ALL THE YEAR ROUND: A NATURE READER. PART I: AUTUMN

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All the Year Round: A Nature Reader. Part I: Autumn by Frances L. Strong & Gertrude A. Stoker

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A NATURE READER

PART I: AUTUMN

BY

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NOTE TO THE TEACHER.

IT is not the purpose of the author of this series to offer, or even suggest, any rules for its use. If anything is established in education, it is the fact that aside from certain underlying principles and general directions, each teacher must be a rule unto herself. The methods which the author and her colleagues have found successful might be entirely out of harmony with an equally good system in some other city. It is to be presumed, however, that if this series of nature-stories should be so fortunate as to be received with favor by the educational public, it will occasionally find its way into the hands of some teachers who are not familiar with nature-work as developed in large cities and well-organized school systems. To these it may be interesting and helpful to know just "how it has been done" in the schools out of which these stories grew, and in which they have been used. Indeed, by way of comparison and suggestion, it may also be of assistance to those who have passed through the experimental stage and have wrought out a system of their own.

It has been the custom in the St. Paul public schools to pursue the following plan:

Materials. — The teacher goes out with her pupils to collect the materials referred to in the lessons, gathering enough to allow each pupil one specimen. Animals and plants are kept alive in the schoolroom to enable all to study their growth and habits.

After the material is at hand, the development of a specific lesson is divided (though not formally and rigidly) into five parts.

I. *Morning Talk.* — The work of the day is begun with a morning talk based either upon one of the natural objects, or upon a geographical topic, according to the season.

If an animal, a plant, or a stone be the subject of the lesson, pains are taken to see that each child is provided with a specimen. By skillful questioning, statements are drawn from the children concerning the facts the teacher wishes observed. New words are occasionally suggested and written upon the blackboard, and their frequent use is required throughout the lesson. In studying objects, it has, of course, been found advisable to consider them as belonging to some great family, making comparisons, and finding resemblances and differences. Children readily find this family element in all things studied.

II. *Drawing.* — The observation lesson is followed by a drawing lesson upon the subject studied. The child has already been supplied with the plant or animal. Each child draws his specimen carefully. It is by no means necessary for the teacher herself to be able to draw in order to get results. Each child is simply required to reproduce with his pencil just what he sees, just as he sees it. Children illustrate their language papers on flowers with water-colors

or pencil. Work in free-hand cutting can be given from all objects, such as bottles, leaves, animals, etc. Scissors are used for this cutting. Modeling in clay is done from any object that will correlate with the other work. It has been found that in connection with the myths there is a great opportunity to develop imagination by allowing the child to illustrate the stories.

III. *Spelling.* — A spelling lesson upon the new and difficult words will follow.

IV. *Reading.* — The child is now ready for the reading lesson appropriate to the subject.

V. *Language.* — Finally, the children write descriptions of the object or country studied, giving free expression to the facts each has acquired.

It may be added that great interest may be excited by introducing into the number-work problems concerning the subject of the morning talk.

The literature, also, holds a very prominent place in this nature-work. The following list suggests poems to be committed to memory, and stories to be read in connection with this reader:

Flower and Fruit . . . . . *Jane H. Newell*
Wait and See (Fruits), "Child's World" . . *Emilie Poulsson*
Song of Harvest } . . . . . *Whittier*
The Huskers }
In Time's Swing . . . . . *Lucy Larcom*
Clytie . . . . . *Cook's Myths*
Harvest Mouse, "Kindergarten Stories and Morning Talks" . . . . . *S. E. Wiltse*

INSECTS.

To a Butterfly . . . . . *Wordsworth*
The Green House with Gold Nails . . . . . *S. E. Wiltse*
Life and Her Children . . . . . *Arabella Buckley*
Edith and the Bees,
Such a Beauty, } "Child's World," *Emilie Poulsson*
A Narrow Escape (Bees),
The Bees' Pockets . . . . . *S. E. Wiltse*
Grasshopper . . . . . *Leigh Hunt*
Grasshopper and Cricket . . . . . *Keats*

PREPARATION FOR WINTER.

The Anxious Leaf, "Kindergarten Stories and Morning Talks". . . . . *S. E. Wiltse*
The Kind Old Oak, "Child's World" . . . *Emilie Poulsson*
The Baby Buds, Winter Clothes, "Child's World". . . . . *Emilie Poulsson*
Migration of Birds, Winners in Life's Race, *Arabella Buckley*
The Flight of the Birds . . . . . *E. C. Stedman*
Coming and Going, "Kindergarten Stories and Morning Talks". . . . . *S. E. Wiltse*

As will be inferred from the method outlined above, the purpose of this book will be entirely misconceived, if it is looked upon merely as a convenient means of furnishing new reading-matter for the children (although it is sincerely hoped that it will do this). It is intended also to stimulate the thought, enlarge the vocabulary, and open the eyes of the children to the wonders of the world around them.

In the St. Paul public schools the manuscript of this series has been used in the second grade. It is thought, however, that it may be used in the third, and even the fourth, with equally good results.

ST. PAUL,
October 17, 1895.