

stationary character of the Grammar Schools, and the unsatisfactory working of Union Schools—operating to the disadvantage of both the Grammar and Common Schools. I have been urged by trustees and supporters of Grammar Schools throughout all Upper Canada to devise some remedy for these defects and evils of the Grammar School system. In 1860 I made an official tour of Upper Canada and held a school convention in each county, with a special view to the improvement of the Grammar Schools. In each of these county conventions, I stated the case of the Grammar Schools, the nature and defects of the law, and the remedies which had been proposed. I requested suggestions, and the expression of the opinions of the parties present. These conventions comprised, of course, but a small portion of the inhabitants of each county; but the clergy, magistrates, local superintendents, and trustees of schools, and all persons interested in the progress of education, were invited by circular to attend them; the places where they were held, usually the County Court House, were generally crowded, and representative persons from most of the townships of the county were present, so that each convention might be fairly regarded as expressing what would be the opinion of the great majority of the county when acquainted with the subject.

I append a copy of the resolutions adopted at these county conventions—resolutions, not one of which was submitted or prepared by myself, but which were prepared and submitted at the conventions as the result of the consultations held. (See Appendix A.) The rural portions of these conventions were most earnest, and all but unanimous in favour of assimilating the Grammar to the Common School system, in regard to the condition and distribution of the Legislative Grant. Many municipal councillors attended these conventions, and only two (as far as I could learn) dissented from that view. In two instances the county councils were in session, and adjourned to attend the convention, at which the wardens presided; and in each case the councillors, including the wardens, were unanimous in favour of the proposed arrangement in regard to county assessment for Grammar Schools, and making them free to the youth of counties.

The object of the Grammar School Bill now before Parliament is to give effect to what was so generally approved at the county conventions referred to, and which appears to me, after years of consideration and consultation, to be the easiest, the most equitable, the most national, and the most effective means of improving the Grammar Schools. For convenience of reference, I append a copy of this Bill, the leading objects of which are to provide for the apportionment of the Legislative Grammar School Fund to counties upon the same terms and conditions as that of the Common Schools, and to provide for the accommodation and further support of Grammar Schools by the city, town, and village corporations within the limits of which they are situated. (See Appendix B.)

The second section of the Bill may be amended by substituting for the words "shall annually levy" "*shall have authority annually to levy,*" &c.; and adding, after the words "Common Schools," the words "*provided also that the corporation of each county shall have authority to exempt from said rate such portions of the county as it may judge expedient.*"

The assessment required to fulfil the conditions of the Bill, has been stated by financial men in several counties to amount to less than a cent on every thousand dollars of assessed pro-

erty; yet by the aid of this small assessment, the Grammar School Fund will be doubled; the average apportionment to each Grammar School will be \$850, and of course more to the larger Grammar Schools; and the Grammar Schools will be free to all the county youth of Upper Canada. Trustees will be able to secure teachers of the best qualifications and abilities, and the Schools will also be elevated in character and usefulness by raising the standard of admission and teaching the elements of chemistry and natural philosophy, as provided by the *fifteenth* section of the Act.

If it be objected that persons will be assessed for the Grammar Schools who do not send pupils to them, it may be replied that many persons are assessed, and sometimes largely, for the Common Schools, who do not send pupils to them. If exemption is admitted in the one case, it must, upon the same ground, be admitted in the other; and the supporters of Common Schools would thus lose twenty times as much as the trifling assessment to which they may be liable for the Grammar Schools; for the proposed Grammar School assessment is scarcely a twentieth of the Common School assessment. If the condition of assessment is good for the Common Schools—and the results of it are marvellous—it must be equally good for the Grammar Schools. The one class of Schools is equally national, though not so numerous, as the other; and the property of the nation should be liable for what is of national interest, and for what adds to its security and value by educating and elevating the community for all the wants, institutions, and civilization of a State.

The *fourth* section of the Bill makes it incumbent on the city, town, or incorporated village in which the Grammar School is situated, to provide accommodations and any further support which may be required. It is admitted as a general rule that such locality receives nine-tenths of the direct benefits of the Grammar School in regard to the attendance of pupils, the situation and expenditure of the school, and its influence on the importance of the place and the value of property. In many cases accommodations are already provided for the Grammar School. The Bill might further provide that the Grammar School accommodations should be regarded as the property of the municipality providing them, and that if any town or village did not wish to contribute its proportion to support the Grammar School, it might signify the same to the county council, which would then abolish or remove the site of the school to another locality.

The trustees are proposed to be equally appointed by the county, city, town, and incorporated village councils; and, as it requires the votes of a positive majority of the trustees present at any lawful meeting in order to any corporate act, the chairman having no second vote, no measure can be imposed upon either the county, city, town, or incorporated village, without the consent of one or more of its representatives or nominees. No difficulty has arisen from Boards thus constituted; but, on the contrary, friendly emulation and courtesy.

As to the few Grammar Schools situated in villages not incorporated, the Bill leaves them to the operation of the existing Grammar School Law, with the advantage of an additional apportionment for their support. It was felt by all parties consulted, that the conditions which the Bill requires of cities and towns could not be expected to be fulfilled by a township or school section. By the existing Grammar School Act any township council can contribute what it pleases in support of