

tion. Nature is then the best teacher of the juvenile mind. Things are studied more than mere words; or, rather, the perception of objects and their characteristics gives precision to thought and language. To give one of many illustrations, how different would have been the history of the great naturalist of our day had he spent his childhood in a large city. How fortunate for Agassiz and for the world that his native home was the humble parsonage of a plain but intellectual clergyman in the little village of Mottier, in Switzerland. Though early instructed by his intelligent parents, he did not attend school till he was eleven years of age. The woody hills, the gardens and vineyards, the brooks, cascades, and lakes, the Jura and more distant Alps, with magnificent glaciers, glistening fields of snow and ice—these were his real teachers. This plain, rustic Mottier, lying midway between the lakes of Neuchatel and Morat, its old stone houses, with projecting roofs of red tiles and the stairs on the *outside* reaching to the balconies that surround the second story, these balconies often serving as storeroom and filled with onions, squashes, and various other vegetables, and sometimes beautiful and fragrant with potted flowers; the streets narrow, winding, and irregular; the houses facing in all directions, like so many dice—such were the surroundings of his boyhood.

A boy's play may become a useful drill. Agassiz's sports were admirably fitted to convert the observing boy into the future naturalist. They were boating, fishing, hunting; studying birds and turtles; gathering bugs, butterflies, and other insects; roaming in the woods; taking long excursions on Lake Neuchatel, whose waters are so clear that the bottom is plainly seen at an unusual depth, enabling him to find the haunts and study the habits of the fish; traversing the valley of the Orbe, after his father moved to that place, on the other end of Lake Neuchatel; climbing steep hills and rocky cliffs, and even ascending the magnificent precipices of the Jura. Living much in the open air, he observed the birds, so as to distinguish them by their beak, claws, size, form, plumage, might, or song. If in early life he knew less of books, he had studied Nature more. The habits of observation thus formed and the love of knowledge thus awakened admirably prepared him for the school books, which he afterward perused with enthusiasm.

I have often advised the sons of wealth in our cities to spend at least one year in the country, with its freer sports and wider range of rambles; or, better still, for both physical and mental training, to give one season to hard work on the farm or in the shop. The practical skill thus gained in contriving and adapting means to ends, in observing men and things, and studying Nature and domestic animals, may fully compensate for some loss of book learning, or lead one, like Agassiz, to pursue text books with still greater zest—*N. Y. Independent.*

—The following is a copy of the brief but comprehensive law "relative to the attendance of children at school" which was enacted by the Legislature of New Jersey at its last session and is now in force in that State. "Every parent, guardian, or other person, having control and charge of any child between the ages of eight and thirteen years, shall cause such child to attend some public or private school at least twelve weeks in each year, six weeks at least of which attendance shall be consecutive; or to be instructed at home at least twelve weeks in each year in the branches of education commonly taught in the public schools, unless the physical or mental condition of the child is such as to render such attendance inexpedient or impracticable. And for every neglect of such duty the party so offending shall forfeit to the use of the city, town, borough, or school district in which such child resides a sum not exceeding twenty dollars, to be recovered in any court of competent jurisdiction in the county in which such city, town, borough, or school district may be situated; provided, however, that the aforesaid penalty shall not be imposed if it shall be satisfactorily proven upon the trial of the case that the parent, guardian, or other person so neglecting was unable by reason of extreme poverty to comply with the requirements of this act.—*N. Y. Independent.*

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Meteorology.

Observations taken at Halifax, Nova Scotia, during the month of December, 1874; Lat: 44° 39' North; Long. 63° 36' West; height above the Sea, 125 feet, by 2nd Corporal J. T. Thompson, A. H. Corps.

Barometer, Highest reading, on the 1st.....	30.534 inches.
" Lowest " " 18th.....	29.106
" Range of pressure.....	1.428
" Mean for month (reduced to 30 F).....	29.867
Thermometer, Highest reading on the 7th.....	52.7 degrees.
" Lowest " " 23rd.....	-6.4
" Range in month.....	59.1
" Mean of all highest.....	36.0
" " " lowest.....	16.5
" " " daily range.....	19.5
" " " for month.....	26.2
" Highest reading in sun's rays.....	89.0
" Lowest reading on the grass.....	-6.5
Hygrometer, Mean of dry bulb.....	27.9
" " " wet " 	27.0
" " " dew point.....	23.3
" Elastic force of vapour.....	.134 grains.
" Vapour in a cubic foot of air.....	1.45
" " required to saturate air.....	.35
" The figure of humidity (Sat. 100).....	.81
" Average weight of a cubic foot of air.....	568.6
Wind, Mean direction of North.....	5.50 days.
" " " North East.....	2.50
" " " East.....	0.00
" " " South East.....	1.00
" " " South.....	1.00
" " " South West.....	5.50
" " " West.....	4.00
" " " North West.....	9.00
" " " Calm.....	2.50
" Daily force.....	2.95
" " horizontal movement.....	258.9 miles.
Cloud, Mean amount of (9 to 10).....	7.0
Ozone, " " (0 to 10).....	1.8
Rain, Number of days it fell.....	8
Snow, " " " 	10
" Amount collected on ground.....	6.23 inches.
Fog, Number of days.....	1