

First Prize Letter.

YARMOUTH, N. S., July 27th, 1912.

MR. STARRATT,

President Summer School of Science.

DEAR SIR:—Allow me to congratulate you and your co-workers on another successful session of the Summer School of Science. To attend this school once means to be its friend forever and to desire to be present at every session; which, however, is an impossibility while the average teacher in the average community is classed with the day laborer, as far as salary is concerned.

What does the school mean to me? More than I am able to tell on paper,—re-creation, enthusiasm, new associations, ideas and friendships, new ideals, opportunity for uninterrupted study, and lots of fun thrown in to spice all the other ingredients.

In the first place, the school is a movable institution, giving the opportunity, which can be found in no other way, of visiting the various places of interest in our provinces. If the teacher has sailed from St. John to Fredericton, she can make her pupils see the grand old city of the Loyalists, the matchless beauty of the river, the graceful elms and pleasant situation of New Brunswick's capital. Yarmouth will live in our memories as a city of beautiful hedges and homes and delightful people. We know more geography and history, as well as geology, botany and kindred subjects, and can make our pupils feel that these are real, live things obtained from nature, not from musty books. And this word is the keynote of our school. It is *alive*, the instructors are alive, and one never sees a more wide awake and earnest gathering of students. Their interest in all the classes is very noticeable.

In the second place, we are brought into contact with the best teachers in the country, those who are willing to make sacrifices in order to improve themselves. If it be true that our characters are influenced by all whom we meet, then surely we want to meet the best people, and I know of no better way than by attending the sessions of the Summer School. Frequently, teachers say, "I am not clever enough to win a scholarship," or "I am too old to go to school with so many boys and girls." To such we say, "You need the school most of all; these boys and girls will profit by your experience. In some things you can be their teachers, and they will rub away some of the ruts into which, as teachers, we are so apt to fall." Again, scholarships, (although so numerous through the generosity of our good friends), are not the loadstone that draws teachers here. There would be just as many in attendance were no such rewards offered. The benefits received here cannot be paid for in money, or its equivalent. For instance, it is impossible to put a money value on the matchless hospitality of Yarmouth's citizens, on pleasant holiday associations, or on the life friendships formed here. No one is working only for scholarships. To quote a few remarks overheard one morning: "I know certain subjects well and could make good marks on them, but I am taking those subjects about which I

know absolutely nothing." And that young man voiced the sentiment of the whole school. A spirit, not of rivalry but of helpfulness, is everywhere evident.

Just here comes a suggestion. Many are working too hard, just because they did not understand conditions. Four, or even three scientific subjects, with their corresponding field and laboratory periods, mean seven or eight hours of hard work every day. If this were made clear in the calendar, there would be fewer tired teachers at the end of the three weeks.

Listening to the readers during the literary periods, one was delighted with the large number of pleasing voices. As teachers we must use our voices constantly, and too many are tired out at the end of the day, simply because they do not know how to use this wonderful gift correctly. A valuable musical instrument is not used carelessly or allowed to remain untuned, but many teachers are compelled to leave the profession for this very reason. Why could the Summer School not have a department in elocution, where suggestions for the proper use of the vocal organs could be given as well as expression in reading?

In a few days nearly three hundred teachers will be leaving Yarmouth, carrying with them most pleasant memories, and a new enthusiasm for nature study which is bound to be infectious. Each can influence at least three or four other teachers; and that means that the school reaches, directly and indirectly, a thousand teachers and forty thousand pupils.

Is the Summer School of Science worth while? Most assuredly it is, and its friends hope to see it go on from strength to strength until our government is compelled to recognize it and the work it does. Surely the teacher's work is invaluable, to the little child the most precious thing in the world. Then for how much longer will our best teachers be permitted, *forced* to leave the country? We trust the day will soon come when our work will receive the recognition it deserves.

With best wishes for the continued success of the School.

Yours very truly,

MARY F. BELL.

William Dean Howells, the famous novelist, enjoys the public confidence in an unusual degree. It was doubtless on this account that a New York promoter recently offered Mr. Howells the presidency of a new mining company, at a salary of \$25,000 a year.

"But sir," Mr. Howells protested, "I know nothing about mining or finance."

"Oh, that makes no difference," the promoter replied. "We won't expect you to do any work. We only want to use your name, you know."

But Mr. Howells shook his head.

"No," he said, "no, I must decline. If my name is so well worth using, it must be equally well worth protecting."