

We ask a careful reading of the article on Geography in Rural Schools, part of which appears in this number, the remainder to be published in the September REVIEW. The author is probably the highest authority on geography on this continent. He invests his subject with a fascination that will stimulate teachers and their boys and girls to study the subject from nature as well as from books. It is not only an essay on geography; it takes in the whole problem of nature-study, and may be made the foundation of an intelligent study of agriculture and of better rural conditions.

Vacations and School Hours.

The tendency to shorten school hours and the school term by making the vacation longer is undoubtedly responsible for some superficial school work. Our school courses are crowded, and there are important subjects, such as music and drawing, pressing for more attention. It may be necessary, as Superintendent Carter recently admitted, to lengthen the school day to allow sufficient time to teach these subjects. There is no good reason why city schools should have a day of five hours and the country schools one of six, nor is there any reason why the summer vacation in the country should be shorter than in the city, which has been the rule until very recently.

Teachers of advanced schools in towns and cities find the time all too short to overtake their work, and the worry incidental to the effort to do this is more wearing on the teacher than would be a less congested day of six hours. The school work in the country with its longer day is done more leisurely and with less strain; and, other conditions being equal, it is done more thoroughly. Parents in the city would welcome the longer day of six hours, since it should mean less home study; and so would conscientious teachers welcome it, who frequently spend more than six hours in the school room in their efforts to bring forward backward pupils.

In English schools there is a longer recess than in our own—a half hour twice a day, if we are not mistaken, and part of this recess is given up to

music and physical training without encroaching on the time for play.

With the longer six-hour day, the high school might be able to accomplish its work in three years, instead of taking four years, the practice in the most of the high schools in Canada and the United States; and the colleges instead of taking four years for their undergraduate work would do it equally well in three years, if the summer vacation were shortened.

Trained Teachers and Salaries.

The demand for trained teachers in the west has drawn a large number from these provinces. "The Lure of the West," as it is called, appeals to the adventurous spirits of the teaching profession, and the larger salaries there paid have an influence in drawing away our best teachers. One obvious way of keeping teachers here would be to increase their salaries.

Teachers who are trained in the normal college of Nova Scotia are required to teach three years in that province in return for the free instruction received, or pay a fee of ten dollars for each year short of that service. Thus a fee of thirty dollars will exempt a graduate from this three years' service. It is proposed to make it sixty dollars in the future if occasion arises. Graduates of the normal college going into other provinces without completing this period of service suspend their licenses by their own act and therefore will not be recognized by the education departments of the other provinces.

In New Brunswick there is at present no law to compel teachers trained at the normal school to teach for a term of years in the province, but it is understood that the board of education is contemplating such a step.

The Quebec government has recently passed a law demanding that those who enter Macdonald College, which is the normal school of that province, shall pledge themselves to teach for at least three years in Quebec.

It seems reasonable that where a province goes to the expense in part, of educating its teachers it should receive the benefit of such an outlay. On the other hand it is an injustice to compel teachers to accept lower salaries than they deserve or can obtain elsewhere.