

## School Amalgamation Discussed By Minister

"With certain limitations, I do approve of the larger school units if the people are willing and can afford to pay the cost of these educational improvements," stated Hon. Keir Clark, Minister of Education, while on the Budget Debate in the Legislature on Wednesday night.

"During the draft address, I briefly mentioned that in my opinion we were rebuilding in this Province too many one room schools on the basis of the old school district. In stating that many districts, well served with paved or improved roads, should consider combining two or more schools, I was careful to point out, that I was not advocating this as a general formula applicable everywhere but as a plan that might be considered under certain conditions.

"Since that time we have had in our department a number of inquiries about combining three, four or more districts. I believe, therefore, I should now make a further statement concerning amalgamation of school districts.

"My professional advisors in the department strongly advocate the larger school unit consisting of fifteen or more school districts, which type of school organization is becoming general all across Canada.

"There are two fairly small units operating in this Province. I wish to refer to both of these. The first, which is known as School Unit No. 1, is located just outside the city of Charlottetown and consists of the former districts of Parkdale, Spring Park, Central Royalty, East Royalty, Union Road, West Royalty, South Winsloe and part of South Milton.

"This unit is already having some financial difficulties largely due to two things—first, that a rapidly expanding school population made necessary a very extensive building program, and secondly, a somewhat ineffective method of tax collecting which I trust may soon be overcome.

"In addition to these special problems facing the School Board the unit itself was really too small and it was made up of a mixture of urban and rural communities with vastly different problems. I mention this to show that this area cannot be looked upon as a typical larger unit of administration.

"Neither can the second amalgamated area which was formed at the beginning of the present school year at Fort Augustus. This case, too, was peculiar and I do not think that it should be taken as an example of a plan that would have general application.

"The Fort Augustus area comprises only five former districts—

Fort Augustus, Tarantum, Webster's Corner, Glenfinnan and Auburn. Of the five districts, Tarantum and Glenfinnan were not operating schools and have not operated schools for several years.

"Some of the pupils in these two districts attended adjoining schools, while the remainder were enrolled with our Correspondence Study Branch. In this case then, a better educational service may be effected through amalgamation and at the same time economies may be effected.

"Because of these apparent advantages the amalgamation was approved but I must point out that approval of further applications for the uniting of school districts will be considered strictly on merit and regardless of a majority vote. We must be convinced of the necessity for and the advantages of any proposed union as well as to be convinced that minority interests are fully protected.

"There is one further difficulty which may be common to all large units and that is the weaker school areas might properly demand the same high quality service as the stronger areas, such as demands for first class teachers and high supplements and although this would improve matters from the educational standpoint, it also might prove too costly on the tax payers. With certain limitations, therefore, I do approve of the larger school units if the people are willing and can afford to pay the cost of these educational improvements."

## Policy on Text Books Outlined By Minister

The reasons for changes in the text books used in the schools were outlined in the Legislature Wednesday night by Hon. Keir Clark, Minister of Education, while he was speaking on the Budget Debate.

"Unfortunately progress is frequently costly," he stated. "I have examined many of the school books in use today and I can see a vast improvement in many of these books compared with the ones in use some years ago. Changes have been necessitated from the standpoint of improvements in materials and methods.

"But apart from these general reasons, changes in text books are frequently forced upon us. The few books used in this Province are not sufficient to make it economical for us to have our own books printed and consequently

## Picture-of-The-Month



Winning picture in the Charlottetown Camera Club competition for March, "Occupations" was the above portrait of a "Bacteriologist" taken by R. D. Donnelly. This study shows Dr. F. W. Jelks, assistant director of the Provincial Health Center laboratory whose fascinating occupation is that of a bacteriologist. Next month's competition will be on night photography.

we must go along with some other Province or Provinces and use the books which are in use elsewhere so we may take advantage of the reduced costs of mass production printing.

"The size of our Province therefore and the number of books which we require makes it necessary for us to follow the lead of other larger Provinces. In many cases we are the last Province to continue using a text that has been abandoned by other provinces."

He stated that when the Department authorizes a change in a text book it makes it possible for the change to be gradual.

"The only new books authorized in Grades I to X this year were a Geography and a French reader for Grades IX and X. The facts in the Geography were out-of-date and the French reader was introduced in Grades IX and X because it was recommended for completion in the new course for Grade XI.

The Minister stated that the Government had cushioned the shock of these changes by a policy of text book subvention. This

policy was started in the fiscal year 1946-47 by a vote of \$1,200 and had grown as high as \$30,000 for the 1953-54 fiscal year.

He estimated that the average sales per year at the School Supply Branch amount to \$70,000 with the Government subsidizing \$30,000 or 3-7 per cent of the total.

The Minister listed a number of examples to show how the subvention policy works. The list price of a Grade X history text is \$2.50 and the book retails here for \$1.50. Using a geography book as another example he stated that such a book for the senior grades is listed at \$2.95 but it sells here for \$1.75 which indicates a saving of \$1.20 per book.

Mr. Clark noted that some provinces provide free text books in certain elementary grades while other provide text books to the senior grades on a rental basis. He also pointed out that Nova Scotia and New Brunswick provide free text books in Grade I to VIII inclusive but not for the higher grades.

"I have some doubt that it is wise to proceed too far in the direction of free text books," he stated. "Many parents would prefer to provide their children with clean new books rather than have books loaned out to the children through the schools.

"There is considered to be great waste under a free book or loan system which most people can readily appreciate. Therefore, I believe the system followed by this Province is the best way of handling the situation and if properly understood, I believe meet with general approval."

## Burgess Bedtime

Continued from page 10

time she looked at him. Somehow, she had a feeling that he really didn't belong to her. Never before had she seen or heard of a white porcupine. He was what is called an albino. No one else in that part of the Green Forest had ever seen a white porcupine. So every one who heard of him had to come and see him, and that meant more visitors in the neighborhood than Mother Porcupine liked. She isn't socially inclined. Porcupines seldom are.

Mother Porcupine kept out of sight up in her tree, and listened to her young son's whining and fretting, and did nothing to comfort him. Young as he was, she felt that he could take care of himself now. She would stay a while in the neighborhood, but she wouldn't let him know it.

So it was that Prickles the white porcupine was really out for himself in the Great World. Do you think Mother Porcupine was hard-hearted? She wasn't. There was nothing more that she could teach young Prickles. And when there is nothing more that father and mother can teach their children Green Forest parents know that it is time for the children to start out for themselves.

## Continued Ban On Lotteries Is Urged

OTTAWA (CP) — The government has introduced legislation in the Commons to consolidate all atomic energy activities into one organization.

Similar steps already have been taken by the atomic energy commission of the United States and the corporation responsible for atomic developments in the Un-

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## The Tiny Folk

Continued from page 10

ing a lot of work for me, Linda," complained Laurie as he tugged at the blanket to put it back in place. Linda laughed and started to bounce up and down. She wasn't used to standing up, and then, plump! down she fell. Down came the box on top of her and Laurie, what a noise of laughing, squealing and talking came from under that box! Then it was pushed up a bit, and out crawled Laurie. Then out came baby Linda.

"You are a queer one to play house," laughed Laurie. "You pull your house down on top of you. Wouldn't it be funny if I did that to Daddy's house?"

Linda pushed the chairs apart and crawled out. Mother picked her up, smiling as she said, "I guess Linda feels safer out of that tippy house. But it is time for her nap now, so away she goes."

"Good bye, Linda," waved Laurie. "You can play house with me another day. Only next time don't tear the house down."

## ited Kingdom.

Under the legislation which received first reading Wednesday, all atomic operations would come under the atomic energy control board. The board would be responsible to the chairman of the committee of the Privy Council on scientific and industrial research. This official now is Trade Minister Howe.

At present Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd., which operates the Chalk River, Ont., atomic energy plant, is responsible to the board. However, Eldorado Mining and Refining Ltd., responsible for the raw material end of atomic research, reports to the minister of defence production.

The legislation will mean consolidation of the two companies into a holding company.

## RAIN AT LAST

LAMAR, Colo., (AP) — Welcome rain, light but steady, fell in southeastern Colorado Tuesday to break the grip of a searing weeks-long drought. The rain soaked into soil whipped earlier by one dust storm after another. Cost of the drought in the Colorado plains area, in terms of crops, has been estimated at more than \$16,000,000.

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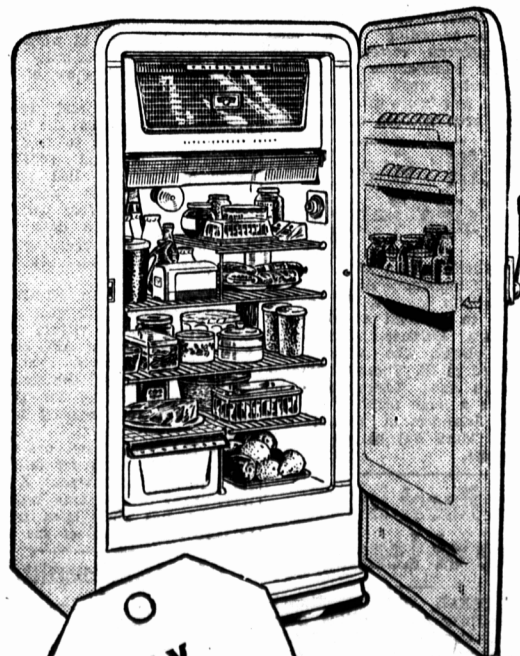
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