

farmer's epigram, "a change of pasture is good for calves," hits the same principle.

In spring, the lengthening of the days, the greater warmth, the re-appearance from beneath the snow of the soil with patches of multiplying points of green, the air redolent with the aroma of bursting bud and circulating sap, the chattering brooklet released from winter's grip, the flight and song of birds, and many other occurrences, proclaim the change in all the world. Man's work assumes a change. Why should not the work of children, those who are in training to take up a little later on the responsible activities of citizenship, continue with corresponding changes, not of method, but of implements? Why continue the winter plan until monotony is succeeded by rebellion, and, because of broken-down interest, pupil after pupil gives up effort and abandons school? How many country fathers who have wished to educate their children have been met by this spring-time problem, and have seen their cherished hopes shattered in a few weeks by first a willingness, and then a demand, to stay at home?

Of the teacher, I would ask: Is there not just here a psychological principle that should guide and stimulate us for the benefit of our pupils? Can we not utilize the very occurrences that seem to attract our pupils away from us to increase their interest in school work by opening up new and living avenues of effort, and then to develop and foster a determination to remain longer in school, and make the best of their time? By holding to books always we thwart nature, and we defeat our purpose just where we desire most to accomplish it. By leaving, for the time, books in part and teaching through the open living scroll of nature, we take advantage of conditions to hold our pupils' thought and attention, and inspire a desire to know what others have thought and learned. This means an eventual return to books with greater zeal and earnestness.

A Word to Parents.

Of the farmer and country ratepayer, I would ask: Do you really believe that the soil, the growing plant and its insect enemies, the forest, mountain and valley, stream and ocean, with all animal creation, have nothing to yield when studied at first hand by your children? Sometimes you make use of agencies, not so much for their own value as because of what they enable other agencies to per-

form. May not the open book of nature, the training of hand and eye, as well as of mind thus afforded, give a bent and scope to the future citizen's life, that the indoor schoolroom might never supply? Does not the practical with the theoretical afford opportunities for testing and applying? Does it not furnish incentives for more diligent study that the single system fails to give? Why should the farmer who wrestles with problems incident to the productions of nature object to that education which, while it gives knowledge and mental training, at the same time puts the child into adaptive touch with his environment, and accustoms his mind and hand to work on that which his own and the world's prosperity depends?

It does appear that as a people we take too narrow a view of education, acting as though nature at first hand had no lessons of worth and training of superior quality to yield to all who wrestle to get them. Can it be that country people are ashamed of their occupation, and that they wish to train their sons and daughters away from rural life, and from an occupation which is at once one of the surest, happiest and most independent employments of man, and one also that is the most likely to yield a competence to those who put skilled brain and muscle into it? Can it be that they think they know all that is worth knowing about nature in her varying moods, and that they can teach this practically to their children without taking the time of school? Certainly not. Then let such possess themselves with the literature of the day on the subject, and let them, as faithfully as possible, peruse it, and they will see that agriculture is developing by leaps and bounds, and that almost limitless opportunities for comfort and plenty lie in her future path. Let the farmer remember, too, that he is not a teacher. Each to his calling will be found the best motto of practice in the present world of competition and specialization.

Field Excursions.

Among the many ways of holding the interest of pupils in school work in spring, the value of field excursions may first be noted. An hour spent in this way from time to time under the direction of a teacher, who has prepared beforehand by visits to the places selected and by a study of conditions, who therefore has much to suggest to the pupils for their active minds to work upon, will be not only enjoyable and attractive, but also an incentive to