

Inspectors in regard to all details of their work, in which his counsel or co-operation could be of service.

He would receive from the District Inspectors their Reports, showing the places assigned to the various schools in the educational scale, together with the written papers on which these Reports were founded. He would examine, at his discretion, and as extensively as circumstances allowed, the written papers so received, and compare his own estimate of them with that of the District Inspectors; and in the event of any material difference between himself and a District Inspector, he would correspond with the District Inspector on the subject. In this way, a powerful and honorable stimulus would be furnished to the District Inspectors to a careful discharge of their duties, and perfect and universal confidence would be produced in the correctness of their classifications.

Such, in barest outline, is the plan that I would suggest for the Inspection of the Grammar Schools. It will be time enough to deal with minute details when there is a prospect of the proposal being favourably regarded by the Legislature, and of the necessary funds being obtained. The scheme may very probably be judged to be of too large a character for the Province of Ontario, in present circumstances; but our choice lies, I believe, between some such scheme on the one hand, and incurable disorder and chronic difficulties in the Grammar Schools on the other. On general grounds, a plan of the nature of that which I have proposed, would be desirable, altogether apart from special sources of trouble; for, as you do not need to be informed, no educational principle is either more evident in itself, or more thoroughly established by experience, than this,—that the efficiency of a system of schools cannot permanently be maintained—whatever other conditions of success be present—without regular and searching inspection; inspection, whose results are made public, and which is attended with financial consequences.

G.—*Union Schools.*

If the method of Inspection at present in force is to remain unchanged, and the apportionment of the Grammar School Fund is to continue to be made on the basis of attendance simply, it seems plain that an alteration in the law which authorizes the formation of Union Boards must be contemplated.

Where the Fund is apportioned on the basis of attendance simply, the temptation to manage the Union School machinery, so as unduly to swell the nominal attendance in the Grammar Schools, is so great that no class of men should be left exposed to it. The interests, therefore, of genuine Grammar School Education, and the interests—still more important—of advanced Common School education, agree in demanding that the law which provides that Common Schools may be united to Grammar Schools should undergo revision. In too many instances, a Common and a Grammar School, united to one another, are like Siamese twins, whose connection is inconsistent with the play of free, healthy, natural life in either. Of course, I do not mean that any change in the law regarding Union Schools should be made hastily, or without regard to existing arrangements. I would not separate the twins with a butcher's cleaver. Union Schools have established themselves so extensively throughout the Province, that a rude interference with them would convulse the whole Grammar School system. But, through wise legislation, the formation of Union Schools in future might be prevented, and influences might, perhaps, be brought into play which, in a gradual and easy manner, would lead to a dissolution of Unions at present existing.

With more complete arrangements for the inspection of the Grammar Schools—arrangements that would reach results, with sufficient accuracy to enable results to be used, in connection with attendance, as the basis of the apportionment of the Grammar School Fund, and that would render mere numerical strength, without attainments, of little account—the temptation to draft unsuitable pupils from the Common School into the Grammar School would be very much taken away. And thus also, the other great evil which has been shown to grow so frequently out of the Union of the Common to the Grammar School, namely, the degradation of the Common School would be lessened; for, in proportion as the Grammar Schools restrained themselves from plundering the Common Schools, the instruction given in the Common Schools would become of a higher type.