

from them. Tell me how you liked it, how the children liked it and how the parents liked it. If any have questions relative to such work, send them along. If they are of general interest, I shall try to answer them through the REVIEW.

My wish now is that every teacher who has not a seed catalogue in her school get one. Encourage the children to study it. Get drawing exercises from it if you wish. Use it in every possible way. It will be the means of interesting some child in gardening. That is more important than interesting him in astronomical geography. It is also easier for the teacher.

### NATURE STUDY OF ANIMALS.

H. G. PERRY.

#### The Beaver.

The beaver is our largest rodent, and one of our most interesting fur-bearers. He is a great worker, and his industry has become popularized in the phrase,—“Works like a beaver.” The beaver has also had a close connection with the early history of our country, and is a most fitting symbol of our nation.

But beavers are no longer plentiful. The ruthless havoc of trappers, Indian and white, in the days of Champlain and DeMonts, soon almost exterminated them. The broken mounds, and lines of earth works, now often found in clearings, stretching across the beds of former streams, or where even yet a brook may feebly trickle along, mark the sites of the once thronging life and the busy industry of beaver colonies.

Locate the sites of these old beaver-dams in your district. Study the location, picture the size of the pond. If you have not had a chance to visit a colony, read books on the subject, descriptions of their dams and houses, etc.; how they are built; the building materials, and how carried; and learn all you can about their food, habits, disposition, character, general appearance, and all other points of interest. Dr. Gilpin publishes an interesting paper, “On the Construction of a Beaver Dam,” in Vol. III., Page 152, of the “Proceedings of the Nova Scotian Institute of Natural Science;” also in Vol. V, we find by the same author,—“On the Dwellings of the Muskrat and Beaver in Nova Scotia.”

Though hard pressed in early days, scattered colonies remain today chiefly in the more remote parts. The formation of new colonies in forests is

often attended with loss to the lumber-man, both in the direct loss of trees cut by the beavers, and the killing out of trees by the water in the dam. What use does the beaver make of the trees he cuts?

In recent years several beaver colonies have moved over the national boundary line, from the State of Maine into New Brunswick, locating on brooks in Carleton and Victoria Counties. One such colony, in Carleton County, has settled on a brook near the site of an old beaver dam. The writer has had the pleasure of visiting this colony almost annually since its location, and every visit has shown progress from the beavers' standpoint,—more trees cut, larger dam, more water, and more houses.

Have the enquiring mind, and you may learn much about these animals and their ways from lumbermen, trappers, hunters, guides, etc.; and at least make the site of one of the best preserved of the old beaver-dams in your vicinity the objective point for a spring outing.

#### The Porcupine.

The porcupine can hardly claim a place of honor among our fur-bearing animals; nevertheless, nature has been somewhat kind to him, for he is well connected, being a rodent.

The large loose quills which form the principal covering of his back and tail, while forming a good defensive armor, have hindered his development along many lines. His quills have been the passport on every path, he has been given wide room among his neighbors. Thus left practically to himself, he has failed to develop the bright, active, vivacious side of animal nature, but has remained slow and dull.

Why do dogs and other animals leave him so severely alone? Is this knowledge experimental or intuitional? The history of your dog will help you to settle this point. The old belief that the porcupine is able to shoot its quills is quite erroneous; they are given off only by contact, and the dog that gets his mouth full of them, you may be sure, was doing something more than merely looking on. Why do these quills “work in” if left in the muzzle parts of the dog? Examine the outer tip of one with a magnifying glass, and note the close retrose barbs along the side.

If you have a chance to examine a porcupine closely, note the character of the body covering on different parts. Select a series of the units from