

The Superintendent of Education was authorized to intimate that the following scheme was being considered. Subject to certain minor conditions, \$200 or \$250 might be granted to aid in building the consolidated school building, for each normal-sized rural section brought into the central one—the total in no case to exceed \$1,000. That means that a consolidation of two sections should receive \$200; of three, \$400; of four, \$600; of five, \$800; or of six, \$1000;—should the smaller sum of \$200 be taken as the unit. Such a plan might stimulate several larger or smaller groups in each county. It is generally maintained that a larger sum would be merely a big plum for some community, while it might depress rather than encourage general consolidation without any aid.

Groups first specifying an agreement to consolidate will be the first to be considered, as a matter of course.

CONSOLIDATION WITHOUT CONVEYANCE.

Since the last school year both Inspectors and School Commissioners have already made a good commencement in several parts of the province in consolidating small sections so as to bring them up to the normal size in which conveyance is unnecessary—four miles in diameter. This year it is hoped the good movement may be still further accelerated in every quarter of the province.

SCHOOL GARDENS.

No photographs of school gardens have yet been received for reproduction in these columns. Fair attempts have been made in many places, however. We have received a very interesting sketch of the rise, progress, and incidents in school gardening on an island in the Atlantic, off the coast of Lunenburg—Corkum's Island. Were the JOURNAL not already far in excess of its normal size, it might be profitable to quote a portion for the benefit of more favored school sections.

By next year, however, we shall have samples of the Sir William Macdonald School Gardens—*one* at the Macdonald Consolidated School at Middleton under the charge of Principal McGill; and *five* in the Macdonald nature-study group in the neighborhood of Truro under the direction of Percy J. Shaw, B. A. A pretty school garden is in existence in Truro, on the Normal School grounds. Now is the time for our indigenous gardens to come to the front; for within another year the exotic Macdonald gardens will be in bloom. The best photograph sent in will be reproduced in the April JOURNAL.

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF NOVA SCOTIA.

From Regulation 51 (c) it can be seen that every good school is expected to have a collection, representing as far as possible the Natural History of the school section—the Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, Zoology, Archaeology (if it has any relics), History, etc., of the community. The formation of such collections will be even more educative than their simple possession afterwards. Children should develop into thoughtful men and women; and the school room is the place in which it is expected mental awakening should originate. The routine of mechanical drill has its place and its special value; but if there is nothing more, the school room will become a place to put *mind* asleep even should it develop good and methodical habits.

It is hoped, therefore, that teachers in addition to their daily object lessons will stimulate the pupils to make permanent collections of all kinds. Such collections will be of very great interest to visiting naturalists, from whom both teachers and pupils may incidentally receive much important instruction as well as the