

will. In many districts, especially in the country, an extra month has been taken, and often the teacher was the loser, not only by the government money for the time, but for the district pay as well. In the cities the children have not returned to school promptly and very little real school work has been done until the beginning of September. It is now hoped that a vacation of eight weeks in cities and six weeks in the country will meet the reasonable requirements of both, and that the average school attendance for the Province will show an increase in consequence of the change.

One of the disadvantages of the extension is that it increases the disparity in the number of teaching days in the school terms. This inequality is now taken into account in many country districts—more salary being given for the first term than for the second. It is a question whether it would not be better for the government to allot the Provincial grants in accordance with the number of days actually taught in either term on the basis of the number of teaching days in the year rather than the term as at present. Where the agreements are for the year, this, of course, would not matter, but in the great majority of districts agreements are for the term, and in these cases the present division is a very unequal one.

No good reason has ever been advanced for the longer vacations in the cities as compared with the country. Precedent is in favor of the longer vacation for the town, and it seems to hold good everywhere.

THE TEACHING OF PHYSIOLOGY AND TEMPERANCE.

The Act just passed by the N. S. Legislature, providing for the more thorough study in the public schools of the nature and constitution of the human body, the laws of health and the effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, reads as follows:

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

1. Appropriate instruction shall be given regularly in the public schools as to the nature of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, including tobacco, and special instruction as to their effects upon the human system, in connection with the several divisions of the subjects of relative physiology and hygiene. Such instruction regarding physiological and hygienic laws and the effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics shall be given orally from a suitable text-book in the hands of the teacher to pupils unable to read, and such instruction shall be given to all others with text-books in the hands of the pupils, and from text-books as well graded to the capacities of the pupils as other text-books are, and such instruction shall be given as aforesaid to the pupils in all public schools in the province.

2. The text-books to be used for instruction required to be given by the preceding section of this Act, shall be prescribed by the Council of Public Instruction, who shall notify the secretaries of the respective Boards of Trustees and of the School Boards of the several incorporated towns and cities within the province of the choice of the text-books so selected by them as aforesaid, and said text-books used in the primary or intermediate grades shall give at least one-fourth of their space to the consideration of the nature and effects of alcoholic drinks and narcotics, and the text-books used in the higher grades shall contain at least twenty pages of matter relating to this subject.

3. It shall be the duty of school officers and school inspectors to report to the Council of Public Instruction any failure on the part of the trustees or the teachers of the sections under their control to carry out the provisions of this Act. Upon its being shown to the Council of Public Instruction, either by such school inspectors or school officers, or ratepayer, that any teacher or trustees have failed to carry out the provisions of this Act, any such failure shall be deemed sufficient cause for withholding wholly or in part from any such teacher or trustees provincial and county grants.

Regarding a similar enactment elsewhere, Mrs. Hunt writes:

No candid reader of this statute can deny that it clearly demands:

1st. That these truths shall be taught, not an exhortation or homily about these truths, but the truths themselves.

2nd. That certain truths shall be taught "as a regular branch of study, *i. e.*, in the same manner and with the same thoroughness that other branches are taught."

This class of truths is clearly set forth in the language describing this study, *i. e.*, "physiology" as here used, meaning the structure and functions of the human organism, and "hygiene," or the laws of the health of that organism, especially with regard to the use of alcoholic drinks and other narcotics. Although the language of this statute seems very explicit, in view of the fact that the science it requires taught is comparatively new as a school branch, it may not be strange that sometimes teachers and others entrusted with its enforcement have misapprehended its demands.

A similar misconception or objection has arisen. The objectors, as I understand them, say:

1st. "Temperance is a moral, not a scientific question; if taught at all it should be from a moral standpoint only." "The strengthening of the moral nature is the best preventive of intemperance." "You should strengthen the will to prevent the pupil from drinking," they say.

2nd. "If you teach the pupils the evil nature and effects of anything, the law of perversity in his nature will make him want to try that thing for himself," etc.

In answer to the first objection, that "temperance is a moral, not a scientific question," etc., let us enquire:

1st. Is it not true that a moral question is one that considers what is right or wrong in action on the part of beings capable of choice?

2nd. Are there not certain facts which are the reasons for an action or course of action being right or wrong?

3rd. If these facts, the reasons for the right or wrong, are duly arranged in the case of each obligation, do they not form the science of that special obligation? Webster says that "science is knowledge duly arranged."