

**If I Had a Horse to Ride.**

The Farmer trots by on his roadster high,  
The Squire on his pony low,  
Young Miss sweeps out from the park-gate  
nigh,  
And canters away with her beau:  
They are proud of themselves,—oh, no!  
But couldn't I deal in pride,  
And couldn't I too cut a dash and show,  
If I had a horse to ride!

The starlings fly in the windy sky,  
The rabbits run out a-row,  
The pheasants stalk in the stubble dry  
As I tramp through the evenglow,—  
As I tramp, tramp, tramp, and grow  
More weary with every stride,  
And I think, as the riders come and go,—  
If I had a horse to ride!

The Farmer is four times as fat as I,  
The Squire he is blind and slow,  
Young Miss has not nearly so bright an eye  
As Bess at the "Barley Mow;"—  
Ah, wouldn't I cry "Gee-hupgee-ho!"  
And wouldn't I bang his side,  
And wouldn't I teach him to gallop it,  
though,  
If I had a horse to ride!

It was only a beggar that grumbled so,  
As his blistered feet he plied;  
But the cry is a cry that we all of us know,—  
If I had a horse to ride!

AUSTIN DOBSON.

**HOW LITTLE CHILDREN STUDY NATURE.**

This morning my little boy (five years old) was amusing himself by cutting open seeds to find their germ. He had been soaking the seeds between two pieces of wet flannel in a basin under the stove, and the shapes and sizes and colours of the various germs furnished him with a most fascinating amusement. He got the idea of his flannel-garden from Jacob Abbott's "Caleb in Town." This, I know, is a small beginning, but still it is a beginning, of the study of botany. The knowledge obtained is slight, but the development of the power of observation is great; and this is one of the most important faculties to develop in young children. Too many people, young and old, go through the world without a suspicion of the wonders they are treading under their feet.

Besides being useful, the study of nature is fascinating to most children. But they must have their own simple way of pursuing it, and not be burdened with what is only suited to older people. Their forte is observation of the simple objects of nature.

I knew a little boy of about four who for a whole summer spent many hours every week examining the spider webs round the yard and garden. Each web and its occupants had an individual interest for him, and he noted with wonderful accuracy the peculiarities in the building of web and the mode of securing prey. The spiders had their loves and their hates, their plans and their surprises, and the little boy enjoyed their world as he might fairy land.

If children were not so often taught by their parents and nurses the ridiculous theory that toads made warts, and that they are "horrid, nasty things"

I am sure they would find great entertainment in feeding the toad with flies and other dead insects they may pick up. We have had pet ones in the garden every summer, and many a hot afternoon has been beguiled by feeding them. The toad's air of lazy indifference really increases the entertainment, for the quick dart of his tongue is a surprise each time. One can soon accustom them to being fed. The children made one useful discovery while feeding them, which is that they will eat currant worms.

The bees that frequent every garden are also capable of furnishing pleasure and profit to a child, if the notion of fearing them can be avoided. Teach the child not to molest them—let him fear the consequences of that—but do not teach him to fear them when they are quietly doing their work in their own way. There is many a child to whom a garden is rendered miserable by fear of these harmless creatures, who might all the time be his companions, and not his foes. The great, buzzing bumble-bee, coming out of the hollyhocks gives one a nice story to tell a child. He can plainly see the dusty pollen on the bee's legs and body, and we can tell of his little brushes and baskets, and the "bee's bread," as well as his store of honey. My little boy has also been much interested in the bees mixing the pollen of the flowers and causing the varieties of colour. He has noticed it particularly in his special bed of petunias in his own garden, where he revels as he likes.

It is a very good plan to give a child some plant or plants for his own. If your garden is choice it saves the other flowers without the constant annoyance of refusal. I find that my garden never contains the wonders in my baby's eyes that his own does. His is mostly, as I have said, a great bed of petunias. They are emphatically children's flowers, growing quickly and blooming profusely, and with enough variety in colour to make each flower a surprise. The little child in taking his flower to pieces—and that of course is always his first desire—soon finds the pistil and the seed-vessel are connected, and soon he wants to know what the seeds are and what they do. The story of this can be made charming to almost any child who has become interested in the seed cups. The seeds themselves are a great source of pleasure to children as the season advances, and they learn much about their shape and arrangement when they are apparently merely playing with them. What baby who knows anything of a garden has not spent happy hours playing with hollyhock cheeses? A doll's tea party on a stump under the trees often rejoices in no other food than hollyhock and nasturtium seeds; and yet such gayety would be welcomed at many a grander feast. It is not in a child's nature to go solemnly from plant to plant studying them; and it is well that it is not so, for it would take all the heart out of

it. Children play with their seeds, and flowers, and roots, and beetles, and worms, and know them as a part of daily life.

I knew a little invalid who remembered many happy days with the green inch-worms, that fell from the linden trees, for her only playmates. She did not in the least envy the gayeties of the stronger children, so content was she with her little green friends as they measured the squares on her apron or spun silken threads from the leaves above her head.

There can be no surer way of teaching little children colour than by interesting them in the garden flowers. Girls generally learn colours some time in their lives, both from choice and necessity; but boys have a poor chance unless we begin with them while young. I find that my little boy, who has spent the greater part of his summers in our garden among the flowers, not only knows all the primary colours, but has a wonderfully quick eye for the different shades, and often detects various tints in certain mixed shades.

I have found the true names as easy and pleasant for a child as any invented, babyish ones could be. Indeed I was called to account by a little boy last summer when I inadvertently called petals leaves. It is of great value to the child, to increase its vocabulary, to give him more material for expressing the ideas that are coming upon him so fast.

The garden in the early morning is sometimes covered with a mist or fog, and I have found it a great help, in easing baby's disappointment while he cannot go out, to tell him to watch the fog and see it rise and rise, higher and higher, until at last it floats off over the tree-tops, and he can see it only as a white cloud sailing in the blue sky above him. The clouds, with their ever-varying forms, will thus become some of baby's friends. He will be getting at home in nature.

These are a few of the ways in which I have seen children study nature, but of course there are many more, as endless in number and variety as nature herself.—*Margaret Allen in Babyhood for August.*

**HENRY WARD BEECHER.**

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER was born at Litchfield, Conn., on June 24, 1813, the son of Rev. Lyman Beecher. He received his education at Mount Pleasant Academy and at Amherst College, where he graduated in 1834.

**HIS FIRST CHARGE.**

At the age of 21, Mr. Beecher received his degree and went to Lane Seminary at Cincinnati to study theology. Graduating from that institution he went to Lawrenceburg, a little place on the Ohio river, and preached to his first congregation. Of this dismal beginning of his illustrious career he said:—"How poor we were! There were only about twenty persons in the flock. I was janitor as well as pastor

of the little whitewashed church. I bought some lamps and I filled them and lighted them. I swept the church and dusted the benches and kindled the fire, and I didn't ring the bell only because there wasn't any.

**PROMOTED.**

"Well, my next move was to Indianapolis. There I had a more considerable congregation, though I was still far from rich in the world's goods. I believe I was very happy during my eight years out there. I liked the people. They were new people—unlearned and uncultured, like the land they lived on,—but they were earnest and honest and strong. But the ague shook us out of the State. My wife's health gave way and we were forced to come East."

**PLYMOUTH CHURCH.**

It was almost by accident that Mr. Beecher came to Brooklyn. What is now Plymouth Church had first been organised into a new Congregational church. The first services were to be held on the 16th of May, 1847. He happened to be in New York at the time, and was asked to preach at the opening of the new church. He did so. A few months later he was called to the pastorate, and on the 10th of October, in the same year, he entered upon his duties.

Of this all-important episode in his career he said: "I am the first and only minister that Plymouth Church has had since the first day of its organization. Of my career since assuming this pastorate I prefer not to talk. It is familiar to every one, and I would rather be known by my deeds than by my words."

**DEFINITIONS OF BIBLE TERMS.**

A DAY'S journey was about twenty-three and one-fifth miles.

A Sabbath-day's journey was about an English mile.

Ezekiel's reed was nearly eleven feet. A cubit was nearly twenty-two inches.

A hand's-breadth is equal to three and five-eighths inches.

A finger's breadth is equal to one inch.

A shekel of silver was about fifty cents.

A shekel of gold was eight dollars.

A talent of silver was five hundred and thirty-eight dollars and thirty cents.

A talent of gold was thirteen thousand eight hundred and nine dollars.

A piece of silver, or a penny, was thirteen cents.

A farthing was three cents.

A mite was less than a quarter of a cent.

A gerah was one cent.

An epha, or bath, contained seven gallons and five pints.

A bin was one gallon and two pints.

A firkin was about eight and seven-eighths gallons.

An omer was six pints.

A cab was three pints.