

SCHOOL WORK.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

SCIENCE.

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SCIENCE READERS.

I.

Nature Study is gradually making its way towards recognition as a subject which will render school work more pleasant and profitable than, in many cases, it has been in the past.

To meet the ever-increasing demands, both of teachers and pupils, in this direction, numerous courses of study have been outlined by eminent educationists, and not a few books have been issued dealing with the subject. Among these latter are Murche's "Object Lessons in Elementary Science," which were shortly followed by "Science Readers," by the same author. The "Object Lessons" are for the use of the teacher, and outline a course in elementary science intended to cover the whole of the time spent by pupils in the public schools of London, England. In the use of these books it is not intended that the teacher shall take exactly the lessons laid down by the author, but that he shall be guided by them in conducting his work in the conditions in which he is placed. Wherever experiments are used they are such as to require only the simplest apparatus and very inexpensive material. In the conduct of classes in Nature Study, it is desirable that the actual objects be used, and not pictures or charts of them. One important point insisted on by the author is that wherever possible a specimen of the "Object of Study"

should be placed in the hands of *each pupil*.

The "Readers" extend over the work of the same grades as the "Object Lessons," and they are intended for use after the work outlined in the Lessons has been taken up in the class.

The author, in his preface, says that "Although the subjects follow the general course of the Teacher's Oral Lessons, the order has been considerably altered, with the view of avoiding monotony in the character of the successive lessons, and of maintaining as far as possible a general level of attractiveness throughout each book."

This attractiveness has been secured by well-graded lessons, both as to subject matter and the language employed. The series begins with easy lessons on objects that are familiar to every pupil, and proceeds by easy steps to less familiar objects, and as the pupil advances the points that are brought to his attention become more important, so that the advanced pupils will not feel that they are being trifled with.

According to the present programme of studies in our public schools these books can only be used for supplementary reading, which is a part of the regular work in all our best schools.

By the use of these books in this department of school work, a great deal can be done to arouse the interest and excite the attention of the pupils, and at the same time there will be brought before the child much knowledge of common things, which will be useful in after life.

The style of these books is attractive, and the illustrations are particularly good, and it is to be hoped that they will be extensively used, especially in junior classes.