

when the thrill and ecstasy of life is in us and all about us! The turning of the soil and the feel of it in our hands! Even though our plants may later be destroyed by frost or cutworms, it is worth the labor just to feel that contact with the warm and steaming soil in spring. Then follows the sowing of the seeds, their germination, thinning to ensure perfect development, cultivation to conserve moisture, aerate the soil, and promote a healthy growth of the plant, the benefits of which are learned by experience and hence are never forgotten. With what expectancy he watches the developing flower buds, and when, at last, the tender petals expand, what pleasure is derived from studying the form and color of the perfect flower!

The vegetable garden furnishes ample food for thought as well as for the table. Its economic value is only of secondary moment to the true amateur. He grows his vegetables mainly for the love of it, and hence watches his crop with quite different feelings to the man whose livelihood depends on it. There are few methods of studying nature that are at once so practical and yet so delightful as gardening, for definite knowledge of nature's methods is here obtained by personal observation, which is one great object of Nature Study.

Not only is the amateur gardener a true student of nature, but he is a public benefactor as well. His garden is a delight to all who see it. It improves the appearance of the city, town, or place in which he dwells, and even if everyone who attempts to follow his example does not catch his enthusiasm and the true spirit, he will exert a very powerful influence for good.

One of the most hopeful turns which Nature Study has taken is the establishment of school gardens, where each child, with a little garden of his own, prepares the soil, sows the seed, cares for the plant, and where he should learn more about nature from his own practical experience than could possibly be taught him by another. If his garden is in a city, or town the child will probably be more interested at first in studying the growth of ornamental plants and perhaps of fruit and vegetables, for these are what he has been brought most in contact with, and, in the teacher's effort to create a love for plants and a definite knowledge of how they grow, success will be quicker and surer if he begins with known rather than with unknown objects. In the country, where pupils are likely to become farmers or farmers' wives, special attention should be paid to economic plants, such as wheat, oats, barley, pease, corn, potatoes, grasses, and roots of various kinds, and fruit. Here Nature Study will in part take the form of elementary agriculture, although the main purpose, as elsewhere, should be to uplift the mind of the child to a nobler conception of life.