

resenting these sounds. For instance, the story of a cat tells that he says "f" when he is cross, and "f" is the first sound of the words *fall, fan, fat, etc.* The watch says "t" and "t" is the first sound of *tick, tan, tall, etc.* These words are then taught to the class. Interesting stories can be made up by the teacher that will impress the new sounds on the children's minds very clearly and accurately.

After a number of consonant sounds are learned, the phonogram, or "family" word is introduced. This tends to shorten the process of word building. The most useful phonograms are selected for emphasis. For example, family words, such as "all," "ell," "ing," "ound" and many others will be used. A set of rimes is used as reading lessons. One rime is worked out each day. From this rime a phonic family is developed and drilled upon. The rime is placed on the blackboard and each child is required to read it silently. When he has difficulty with any word his knowledge of phonics is used to work out that word. The following illustration of a rime and its developments may be of value here.

We play in the hay
On a sunshiny day.
Oh, this is the way
To stay happy in May.

The new family to be developed is "ay." Some child is asked to read the rime to the class after it has been studied. Attention is called to the fact that there are a number of words in the rime belonging to the same family. These words are underlined by different children and sounded. The family name "ay" is then written on the blackboard and the words in the rime, belonging to that family, placed under it. Other words are added to the list by the children. Printed cards containing these words are also drilled on, and many games and other devices for drill are used. One that the children are particularly anxious to play is the "father" game. The teacher says, "Father 'ay' has lost his pay." A child points to the word and says, "I found his 'pay,'" sounding the word as he touches it. Other games are used successfully, such as "Merry-go-round," sounding all the words on a brick wall, asking questions, "What sounds shall I put with 'ay' to make 'stay'?"

Words developed in the family are then used in sentences in order to see if the child understands the meaning. After the words have been visualized and sounded by the class they are then erased and given as dictation for blackboard work.

The aim in these lessons is to get the correct habit for attacking new words, and this habit puts within the child's power a reading vocabulary. He has a key which can be used independently.

LILLIE BELLE BISHOP

IV (b)

"THROUGH NATURE UP TO NATURE'S GOD"

AN APPRECIATION

Any one acquainted with the courses of study in our public schools needs no argument to be convinced that the study of nature has never yet been accorded the place it deserves.

There are hundreds of little children all over our land who come from homes utterly devoid of anything to quicken their imagination, to excite a love of the beautiful, or to gratify their desire for information concerning the wonderful processes going on all about them. Dewdrops sparkle in the summer sunlight; hoarfrost enshrouds the dear dead things the autumn's breath has stricken; but whence either came or whither it went are tantalizing questions to many a hapless child in its ignorant environment.

Many children are so poor that they have seldom felt the joy and pride of ownership. Under the skillful guidance of some devout nature student, what a world of wonders can be opened up for these little hungry souls! Storms and sunshine, rainbows and sunsets, landscapes and waterscapes—all theirs for the trained looking! Jewels on wing, curios in the water, stars in the snow storm, quaint figures in the constellations—all theirs for the proper searching.

Handbook of Nature-Study. By Anna Botsford Comstock, B. S., Assistant Professor in Nature Study in Cornell University. Cloth. Illustrated. 918 pages. Price \$3.25. Comstock Pub. Co., Ithaca, N. Y.

That few teachers like nature study or try to teach it is because they are, as a whole, untrained in the subject. Many are anxiously looking for books of guidance and will be glad to have their attention called to the one under consideration in this article. Miss Comstock has undoubtedly met a long-felt want on the part of both parents and teachers in her admirable handling of the many phases of nature that she has elucidated in this large volume.

Her twenty-four pages on "The Teaching of Nature-Study," especially in regard to what it should do for the *child* and what it should do for the *teacher*, are full of convincing arguments in favor of the subject.

Her 123 pages on bird study invest our feathered neighbors with a new and an abiding interest. Even the once despised little screech-owl, under her generous treatment, becomes almost as interesting as our beloved robin or oriole.

Among the fish described by her, Johnny Darter holds his own with our much admired speckled trout.

In her "Batrachian Study" we find admirable traits in the much-avoided old "hop-toad" of our bare-foot days.

While she ruthlessly destroys a popular and cherished belief concerning our old "milk-snake" of the barnyard, she makes amends by attributing to him good qualities of which we, as children, never dreamed.

In her ninety-five pages of "Mammal Study" we meet again and become so much better acquainted with all the neighbors and household pets of our childhood. After her fascinating story of "The Little Brown Bat," we lose all former fears of this nocturnal visitor and are tempted, as she suggests, to adopt as a pet one of these little silky "flutter mice" in order to study its wonderful mechanism and cunning ways.

The 150 pages of "Insect Studies" are more fascinating than were the marvelous fairy tales of "ye olden times." Here we meet once more the old "Snake Doctor" from whose vicinity we fled, in fear of his dangerous patients, supposed to be lurking there. Miss Comstock introduces our *bete noire* as "Mr. Dragonfly" and holds us spell-bound until we see with her, his wondrous beauty, and learn of his useful habits.

Here, too, we find the mysterious old "doodle-bug," over whose earthen door we

bent and called so confidently in the golden days of our *wanderlust*, always to be rewarded by the appearance of this queer insect. As Ant Lion, he furnishes the subject of a most interesting story by the author.

In "Wild Flower Study" we traverse once again the old familiar hills and dales, the wildwood, and the grassy meadow, and meet at every turn the favorites of the vanished epoch in our lives, and find new interest in our loved "Jewel Weed" and "Queen Anne's Lace." Here, too, we meet some queer strangers, such as the Christmas Fern and Scarlet Saucer, and long for an intimate acquaintance with them.

Among the shrubs we shall meet our own loved Mountain Laurel and learn new facts about its wondrous blossoms.

The beauty of our dear old apple-tree is enhanced by her marvelous touches. The old shagbark hickory presents other attractions than the much-prized nuts; while the oak seems almost like some human monarch as we study it here.

In her "Earth and Sky," the brook, the common minerals, the familiar constellations and planets, all come in for their share of interesting facts and curious characteristics.

Upon the whole, this book is one to be prized and studied by every teacher and parent who wishes to guide little pilgrims along well-trodden paths that lead "through Nature up to Nature's God."

S. FANNIE SPECK

WHY NOT TEACH?

Young Women:

1. Virginia needs you.
2. The vacancies exist.
3. Salaries are going up.
4. Get in line for the new days ahead.
5. An unexcelled opportunity to serve your State and enter a profitable vocation presents itself.
6. Get the right training and, if it is coupled with character and native ability, you can write your own contract.

V

DISTRICT MEETING, MARCH 25,
26, AND 27, IN HARRISONBURG

The district meeting of the teachers from the counties of Highland, Bath, Augusta, Rockingham, Page, Shenandoah, Warren, Clarke, Frederick, cities of Winchester, Staunton, and Harrisonburg, will meet in Harrisonburg at the State Normal School on March 25, 26, 27. Superintendent J. H. Booton, Vice President of the State Teachers Association, for this district, has prepared the following program that should appeal to every teacher in the district:

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 8 P. M.

Supt. J. H. Booton presiding.

Invocation.

Addresses of Welcome.

Supt. W. H. Keister, for the City of Harrisonburg.

Supt. J. C. Myers, for Rockingham County.

President Samuel P. Duke, for the Normal School.

Response:

Mr. Walter H. Newman, Woodstock,

Music by the Normal School Glee Club.

Address—Hon. Harris Hart, State Supt. of Public Instruction.

FRIDAY MORNING, MARCH 26, 9:30 A. M.

Intelligence Test—Principal B. H. Seekford, Staunton High School.

Educating the Exceptional Child—Supt. J. P. Neff, Staunton.

Securing Community Support for Public Education—Superintendent Leslie D. Kline, Supt. Frederick and Clarke Counties.

High Spots in Modern Education as Reflected in the N. E. A.—Supt. W. H. Keister, Harrisonburg.

The method of the Great Teacher—Dr. J. W. Wayland, Harrisonburg Normal School.

Music by the Normal School Glee Club.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON, MARCH 26, 2:30 P. M.

Professor N. D. Cool, Bridgewater, presiding.

Building up the Rural Schools—Supt. C. V. Shoemaker, Shenandoah County.

Adequate Rural Supervision—Mr. S. L. Batman, Trustee, Page County.

The Relation of the Supervisor to the Superintendent—Miss Ada S. Baugh, Supervisor, Rockingham County.

Music.

The Page County Survey—Miss M. A. Young, Page County.

The Purpose and Use of Tests—Dr. W. J. Gifford, Harrisonburg Normal School.

FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 26, 7:30 P. M.

Address—President Henry Louis Smith, Washington and Lee University.

Address—Superintendent F. E. Clerk, Winchester Schools.

Dramatic Production by Students of the Normal School.

SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 27, 9:30 A. M.

Section for Elementary School Teachers:

Instruction in Arithmetic—Principal D. G. Cooley, Berryville High School.

Where We Fail in Teaching the Fundamentals in Arithmetic—Mrs. E. A. W. Rathke, Principal, Luray High School.

Some Problems in Silent Reading—Miss Kate M. Anthony, Harrisonburg Normal School.

Round Table Discussion.

Section for High School Teachers and Principals:

The Junior High School in Relation to the Reorganization of Secondary Education—President Samuel P. Duke, Harrisonburg Normal School.

The Teaching of High School English—Professor Conrad T. Logan, Harrisonburg Normal School.

The New High School Manual and the Courses of Study—Miss Lina Sanger, Principal, Bridgewater High School.

Round Table Discussion of High School Problems.