irritable. Pupils in the first two grades should not be kept at work longer than three hours at a time—two and a half hours is better. In most towns an hour and a half is allowed for noon. Out of this must be deducted twenty minutes, because they are required to be present that long before school time. This means in most cases a hurried walk to dinner and an equally hurried one back to school immediately after dinner. According to the laws of health this is decidedly wrong. What is true of the teachers is equally true of many of the pupils. It is possible that in conformance with our present school hours, we are laying the foundation for a race of dyspeptics. A few towns recognizing the disabilities which teachers and pupils labor under from the length of the noon recess, give two hours noon and dismiss a half hour later. This plan is worthy of consideration. It might also be considered whether ten instead of twenty minutes, would not be sufficient for the teacher to be present before school time.

THE COMPULSORY SCHOOL LAW DEFECTIVE.

"Pupils should only be allowed to leave school at the age of fourteen when they have *bona fide* and respectable employment to go to. There are numbers of boys and girls who leave school when they reach their fourteenth birthday, and who then begin a systematic course of idleness—the boys about the street corners and girls about home—till they are sixteen, seventeen, or eighteen. It is all over with the majority by this time as regards usefulness, for they have learnt to do nothing, and the boys simply develop into larrakins, and the girls into—well, household drones or parasites—too lazy to work at home, and too proud and conceited to take respectable domestic service abroad."

Our compulsory school laws may be doing some good, but they are seriously defective in not compelling the attendance at school of unemployed children after the age of fourteen. Those of that age who dislike school, and consequently stand most in need of the training it has to give are the most likely to leave even one, two, or three years before they can find any employment, especially if they live in towns or cities. In country sections this evil is not so serious, for the farm affords employment, or if not, love of society keeps the pupil in school. The city boy not only knows that he may leave at fourteen, no matter if he can barely read, but he has almost come to think that the law expects him to leave. At all events the fact is that experience shows that since such compulsory laws came into force, the most backward of the older pupils do not stay in school as long as they did formerly. This is greatly to be deplored. While the primary departments are crowded, the intermediate departments are poorly attended, though teachers and accommodation are provided. A clause compelling the attendance of unemployed children for two years longer would fill many seats now vacant without increasing the cost of the schools. But what is more important, it would save many boys in Halifax, St. John, and all the large towns, from contracting idle and vicious habits, and give them that minimum of education, without which, no person should be entitled to the privileges of citizenship. We call the attention of our school boards to this important subject.

THE SCHOOL AND THE FUNDAMENTAL INDUSTRY—FARMING.

In this country—in almost every country—farming is the fundamental industry. This fact should be kept constantly in view by those who either in higher or lower places direct the educational policy of our country. The framing of courses of study is too much influenced by mere scholars—men whose knowledge and sympathies hold no vital relation to the main currents of our national life. In politics we are not represented by a sufficient number of farmers and mechanics. The vast majority of our teachers is composed of women whose knowledge of farming is almost *nil*, though their sympathies may be all right. Our male teachers mainly aspire to be professional men—none of them aspire to be farmers.

Altogether then, the trend of educational work and thought are away from the farm, and this to such an extent that the young people try to get away also. The conditions of successful farm life, the training necessary to make good farmers and the aspiration of farmers, have all changed very much within a few years, but our system of education in their relations to the former have not changed to meet the changed circumstances.

We do not claim that we should specially educate to make farmers, but we should so educate that our people will be enabled readily to adapt themselves to changes of environment. We certainly should not educate away from the farm. The education that will in the long run pay the country best, must take into account the necessity for a fair insight into the laws governing the material world around us, and vegetable and animal life, as well as, or rather in preference to, the laws of the Latin subjunctive mood or the feudal system.

"The boy on the farm—and the girl quite as much—needs to know the things under his feet and over his head, the soil, the life in and on the soil, and his relation to them. He should learn to see well, and to use all his senses. Every child should become an investigator," and his training should be such that intelligence, scientific interest, reasonable profit and