

Rural School Compulsory Attendance.

Out of the 1796 school sections of Nova Scotia, all the cities and towns have compulsory attendance law in force, and about 1200 rural school sections. But the law for the rural schools has proved to be practically useless for several reasons. One reason is that it merely attempts to scare people by threatening them with a little fine next year if their children do not attend school at least 120 days this year. The law allows them to stay out; and when the day of punishment comes the trustees feel that the Act is penal and not preventive, and seldom have the heart to enforce it.

In the cities and towns Act, as soon as a pupil is noticed to be five days absent, he has to be looked after and kept in attendance. Not a single complaint has come from a city or town of the working of the Act, except in one case, where it is maintained that the children of persons in the British Army should not be exempt.

Proposed Rural School Compulsory Attendance Law.

Owing to the lateness of the introduction of the following Bill into the Legislature, and to give school trustees and the general public an opportunity to see if it would be an improvement on the present useless law, it has been left over for consideration next year. It is an effort to apply the effective law for the cities and towns to rural schools. Those approving the bill or objecting to any features of it should send their views to the Superintendent of Education who will have them brought to the attention of the next legislature.

No. 126.

BILL.

1916.

An Act to Amend Chapter 4, Acts of 1915, "An Act Respecting Compulsory Attendance at School in Cities and Towns."

BE it enacted by the Governor, Council, and Assembly, as follows:

1. Chapter 4 of the Acts of 1915, "The Cities and Towns' Compulsory Attendance Act," is amended by adding thereto the following Part:

Part II.

"37. This Part shall apply to every school section, not being a city or town, in which a resolution substantially in the form in the schedule to this Part is adopted by a vote of the majority of the qualified voters present at any annual school meeting for such section."

"38. After the adoption of such resolution as aforesaid, all the provisions of Part I, hereof (except as herein otherwise provided) shall *mutatis mutandis* on the first day of August following such adoption come into force in such section."