

Notes from the Macdonald School, Guelph.

By M. G. F., A NEW BRUNSWICK TEACHER.

We New Brunswick teachers who are taking the nature-study course at the Macdonald Institute at Guelph, would like to tell our fellow-teachers a little about the work we are doing here. There are fifty students in our class; seven are from New Brunswick; the remaining forty-three are from various parts of Canada. We feel that we are a part of the Macdonald movement which means better teaching for Canada.

We find a great teacher in Professor McCready. He has led us to realize as never before the importance of nature-study, which takes for its thought the child and its natural environment. It is possible to get children in love and sympathy with nature.

"There is no glory in star or blossom
Till looked upon by the loving eye.
There is no fragrance in April breezes
Till breathed with joy as they wander by."

The child's earliest education is almost entirely in nature. It is an education of seeing and doing. Teachers who realize this and who have much love and sympathy for children will prove, by making a wise use of what has been gathered from the course pursued here, proper methods in teaching nature-study.

Much of our time is spent in field work in the study of plants, insects and birds, under the direction of Professor McCready and members of the college staff. Excursions are made to the different departments of the Agricultural College where we always find a willing and helpful instructor.

Our aim as teachers is not to memorize the names of a great number of plants, birds and insects; but to grasp the new methods of giving instruction in the subjects of the course.

Soon we shall finish our work here and return to our own province; but we shall ever carry with us pleasant remembrances of our visit to the Guelph Macdonald Institute and the Agricultural College. We shall also feel grateful to our leader Professor McCready, who has so thoroughly taken up this work with us and to our government which has seen the wisdom of sending us here.

From a recent subscriber: I enjoy the REVIEW very much and always look eagerly forward to its coming. It offers so many useful hints and suggestions, that I sometimes wonder how I managed to do without it so long.

M. L. D.

An Open Letter to Kindergartners.

TO THE KINDERGARTNERS OF THE MARITIME PROVINCES, AND TO ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN CHILD-CULTURE.

By MRS. CATHERINE M. CONDON.

When the history of the Kindergarten movement comes to be written, it will be painful to find how little direct and acknowledged effect it has produced on our public school system up to the present time. In 1886 there were three small, struggling private kindergartens in Nova Scotia, two of them in Halifax, and one in Yarmouth. They were private enterprises, but did good work. These failed for want of financial support. Here let me remark, that personally, it has always appeared to me, the burden of ways and means should be assumed by a capable committee, so that the kindergartner may devote herself wholly to her work without distraction. (Here follows a history of the kindergarten movement in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with the names of those directly associated in the work).

A well-conducted kindergarten is its own best argument, and no intelligent person can carefully observe the busy, happy little ones, following the directions with alacrity, because they have learned; even those who are "little Turks" at home, that obedience produces pleasure in well-ordered circle-games, and pleasant work at the tables. See how industrious and attentive they are; no listlessness here, but all eager and alert, and looking out for the next pleasant expression prepared for their productive self-activity. Kindliness and good manners, the "morals of the heart," are in the very air of this "Paradise of Childhood." As a preparation for the school, this genial training of eye, ear, hand and mind cannot be over estimated, and those who have studied Froebel's methods most carefully, and have seen them carried out most frequently, under the most varied conditions, feel deeply, and see clearly, the need of this addition to our common school system. There is but one way to further this great reform; and that is for the people themselves to look into the claims made by the advocates of kindergarten extension, and if (as they will) they find those claims are founded on sound views of life and a correct pedagogy, then it will be their duty to make up their minds to further the movement in every reasonable way. The seed has been sown, and much patient labor has been bestowed by the few who have the strong conviction of the value of Froebel's system, born of study and experience. If