

### Midsummer School Examinations.

Considerable discussion has arisen lately in the press and elsewhere on the severe strain to pupils caused by holding examinations in the hottest weather. At the closing examination of the Normal School at Fredericton, in June, the thermometer one day registered ninety degrees and upwards and the nervous tension on the pupil teachers was most severe. A speaker at the recent Provincial Institute at Fredericton, characterized the exhibition as "brutal;" but he seemed to place the responsibility on the Board of Education, rather than on Providence. Of course the Board was powerless to change the date of the examination, and the hot weather was the most extreme known for years.

It is much easier to criticize in such a case than to propose a remedy. To hold the Examinations in December would compel schools and colleges to close their year at Christmas, which might be a good plan if all could agree. But they certainly would not. The charm of green fields and apple blossoms and the pleasure that these summer college and school closings afford to interested visitors would be lost. Again, if the examinations were held earlier in the season, as the *Halifax Recorder* advises, interest would dwindle among the students, and it would be a difficult matter to keep scholars to their work as the season of hot weather approaches.

A great deal that is said in these discussions seems irrelevant, the language extravagant and used without a consideration of the facts. The boys and girls who are described as "sweltering" over their tasks in hot buildings in June, would "swelter" still more if outside at their tasks, unless they were idly resting in some cool shades, which is a condition that all cannot afford, even if it were good for them. The "boys and girls" in question are from fourteen to twenty years of age and should be able, unless the race is degenerating, to endure the ordeal of an examination even on fiery days. They are able, and usually welcome the ordeal. These student-teachers would be amused if they were advised to close their schools and seek the shade during these hot days of August!

Principal Bridges would do away with the final test at this usually trying period of the year—in June—and let the faculty decide, as in the Nova Scotian and other normal schools, on the fitness of pupil-teachers for license. The suggestion has very much in its favour.

### Canadian Literature—VII.

BY ELEANOR ROBINSON.

Wilfred Campbell.

Ontario has given to Canada many of her best writers, and not the least of these is Wilfred Campbell, whose distinctive title is "The Poet of the Lakes." The son of a Church of England clergyman, William Wilfred Campbell was born in the town of Berlin, Ontario, on the 1st of June, 1861. He was educated at the University of Toronto and at Cambridge, Mass., with the intention of following his father's profession, and was ordained by the Bishop of New Hampshire. For a time he had charge of a parish in New England, and afterwards became the rector of St. Stephen, New Brunswick; but in 1891 he resigned his charge, and went to Ottawa, where he entered the civil service.

Mr. Campbell has been an industrious writer, contributing to the best known magazines in England and America. *Harper's Monthly*, *The Atlantic*, *The Century* and *The Spectator*, among others, gave him a welcome place in their pages. In 1891 his poem called "The Mother" appeared in *Harper's*, and attracted a great deal of attention from American critics, the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* giving it particularly high praise.

Mr. Campbell's chief works have come out in book form in the following order: *Lake Lyrics*, 1889; *The Dread Voyage*, 1893; *Mordred and Hildebrand*, 1895; *Daulac*, 1896; *Beyond the Hills of Dream*, 1899. In 1905 the poet collected in one volume all of his verse, not dramatic in form, which he desired to preserve, and it is from this collection that our extracts are made. The poems are arranged in eight groups, classified, apparently, partly according to subject and partly according to form. The first and largest class is called "Elemental and Human Verse." Then follow "Nature Verse," "Elegiac and Memorial Verse," "Poems of the Affections," "Dramatic, Classical and Imaginative Verse," "Sonnets," "The Sagas of Vaster Britain," and "Lake Lyrics." It will be seen from these titles that Mr. Campbell has a wide range, and so even is his power of expression that it is hard to say in which direction his feeling or taste most strongly impels him.

It is always of pressing interest to know the poet's conception of his work, and how he answers the questions, "What is the use of poetry?" and "What am I, a poet, put here to do?" Some poets give us the answer implicitly, others tell us directly, and