

*THE SUMMER SCHOOL ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN.*



THE summer school is one of the modes devised by modern educationists for imparting knowledge to the masses. In these establishments, lectures are given, and practical work is done in some of the subjects of a university curriculum, during some weeks in the summer, when relaxation or a change of occupation is sought by many engaged in literary, or commercial pursuits. Such institutions have been found most successful in satisfying, to some degree, the aspirations of thousands who have not the time, or the means to acquire, in the ordinary way, the higher education they long for. Religious denominations have been successful in carrying on summer schools, in which lectures by prominent educators, and speakers of their persuasion, have shed some light, for the multitude, on ethical and scientific problems, and have been at the same time a plea for unity among members. This paper is designed to give Canadian readers, our students especially, a brief account of the origin and development of the Catholic Summer School.

The idea of a Catholic Summer School took definite form in 1892. During the summer of that year a programme of lectures, on subjects deemed of interest to Catholic hearers and readers, was carried out at New London, Conn. The committee of organization, approved by prominent members of the clergy and laity, had but a few weeks to secure lecturers and make the necessary preparations. But in spite of this fact, Catholics assembled from all parts of the country, in goodly numbers, to usher in with all due éclat, this new venture in Catholic education. The brightest anticipations of its promoters were surpassed: instead of having, as they expected, an average daily attendance of about one hundred and fifty, they were forced to accommodate almost five hundred. If the fathers of the project, ever entertained the slightest doubts of its success,

these were quickly dispelled, by this convincing proof of the unbounded interest that the Catholics of America, showed in the Summer School, the year of its birth. During the season of '92, three lectures were delivered each day, but it was quite evident that this was too great a strain upon both lecturers and students. As a consequence, the committee of the present year decided to have only two lectures a day: one in the morning, the other in the evening. Thus, those attending the meetings, are left free during the heat of the day, to enjoy themselves in whatever manner they may desire.

The great success of the session of '92 compelled the committee, to seek a site suitable for the permanent location of the school. The sub-committee appointed for this purpose spent several months in visiting the different places proposed for its site. After due consideration on the part of the supreme council, they decided to locate permanently at Plattsburgh, N. Y.

Many towns offered special advantages to the school, but the citizens of Plattsburgh, more enterprising than those of much larger and wealthier cities, bestowed upon the committee, the munificent gift of four hundred and fifty acres of hill and dale, gently sloping to the shores of the placid Lake Champlain. This donation should be all the more highly prized, coming as it does, from a town the majority of whose inhabitants is Protestant, and it is a convincing proof, that at length racial prejudice and religious bigotry, are fast giving way to that brotherly esteem and love, which should ever exist between Catholics and Protestants. We should rejoice that the benevolent spirit of "The Father of his country," is being rapidly infused into the hearts of his compatriots.

During the session of 1893, the lectures were delivered in the Opera House and Normal School. These buildings were placed at the disposal of the committee through the commendable generosity of the citizens of Plattsburgh, who paid all expenses connected therewith. But during the coming year, the committee intends to