

### The College Summer School.

In good health the wisest recreation is a change of work. That the consequences of complete cessation from mental work for a long period each year may be serious is recognized by the great universities. Harvard has a six weeks' course attended by about six hundred students annually. Instruction is given in English, mathematics, classics, gymnastics, physics, the natural sciences and in many other subjects. The student is strongly recommended to confine himself or herself to one subject. In many instances the subject taken may be counted as equivalent to a half course at Harvard. But the fees and the cost of living at Cambridge make the Harvard Summer School too great an expense for many. Our Summer School of Science for the Atlantic Provinces, which has met for two weeks during many summers in some of the most picturesque parts of the Maritime Provinces, does good work in the stimulus it gives to teachers in natural science and other subjects. The fortnight's recreation is pleasant, and what with the changes of place of meeting and the excursions, the teacher's knowledge of the resources of our native land is increased.

Many of our best teachers are anxious to study mathematics, the modern languages, etc., during a portion of the summer months. After the school term is ended and they have taken some needed rest, they find all the colleges in our provinces closed. Many of the professors are enjoying a five months' vacation. The scientific apparatus and the libraries are rarely visited except by the janitors who come to brush off the long-settled dust. To the teacher who spends the long winter in performing important, but tedious and often thankless tasks, the maritime colleges are absolutely closed. Yet among the thousands who are thus excluded are bright and receptive intellects, the training of which would add greatly to the reputation of the college in every part of the Maritime Provinces. Harvard greatly extends her influence by banding her summer students into the Harvard Teachers' Association. Any maritime college which opened its doors for four weeks to the teachers of the provinces would secure the adherence of those who influence the choice of our future college students.

It is of great importance, moreover, to the country that our teachers should be ever progressing in exactness of scholarship. The governments of the provinces would not fail to understand the importance of a movement which would tend to prevent the annual lapse of its employees into mental atrophy; but would spread higher ideals of scholarship and culture. Those who would use their means to promote the public good, could

hardly find a better investment than in enabling one or more of our colleges to open the doors for a month in the long vacation. Few business men could look with satisfaction on one of the enterprises which remained dormant for one-third of the entire year. A long period of stagnation will in the intellectual world, as in other spheres of life, lead to impaired power and indolence during the working period. Such a session of the college might do something to remedy a most deplorable state of affairs which exists at present. In the government examinations in Nova Scotia, an attempt is made once a year to find out in an hour's written examination for each subject what the student has learned from a scientific text-book and what has been done in the laboratory. As in the great majority of schools there are no laboratories, and in almost all the schools without exception no teachers who have received the necessary training for conducting laboratory exercises, the results cannot be other than deplorable. They have been described graphically and frequently by the eminent scientist who examines the papers and who has often vigorously denounced the system. One of its worst features is that it puts every temptation in the way of the student to claim laboratory work which has not been done, and in the present state of affairs in most of the schools could not be done. Such pretension on the part of the student is the same habit of mind which leads many a man or woman to procure goods under false pretences. A remedy should be sought in training the teachers to use intelligently such simple apparatus as the school sections can buy. This could be done well in a summer school held in one of our colleges.

It may be objected that the country is the proper place for the teacher in vacation; but most of the teachers have been in the country during the long term of ten months. They should have the change which the life of the town affords. Happily too, our country is not yet so thickly settled that any town or city is out of convenient reach of natural parks of great beauty. Study at the summer school could be varied by short excursions to the shore and the mountains, where are many things to delight the eye and the ear. We may reasonably hope that some one of our colleges in these provinces will rise soon to this great opportunity. It will deserve the gratitude and support of the public.

"That question is not in the book we are authorized to use at all, and I don't see why we should be marked if we don't know it."

So writes one of the candidates for a first class license in the recent examinations in New Brunswick, referring to a certain question in one of the examination papers. Does she expect to teach the book when she gets her license, or to teach the subject?