

study as they expected the children to do it at the school afterwards. A plant house is not so costly for construction and maintenance that this would be a very difficult accomodation to have for the winter and spring months.

RECOMMENDING AND SUPPOSING.

I recommend these four matters to your most sympathetic consideration : (1) the possibility of giving an illustration of the best method of carrying on educational work in rural schools in groups of five or ten schools ; (2) the carrying on of evening continuation classes for boys and girls of from fourteen or fifteen to eighteen years of age ; (3) the consolidation of rural schools in one or two districts; and (4) the establishment of training schools for teachers, at one or more places. These would all be in a measure experimental. I think they would serve for education a purpose somewhat similar to that which illustration stations, dairy stations and experimental farms have served for agriculture in Canada.

Now, *supposing* a committee of this Association should be appointed to take these matters into consideration, do you not think that such a committee could bring something to pass and have an amount of exceedingly valuable information to present to the convention of this Association to be held two years hence. *Supposing*, but you may say, what is the use of *supposing* when the want of funds and the want of time put the matter beyond the ability of the Association or its members? Mr. President, I have a great regard for the habit of *supposing*. Let me give you an illustration. One night with my feet on the fender, I sat musing and *supposing* what would happen if a thousand boys on Canadian farms could be led to take up the systematic study of the selection of seed grain, if they would each grow a special plot on their father's farm and discover for themselves what improvement would result by systematic and continued selection for several years. *Supposing* that were possible, what a great gain to the agriculture of the Dominion and to the intellectual life of the people on farms would result. *Supposing* ten thousand dollars should become available in the shape of prizes to encourage these boys to take up this work ; *supposing* that could be done, what then ? Well, the illustration of *supposing* I have given you, led to the sum of ten thousand dollars being put in the Bank of Montreal by Sir William C. Macdonald to do the very thing which I began *supposing* might be done, and which if done would be of great benefit to the people of Canada.