

NATURE STUDY—NO. XIV.

SOME UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES, METHOD AND SYSTEM OF NATURE STUDY.

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Most educators, and people of alert mind generally, have come to recognize the usefulness and even necessity of Nature Study for people in general and the young in particular. I hold that to study and know something about nature and the objects in it, among which we live, which we see, hear and are brought in more or less close proximity to, is as useful and profitable for a person as some of the branches of science and art hitherto taught in schools and colleges to the exclusion of everything else. For instance, if we learn at school, where a certain city or river is situated in the world, which we shall perhaps never see or even hear of again, it is just as valuable to know where certain trees and plants grow, especially in our neighborhood, and why, and where the different individuals or families of living things stay and where they do not as well as for what purpose. If we read in history of the irruptions of, say, the Huns into Europe and their defeat A.D. 453, or of the immigration of the Anglo-Saxons into Britain 449 A.D., etc., it is just as important and valuable for people to know about the irruption and migration, the appearance and disappearance of insects, birds, mammals, fishes, plants, etc., which may affect our lives favorably or unfavorably, destroy our crops or trees, or help us to overcome such pests, etc. If we derive endless pleasure by studying the gems of thought and diction in literature, why overlook the gems of God's own handiwork in His mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms surrounding us! And these can be found and enjoyed not from dusty books, but out in the sweet-scented air and healthgiving sunshine. If a person not used to it, once tries to see and observe things in nature, he will soon find how little he is able to see and hear and differentiate correctly, how little he can use his senses properly, showing that while his head may be crammed full of book knowledge, his faculties to rightly observe things near him have been neglected, and he will perceive, that, though he knows a good deal about things far removed from him by space or time, he knows little or nothing