—*American Journal of Education.*

The EDUCATIONAL REVIEW, from the practical and vigorous stand it has taken on the educational affairs of our provinces, is making itself valuable to the aggressive student.—*Acadia Athenaeum.*