

### Nature Study in May.

This is the month for bright skies and nature study; but April, in its genial weather, anticipated May this year. This month so far has been cool, with some frost, and plants have delayed opening their flowers and leaves, except those very early ones that children welcome every spring with all the joy of discoverers. There are no other flowers that bring such lively feelings of pleasure as these early wild flowers. Children learn to know their haunts, and long remember the places where the first may-flower or the first violet was found.

A bird observer tells the REVIEW that the migrating birds came this year few and scattering and not in such large flocks as usual. Has this been the experience of other observers throughout the Maritime Provinces? The fox sparrow, the song sparrow, the robin, thrush have been few in number compared with other seasons. The bright weather of April may have tempted them to continue their journey and seek their food and nesting places farther north; but this is only a guess. The instincts and habits of migrating birds are but little understood. Perhaps the teachers and children who love birds—the number is growing every year—and delight in observing them will help to solve some of these questions about bird life.

The first days of May this year have not been bright and warm enough to tempt one into the woods and fields. But wait. Soon there will come days of sunshine, and then the flowers will come so fast and the birds will sing so cheerily that we will not have eyes and ears enough to see and hear all that may be seen and heard. Every day will bring some new flowers, some new song. There is no rest for the nature-student this month; there will be an ever varying delight to ramble over fields and through woods which the spring has made like another world to us.

Have you this love of nature, and do all these changes interest you? Happy for the children in your school if they do. If you have no delight or interest in nature it may come to you as it has come to others by *really* seeing and hearing things in your walks or drives—some plant or bird with the sight of which you may have been familiar all your life but which you have not really known. Try to know it now; and your awakening will be an inspiration to you and to the children.

### Acadia in the Coal Era.

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The Devonian era, described in a previous chapter, was a time of comparative continental elevation. During its continuance Acadia, like most of eastern America, probably stood at a higher level than now, and before its close, as the result of what has been called the Devonian or Acadian revolution, had its surface diversified by the hill ranges of which the Quaco Hills, the Nerepis Hills, and the northern Highlands are the representatives in New England, as the Cobequids and South Mountains are in Nova Scotia.

But, as has been explained, geological history, like human history, is marked by cycles of change, subsidence succeeding elevation and vice versa; and before the Devonian age, as based upon the distinctive features of its life, had reached its close, we find that a downward movement had set in, which, before its completion, had again carried most of the land now constituting the Maritime Provinces below the waters of the ocean. The proof of this is to be found in the character of the deposits then produced. These are for the most part coarse conglomerates, usually of a red or brownish-red colour, such as now constitute the peninsula of St. Andrews, the promontory of Point Lepreau, the Boar's Head and Minister's Face on Kennebecasis Bay, and much of the Kennebecasis Valley, as well as detached areas in the northern counties of New Brunswick. They indicate by their coarseness the presence of powerful currents sweeping around and among the Devonian hills, and sometimes burying these latter to their very summits. The same conditions would seem also to have prevailed far into the next succeeding era, that of the Coal period, for the earlier rocks of the latter present similar characters and a similar distribution. It is to that latter era that we have now to turn our attention.

It has been said that the earlier beds of the Coal era were marine, marking a time of submergence. This is very clearly indicated by their character, for strata exhibiting such features and so distributed could have been produced in no other way; but still more positive evidence of this is to be found in the fact that many of the strata are saliferous or salt-bearing (as found at Salt-spring