

**NATURE STUDY AND LIFE.**

"Nature Study and Life" is the title of a timely volume on a subject that just now is receiving much attention from educators in different parts of the country. In this new movement New York has led the way. According to Prof. Bailey, of Cornell, the express purpose of the movement in New York is to solve the rural problem, to stem the tide of immigration from the country to the cities.

From the purely educational standpoint nature study means a new emphasis on the pupil's environment. The reasons are very good. An individual thinks of his past experience and his habits of thought are constantly influenced by his surroundings and the experiences of his daily life. Any system of education that ignores these fundamental principles is wrong in spirit and wasteful in practice.

In several states nature study has been identified with secondary education in agriculture. State Superintendent Harvey, of Wisconsin, has made some valuable contributions to the literature of this subject. Of agricultural education for rural and village schools he says: "The country boy and girl should have opportunities in the schools open to them and which they are able to attend for securing a more intimate knowledge of the things with which they are likely to be concerned in after life, than is now afforded. They have a right not only to this knowledge, but to the kind of training necessarily required in securing it."

Dr. Hodge's point of view is more comprehensive than any of these. In a way his scheme includes all these. According to Dr. Hodge's theory nature study may and probably will help to solve the rural problem, it will put the needed emphasis on the child's environment and educate him through his experiences, and it will serve as a basis for agricultural education in the secondary schools. But the fundamental principle on which he bases nature study is basic to all these. It is man's relation to nature, the problem of civilization.

Of the cultivation of plants he says: "Cultivation of plants indicated and developed elements of character fundamental to civilized life. When we consider its universal and fundamental character in relation to civilization and human advancement, the omission of soil lore from a system of education of the young is suggestive of relapse to barbarism. To allow a child to grow up without planting a seed or rearing a plant is a crime against civilized society, and our armies of tramps and hordes of hoodlums are among the first fruits

of an educational system that slights this important matter."

The subject matter is unusually rich and the method of presentation excellent. Dr. Hodge has something of value to say and the way of saying too. The book has great practical value. All the plans and theories given have stood the crucial test of practice in the public schools of Worcester. Dr. Hodge has developed a good working plan for the study of nature and he gives it with a fullness of detail that will be very helpful to busy teachers.

To my mind however, the chief value of this book is not in its practical usefulness, nor yet in its subject matter, rich and varied as that is, but rather in its suggestive stimulating quality. Dr. Hodge's nature study is of the active out door variety and this quality he has imparted to his book.

There are many beautiful illustrations. The first one "An Old New England Homestead," is peculiarly appropriate. New England has already given many naturalists to the

world. She gives one more whose theme is "Nature Study and Life." There is throughout that blend of hard, practical, common sense and poetic interpretation that marks the New Englander as a genius.

LOUISA McDERMOTT.

Breen, Colo.

**GENERAL STEVENS.**

In reviewing a biography of General Isaac I. Stevens, in the Conservative of March 27th, we spoke of his death in a way that might mislead a reader as to the rank he held at that time. He was, of course, a major general and in command of a division, though he was leading his old regiment, the 79th Highlanders, in a charge when he fell.

**IMPORTANT WORK.**

The United States Department of Agriculture has just issued a work of absorbing interest, dealing with Apoplectiform Septicemia in chickens. This we can heartily recommend to all our chicken-hearted friends. We cannot at this moment recall having read a more pleasing essay on this particular Nonpyogenic Streptococcus. It is sold for the low price of ten cents, which any one will admit is cheap for any kind of a Streptococcus.

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