

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT.

In the present number we revive the Science column of the Monthly. Under the present management, an effort will be made to render this feature of our magazine interesting and profitable to any who are seeking to improve our present methods in connection with the education of the young. No pains will be spared to have such matter published in this column as will be of assistance to every teacher, whether engaged in kindergarten, public school or high school work.

When we consider the wealth of material that surrounds us on every side both in the animal and vegetable world it is surprising that we, as teachers, have not availed ourselves to a vastly greater extent of these resources than we have. What object, could be more suitable for object lessons than the fruit, flowers and leaves of the common plants around us and of which the pupils know so little? These living bodies possess an infinitely greater interest for the young mind than the numerous lifeless objects that are so often made use of for this purpose. Our present system of education, too, affords but few facilities for the training of observation in the child. The whole system as at present conducted seems well adapted to the cultivation of the memory to exclusion of every other faculty. A ready means of doing away with this one-sided system lies at our hands. Let us use these means to the fullest extent possible. Nothing is better suited to bring into operation the important faculty of observation than a study of the natural objects around, and, from the observations thus obtained, such opportunities for the exercise of the reason will arise as will fully stimulate this faculty. In addition to the fact that a good

healthy training of the mind is obtained, there is the pleasure that is derived by one who has that knowledge of nature which makes the plants of our fields and woods objects of delight and enjoyment to him, while to the man who is without this knowledge they are but weeds.

Our object, then, will be to create a healthy interest in the study of science as well as to suggest methods in the teaching of it, and in order to secure this object, we invite the co-operation of our fellow-teachers and on our part we shall try to present such articles as will be suited to all grades of work from the Kindergarten to the highest classes of our Collegiate Institutes.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEEDS.

The study of the distribution of seeds is a peculiarly interesting one at this season of the year. The number and variety of fruits obtainable at the present time make the practical study of it accessible to every one.

The following notes may direct the beginner in botany where to look for the specimens which he requires to prosecute his study of this subject.

We shall first note a few plants whose seeds are transported from place to place by the agency of the winds. The thistle and dandelion fruits are attached to a tuft of down which serves to render them specifically lighter and consequently the more readily blown about by the wind. This tuft of down was the pappus of the flower and is therefore the remains of the limb of the calyx. A similar tuft of down is attached to the seed in the milkweeds and the great willow herbs. In these plants, however, the down is enclosed with the seeds in