



Life, Literature and Education.

Macdonald Consolidated School Kingston, N. B.

On a beautiful plateau, almost midway between the Kennebecasis and St. John rivers, stands the Kingston Consolidated School. For nearly three-quarters of a century the locality was known as the shire-town of the county, and here were situated the court-house and jail, and all the offices appertaining to the administration of justice; but when Hampton was made the shire-town, the glory of Kingston departed, and now a more quiet rural neighborhood could not be found within the boundaries of our Province. But though, until recently, shorn of its local importance, the historical associations that cluster around Kingston will ever render the place an object of veneration to every lover of our Provincial history.

Around the locality linger the names and memories of many of the Loyalist founders of our Province. The old parish church still stands, which they built in 1789, and in which they worshipped during the early, weary and toilsome years of settlement; and in the graveyard in the shadow of the old church they sleep in British soil.

Professor Jas. W. Robertson chose Kingston for the New Brunswick Consolidated School because it represented a typical rural center, considered from the standpoint of paucity of population, inefficiency of the district schools, and need of educational and agricultural awakening. From the standpoint of wealth, accessibility and general character of the farms and roads, it is not typical of N. B. rural centers. There are few men of wealth in the districts, the farms are, in general, rough and rocky, although the soil is good, and the roads are hilly. Considered from all standpoints, perhaps there could not be found a center in New Brunswick which would offer more natural obstacles to the success of a consolidated school than Kingston.

Professor Robertson visited Kingston in the summer of 1902, and addressed an enthusiastic meeting of ratepayers. A few days later he promised the school to Kingston if a sufficient number of adjoining districts could be induced to join the consolidation. Seven districts, within a radius of five miles from Kingston as a center, voted to consolidate, and preparations were soon begun for the erection of a building. On the old public square at Kingston, on the very site of the old court-house in which the notorious Henry More Smith was once confined, the building was erected. The contract price was \$14,700. The building is two and one-half stories high. The general appearance is fine. The roof is steep pitched, terminating with ventilating turrets; the walls are covered with clapboards and fancy cut shingles, painted with pleasing colors. There are many large windows. Surrounding the building are beautiful grounds, laid off in lawns, gravel walks, gar-

dens and playgrounds. Trees, shrubs, hedges and flowers are seen here and there about the grounds, arranged in such a way as to give natural artistic views. Entering the building, one treads on hardwood floors. The woodwork is finished in cherry stain and varnished. In the halls are cloak-rooms made of heavy wire, six and a half feet high, permitting drying and ventilation of the children's clothing. On the ground, or first floor, besides cloak and store rooms, there are two school-rooms for primary grades, and a "manual training" room. These rooms are all lighted from the rear and the left. The size of each is 33x26. On the second floor are two schoolrooms for intermediate and advanced grades, a "Household Science" room, a laboratory, and library or reading-room. On the third floor is a spacious Assembly Hall. The basement is airy and well lighted, and contains large play-rooms for wet and cold weather, a storeroom and furnaces. All the rooms of the building are spacious, warm, well lighted, with good ventilation, clean and attractive. The school is furnished with all necessary and no unnecessary equipment. The apparatus in the laboratory is of the simplest nature.

One acre of the school-ground is given to garden and orchard purposes. There is a small orchard containing twenty apple and sixteen plum trees. These are set in four rows, the apple trees being thirty feet apart each way, and plum trees used as "fillers." The garden contains ten large illustration plots, each 10 feet 5 inches by 20 feet 10 inches, or 1-200 of an acre. The first eight will illustrate a three-year rotation. This year they are planted as follows:

No. 1, crimson clover; No. 2, timothy; No. 3, potatoes, sprayed; No. 4, potatoes, not sprayed; No. 5, wheat, selected, with clover; No. 7, oats with clover; No. 8, oats without clover; No. 9, cow peas; No. 10—nursery—seeds of shrubs and trees planted.

There are ten plots, each 10 feet by 5 feet, in which are planted the different clovers and principal grasses. There are a dozen or more il-

lustration plots started with different field crops. Each pupil in Grades VIII. and IX. has a plot ten feet by 8 feet, in which are planted beans, corn, potatoes, carrots—one row of each. In grades VI. and VII. each plot is 10 feet by 6 feet, with three rows, viz., peas, turnips, and onions. In Grades III., IV. and V. two pupils have a plot 10 feet by 4 feet, with three rows, viz., beets, cabbages or tomatoes, and lettuce. In the Primary Grades I. and II., three or four pupils work a plot 10 feet by

rows of flowers, and plots containing pumpkins, cucumbers, etc. Each pupil keeps an account, showing value of seeds planted, value of labor at so much an hour, and receipts. On the grounds and lawns about the building there are several flower-beds containing perennials and annuals. This year about two hundred native trees and shrubs were planted. The children brought the trees and helped to set them. All the trees are growing and look well.

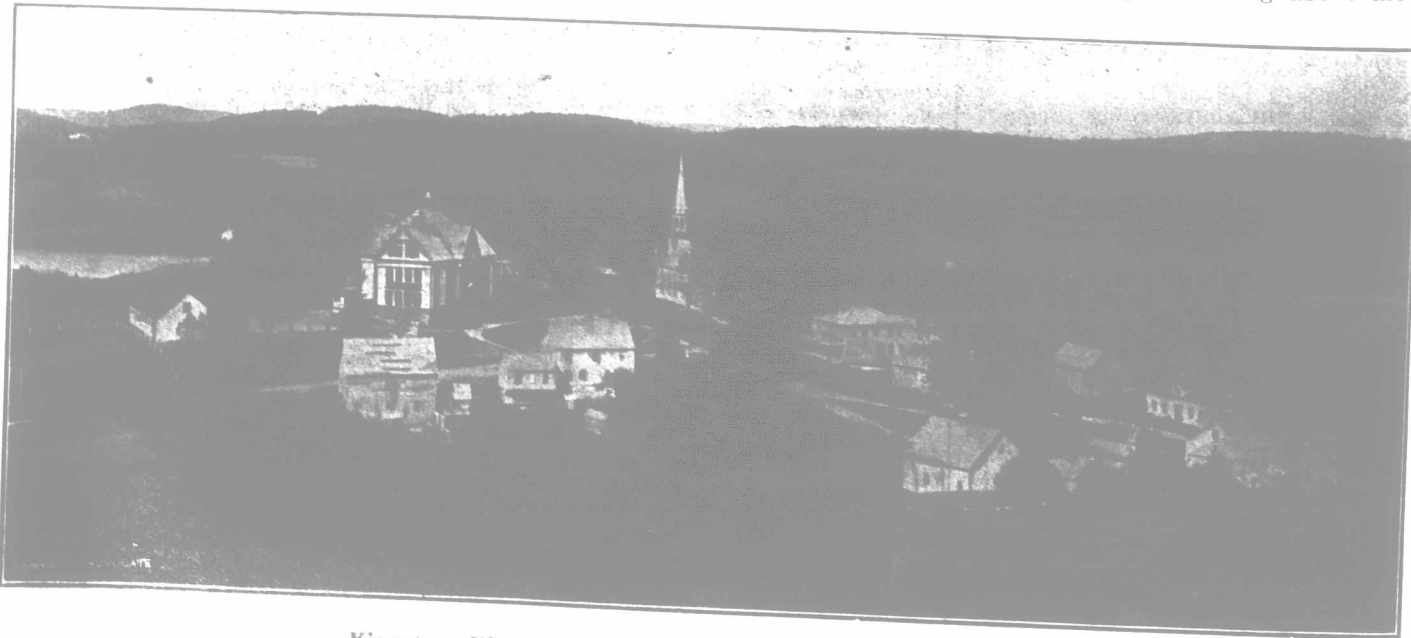
On Monday, August 29th, 1904, the school opened with a large attendance, which gradually increased, until, at the close of the first term, the enrolment was 166, of whom about twenty were from different parts of the Province outside the consolidated districts. The enrolment of pupils in the seven districts previous to consolidation was 125; after consolidation, first term, it was 166, an increase of 41 pupils, or 33 per cent. For the second term the enrolment is 175. The total average daily attendance in the seven small schools was about 55, or 44 per cent. of the enrolment; in the consolidated school for the first term it was 140, or 84 per cent. of enrolment. The actual daily attendance has been trebled, and the percentage of enrolment doubled. For the first two months of the term the daily attendance was nearly 95 per cent. of enrolment. The percentage for the whole term was lower, because a great many of the older boys and girls did not enroll until near the end of the term. For the term about to close the attendance has been excellent. Among those enrolled are twelve over twenty years of age. Many who had been absent from home and school for several years returned in order to take advantage of the school privileges offered. The interest of the pupils in their work, particularly in nature-study and school-garden work, in manual training and in household science, has been excellent. The problem of interest and discipline has been solved. In a school of 175 pupils, during a whole school-year, the Principal has not used a stick once, has not seen one fight, and has not seen any evidence of intentional marking or carving about the



D. W. Hamilton, M. A.

Principal Macdonald Consolidated Public School, Kingston, N. B.

3 feet, and they have in each plot three rows, one of radishes, one of onions, and one row of easily-grown flowers. All the work on the plots is done by the pupils after the ground has been plowed and harrowed and the large stones removed. All the plots have corner stakes, each two inches square; these are painted white. The paths between plots vary from two to four feet in width, according to position. Surrounding all the individual plots are



Kingston, King's Co., N. B., Seat of a Consolidated School.