

picture on the wall or in the book is not to be despised; indeed it is deplorable that the pictures in our reading-books are so wretched, and the walls of our school-rooms so bare. Properly selected pictures work very powerfully, though insensibly, on the child's mind. But in literature, prose and poetry, especially if supplemented by good pictures, the child is brought into contact with the world of nature, and always in a way to draw out its sympathies. Nursery rhymes are an indispensable beginning, I am persuaded, embodying, as they do, a profound and yet simple outlook on the world of natural things, and indirectly leading a child to love these things and treat them in the right way. Even sad rhymes, like *Cock Robin*, purify and enlarge the child's feelings. Nursery jingles, then, begin the process of education by which the child passes out of the smaller into the larger world. Foolish as they seem to be, their folly is the folly of love and joy, not the folly of ignorance, and they make a good foundation for subsequent scientific study. Of course in these merry verses animals are made to speak like human beings, and Ernest Seton-Thompson has rejected that plan of portraying the animals' mind. But it does not materially concern us here as to the method employed, whether it be that of Seton-Thompson or that of Kipling, the great thing is that by different roads different writers arrive at the same goal, namely, to awaken in the young a cordial and intimate interest in all living things.

(2) Now very soon, indeed, literature in the stricter sense of the word can come to the assistance of the nursery tale. Long before the child can read for himself, or read only with labour, it

should be familiar with such a beautiful poem as Blake's "Little Lamb, who made thee?" and many other similar wonderful object lessons, so that its heart may be right before it needs expressly to think and know. This process of building up the pupil's sympathy really never stops and is of the widest application. The power of true poetry here is of the most curious and far-reaching kind even for adults. We are all able, for example, to enjoy to some degree, the delightful scenery of merry old England, its hedge-rows and spring flowers, although we may never have seen the land with our bodily eyes. The daffodil, in full bloom at the present moment in our hot-houses, has already put on all its glorious array in the open air in the home of our fathers, daffodils, says Shakespeare,

That come before the swallow dares,
and take

The winds of March with beauty.
(Winters Tale, IV., 3.)

Talk of the magic Eastern carpet which was able to transport you in a trice to distant shores; there is no magic to equal that of the poet's wand, which is able in the twinkling of an eye to unload the spoils of these shores at our very feet. Surely it is a great matter, even from this simple point of view, to have the little ones grow up to be citizens of the whole empire, even though it be their lot to live in its remotest corner.

(3) As the years pass the child begins more or less consciously to form ideals. The boy, who wants to be a man, is thinking in his own way of what a man is; and the girl, too, is forming her idea of what it is to be grown up. At this stage literature has a decided though mainly indirect part to play. The time has come when biography