

faculty, so useful in science, art and literature, should be supplied with a large stock of fundamental ideas and conceptions, clear, correct and beautiful, and that it should have the exercise needful for its best development. This exercise will be best obtained from those fairy tales and nursery rhymes which have demonstrated their adaptability to child nature by their persistence and universality.

Genuine juvenile literature has a verisimilitude that cannot be approached by any imitation, not even by scientific experts. There is but one Robinson Crusoe.

The stories that appeal most profoundly to the little child are the literary productions of the childhood of the human race, and for that reason they awaken a responsive chord.

The development of the faculties of the child agrees in order and character with the development of the same faculties in the human as it emerged from its childhood to the complex civilization of the present.

To us who know something of science, the statements in fairy tales and nursery rhymes appear crude and grotesque, but to untrained minds of primitive men and of children they seem natural and present no incongruity.

Children of to-day, like primitive man, are fond of jingling rhymes, of alliteration, and of simple, bold imaginings full of action. The continuing popularity of most nursery rhymes is owing to their possession of one or more of these qualities.

The myth, which is early man's attempt at an explanation of Nature's forces as manifested in natural phenomena, has a peculiar fascination for children to whose unformed minds those dreaded or beneficent forces appear as conscious agents of evil or good. The better we understand this universal belief in Nature as being sentient, the more fully we can sympathize with the primitive man's and the child's point of view, and the more we can enjoy those ancient myths.

Before the days of printing, fairy tales and legends were developed to relieve the tedium of the long winter evenings. They were a gradual growth, deriving their materials from historical events, striking natural phenomena, and the desire to perpetuate ethical teachings derived from experience. These stories developed memory, the poetic instinct, and the power of expression. In olden times the good story teller was greatly esteemed. He was an intellectual force of a high order, supplying the place now taken by books, newspapers, public entertainments; and, to some extent, public schools.

The literature that formed the mental pabulum of the human race in its infancy, that has produced inherited tendencies in our children, that gives us a better insight into their ideas regarding Nature than their explanations or our own memories can supply, and that always arouse their interest, such literature should be found in considerable quantity in school readers and libraries for the young.

The tendency of the times to what is called a practical education—science and mathematics—leaves the imagination, the love for the beautiful, and the wider, nobler sympathies undeveloped.

Our feelings and emotions are just as real as the globe we tread on, and while we may not be able to weigh or measure them, they influence our lives and help to form our characters.

If the study of good literature, that is, of works which are the handicraft of imagination rather than reflection, serves to broaden our sympathies, develop our æsthetic taste, and ennoble our lives by setting before us high ideals of what is noble and good—why then should we not furnish our children with stories suited to their limited understanding, and drawn from their own little world, that would tend to character building, as well as develop the love of the beautiful, which is near akin to the good.

Place before them good, wholesome tales, that will give pleasure not only when they are young, but will leave in after years a fond recollection of childhood's happy days. Would you take from your little girl her doll, telling her that it was very wrong to treat it as if it was a living being? Then why is it wrong to read stories to children, or allow them to read stories that are just on the same level of culture?

Besides the pleasure obtained by the child from the old classic myth and legend, there will be developed a fondness for reading, and if the tales are judiciously selected they will serve as models of correct expression, and indirectly become aids in the acquisition of a correct use of the mother tongue.

Object Lessons and Nature-Study.

By J. BRITTAIN, NORMAL SCHOOL, FREDERICTON.

Birds in School.

Teacher, have you ever tried to interest your pupils in bird life? March is a good month in which to commence or to re-commence. The study of birds need take but little of your own time, or of your pupils' time in school. You will not have to neglect any of the "important" subjects. Teach reading, writing, spelling and arithmetic as conscientiously as ever, but find a few minutes each week for the birds, and most of your pupils will remember you for it, together with the birds and their songs, long after they have forgotten the names of the wives of Henry VIII, whether *love* is a strong or a weak verb, and many other "important" things. A few will remember these things, too, but only a few. Begin with two or three short talks on birds.

TOPICS FOR TALKS ON BIRDS.

The scarcity of life out-of-doors in winter. What do you miss from the trees and fields in winter?

Where are the birds? Why do you think so?

Why did most of the birds go away?

What are they doing now?

Will they ever come back? Why do they return?

What do they do here which they don't do in the South?

Whether birds are heavier or lighter than air. How they keep themselves up in the air.

Which can maintain themselves longer in the air—birds with *short* or with *long* wings.

What feathers are made of.

Whether birds change their colors, and how.

What covers the feet of birds.

How many toes a bird has, and their use.

What the bill is made of—and the nails or claws.

What the *arms* of birds are called.

What part of its body the bird uses as a *hand*.

After discussing these and kindred topics, call upon the children to relate anything they have learned by observation about the food of birds—their nests—their songs—their affection for their young.

Try to arouse or deepen in their hearts a kindly feeling towards these buoyant and busy creatures. Ask them what they think the world would be like without birds—and whether a greater number of most kinds would make our country pleasanter. Impress upon them the thought that it would be cruel to kill a bird for sport—that they can learn much about the birds without killing them or making collections of their eggs.