

Jack. "Yes, its young are spotted and the old female bird has scarcely any red breast. She looks as if all the brownish or orange brownish of the male bird were washed out of her feathers."

T. "Very good, and quite correct. You have no doubt noticed its slender bill as compared with the short, strong, conical one of the sparrows. But can you tell me what it feeds upon?"

S. "Earth worms, small insects, caterpillars, and sometimes berries."

T. "It is useful then. What can you tell me about their nests?"

At this stage various accounts were given of the curious architecture of the robin, from which it would appear that while they always commenced from a base of twigs and finer rubbish, lined with a wall of clay which is again lined with finer fibres picked up by the industrious birds, some of the nests showed greater industry or genius than others even when the same material was accessible to all. Then came recitals of the numbers of the pretty sea-green eggs, from four to six in number, about an inch and a quarter in length and over three quarters of an inch in breadth; of the eleven or twelve days of hatching, followed by as many more with the young chickens attached to the nest; and the final dispersion of a family, which the same pair may rear at least three times during the same season. Last of all the following list of thrushes seen in the neighborhood was written down.

1. The robin (most common). 2. The hermit thrush (olive brown above, reddish brown on rump and tail, dusky spots on breast, white ring about eye, seven inches long, nearly three inches shorter than the robin). 3. Olive-backed thrush (over seven inches long, no reddish anywhere on back). 4. Wilson's thrush (over seven inches in length, reddish on back equally distinct from head to tail, breast and throat with brownish or pinkish yellow, with indistinct brownish spots). List in the order of abundance.

Jack's average dates for six years (1884 to 1889) of the spring migrations of some birds opposite the middle of Northumberland's Straits. Problem: Note whether the first appearance of the same birds in your school section is earlier or later than this average for 1894.

Names of Birds.	Average first appearance 1884 to 1889.	Abundant 1884 to 1889.
The Canada Goose.....	10 March.....	9 April.
The Song Sparrow.....	19 March.....	19 April.
The American Robin.....	24 March.....	16 April.
Brant.....	25 March.....	23 April.
The Fox Sparrow.....	19 April.....	25 April.
The Kingfisher.....	21 April.....	16 May.
The Yellow Crowned Warbler..	6 May.....	24 May.
The White Bellied Swallow....	6 May.....	22 May.
The Bobolink.....	21 May.....	5 June.
The Humming Bird.....	21 May.....	2 June.
The American Goldfinch.....	22 May.....	11 June.
The Cedar Waxwing.....	8 June.....	15 June.

For the REVIEW.]

### Field Botany.

Rest is not necessarily idleness. As a relief from the engrossing cares and labors of the teacher's vocation it is wise that he should have an avocation—a hobby, if you will, preferably in some branch of science or literature, follow it up for its own sake until he is specially interested in it and can claim some special knowledge of the subject; and I wish to present the claims of field botany as one form of mental and bodily activity in which a sensible person may find at once a pleasant and a profitable employment for his leisure hours.

(1) Plants are found everywhere, and in endless variety; a readily accessible and inexpensive fund of material for study.

(2) They are living things. Though less active than the birds and bees and butterflies, they have movements and habits of their own that are of deepest interest to the close observer; while their relations to the animal world are far more close and interesting than even the earlier botanists of our own century supposed.

(3) Plants (including forest trees of course) are closely identified with locality, and appeal to the love of home. They form a connecting link between the land itself and the myriad forms of animal life which they shelter and sustain; and they form characteristic features of the landscape, more prominent in this level country at least, than the hills and waters whose sides and margins they adorn. Whoever loves his country must therefore love its forests and its fields, and can find a deeper pleasure in a closer acquaintance with them.

(4) Plants attract us by their beauty, even in such unnatural situations and surroundings as those of our gardens and greenhouses; much more so in their native wilds, if we would but take the trouble to see and enjoy them there. The graceful shape of leaf and flower, the lines of tree growth, the distribution of light and shade, and all the varied tints of stem and leaf and blossom and fruit are a liberal education to the eye, and the best means of training it to an appreciation of form and color that can be had outside a school of art.

(5) Another way in which one may find plants interesting is in watching their success or failure in the struggle for existence. In exposed places or in poor soil certain of the hardier plants alone may be able to subsist, whilst in better situations these same plants will disappear because stronger but less rugged ones come in and crowd them out. Some seem to take an unfair advantage of their neighbours, and we take sides against them in the struggle and call them weeds.