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978-1-316-50984-5 - Educational School Gardening and Handwork

G. W. S. Brewer

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SCHOOL GARDENING
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A handsome flower border Chard Tatworth C. School.

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EDUCATIONAL
SCHOOL GARDENING
AND HANDWORK

by

G. W. S. BREWER, F.R.H.S.

Inspector of Educational School Gardening,
Somerset County Education Committee

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

by

The Rt. Hon. HENRY HOBHOUSE

Chairman of the Somerset County Council

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PREFATORY NOTE

THIS work on Educational School Gardening is an endeavour to carry into practical school life the spirit of the following extract from *Jock of the Bushveld*. “Boys is like pups—you got ter help ’em some; but not too much, an’ not too soon. They got ter larn themselves. I reckon ef a man’s never made a mistake he’s never had a good lesson. Ef you don’t pay for a thing you don’t know what it’s worth; and mistakes is part o’ the price o’ knowledge—the other part is work! But mistakes is the part you don’t like payin’: that’s why you remember it. You save a boy from makin’ mistakes, and ef he’s got good stuff in him most like you spoil it. He don’t know anything properly, ’cause he don’t think; and he don’t think, ’cause you saved him the trouble an’ he never learned how! He don’t know the meanin’ o’ consequences and risks, ’cause you kep’ ’em off him!

An’ bymbye he gets ter believe it’s born in him ter go right, an’ knows everything, an’ can’t go wrong; an’ ef things don’t pan out in the end he reckons it’s jus’ bad luck! No! Sirree! Ef he’s got ter swim you let him know right there that the water’s deep an’ thar ain’t no one to hol’ him up, an’ ef he don’t wade in an’ larn, it’s goin’ ter be his funeral!”

G. W. S. B.

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INTRODUCTION

I HAVE been asked to write a few words of introduction to this little volume, and I do so with pleasure.

We are all conscious now-a-days that there is a widespread dissatisfaction with our system of elementary education. It is said that by giving too much “bookish” instruction it is unfitting our children in the rural districts for their “natural future” on the land and encouraging them to seek for clerical employment in the towns to the detriment of our population as a whole.

This book may well be commended to those who sympathise with these views. It is perhaps through the medium of the school garden, the school workshop and the school kitchen, that we can do most to counteract the tendency complained of. Mr Brewer deserves the thanks of educationalists for the enlightened spirit in which he approaches his subject. He shows how, under wise guidance, the school garden

may become the means of training boys in self-help, initiative, and the capacity for finding things out for themselves, and so learning the valuable lessons that only mistakes can teach. Mr Brewer believes that many school lessons, e.g., nature study, arithmetic, drawing, mensuration and composition, may be rendered more interesting and living by taking their subjects from the school garden. There is no doubt that progress in both literary and practical work is promoted by such intelligent co-ordination. Teachers should find the book suggestive and full of practical hints and ingenious devices.

There is, moreover, a still more important object which the author seems to have in view, namely, the formation of character in the training of boys in habits of industry, co-operation, and in what may be called the broad scientific outlook.

HENRY HOBHOUSE.

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