

# UNIVERSITY CONSOLIDATION.

WHEN the good citizens of Kingston became aware of the nature of the proposed scheme of confederation, an influential committee was at once appointed to take steps to find out the mind of the citizens on the subject, etc., as well as that of the graduates and benefactors at large. A circular was drawn up, and sent to the graduates of the Province and to the most prominent friends of the college asking them to attend a public meeting for the discussion of the question, or, if unable to be present at the meeting, to send in their opinion on the proposed measure, and its effect on Queens. A more spontaneous, decisive, and unanimous opinion was perhaps never given on any public question.

The public meeting was called for February 9th, in the City Hall, Kingston, and although the night was very stormy, the large hall was packed as might have been the case at a political meeting, and the most intense interest was manifest. Among those on the platform were: Dr. Grant, Ottawa; Judge McDonald, Brockville; George Gillies, Gananoque; Dr. Moore, Brockville; Jas Reynolds, Brockville; Dr. Parker, Stirling; John Carruthers, B. M. Britton, Q. C.; Dr. Boulter, M. P. P., Stirling; R. T. Walkem, Q. C., G. M. Macdonnell, Q. C., John McIntyre, Q. C., Jas Metcalfe, M. P. P., Ex-Mayors. Carson, Gildersleeve, Gaskin, Livingston; Revs. W. B. Carey, M.A., and T. W. McCuaig; Professor Carr Harris R.M.C.; a number of Aldermen, and a large number of merchants and professional men.

Mayor Smythe was called to the chair, and A. P. Knight was appointed secretary. The mayor made the opening speech. He was a graduate of Toronto University. He had heard that the confederation scheme emanated from it, but he was not prepared to admit that such was the case. At any rate he was prepared to assert that he was opposed to the grouping of the universities in one place. The scheme was unfair to the whole Province, and especially to Kingston and its vicinity.

The Secretary of the meeting then read letters from those unable to be present, some of which are subjoined, after which Dr. James A. Grant, of Ottawa, moved: That this meeting, called to consider a scheme recently proposed to the Provincial Government by which the existing universities and colleges may be formed into a confederation at Toronto, believes, that the best system of promoting university education is that which causes the most general diffusion of such education in an efficient manner among the people, and which develops the largest amount of private aid for its support, and that these objects are best secured by the establishment of universities in local centres, instead of concentrating all in one locality. Dr. Grant in speaking to the motion said that in his opinion the scheme would not meet the requirements of the people. Queen's held a proud position and she was known wherever the telegraph wires extended to. (Cheers.) The people of the Ottawa Valley were deeply interested in her, and he represented that valley, where there were hundreds who would like to have come to Kingston to attend the meeting. He not only represented the Protestants of the Ottawa Valley, but he was backed by the Catholics as well, which was a most happy and desirable blending on the subject. (Cheers). After referring to the position of Queen's with a head who was the Carlyle of to-day, and to her graduates throughout the country, the speaker said he felt sure that the scheme in a great measure would prove an abortion (Applause). It could not be carried out in theory. The people down here were a strong, able and prosperous people, and all they wanted was their rights. (Cheers). Both Catholic and Protestant say that Queen's must stay, and stay she should, and go on increasing in prosperity till she becomes

the most prosperous university in the country. (Cheers).

Mr. Geo Gillies, manufacturer, of Gananoque, a graduate, seconded the motion; he said the Provincial University desired confederation, and simply because Queen's was becoming her great rival, and was likely, in the course of a few years, to surpass it. (Hear, hear.) He could not see why all the high schools in a county should not be centred in one town if all the colleges in a Province should be centred in one city. (Applause.) Many were like him; they would not have received a college education had Queen's not been convenient to them. He liked the idea of college competition, said it was fruitful of good, because the institution which surpassed the others in good management and instruction would get the students and get the favor of the people.

Rev. W. B. Carey, M.A., a graduate of Trinity College, Toronto, was the next speaker. He thought Toronto University favored confederation because it was essentially necessary in order to secure her more funds, and because her friends would not put their hands in their pockets as the friends of Queen's had done. He claimed that the people of Eastern Ontario should stand by Queen's and give her the place she richly merits. (Prolonged cheering.)

J. H. Metcalfe, M.P.P., said the question was divested of all political considerations. He continued that he had called at Toronto a meeting of parliamentary members of the eastern part of the province, and they felt satisfied that Queen's should be left as she was. (Hear, hear.) As far as he could learn the members were opposed to the removal of the institution to Toronto. There were a few members in the House who were undecided in the matter, but he was sure that, after such a grand meeting, they would no longer be in doubt.

Judge McDonald, of Brockville, moved the next resolution: That this meeting is of opinion that the existing universities can attain success without the proposed expenditure of further public moneys, and that a generous rivalry between these institutions in regard to the amount of their private endowments, the economy of their administration, and the number and attainments of their students, will meet the wants of Ontario in regard to higher education, and produce more permanent good than present Legislative aid. Having passed the previous resolution he conceived it to be absurd to undertake to convince the people of a point on which they had already been convinced. He related the loss which the removal of the college to Toronto would involve, and pointed to the breach of faith which would also be incurred. Toronto could not offer any advantage which would hasten the change. Queen's had had very many difficulties in the past and she was able to surmount the present crisis, and speaking for Eastern Ontario he was bound to say she would be greatly injured by the confederation of schools if Queen's participated in the same. The young men east of Kingston, or perhaps of Brockville, would go to McGill, in preference to any Toronto College. The confederation scheme he strongly denounced, because he felt that Queen's would become careless and lose its identity.

Judge Price explained what he understood by the college confederation scheme—first concentration territorially, and then collegiate absorption. He took his hearers back 40 years to the time the college was founded, and touched upon the facts in its position. Queen's was in a better position to-day than she ever was, and she is better supported by the people. To his mind the scheme now suggested meant retrogression, and the people of the East could have nothing to do with it. It was the duty of the government to educate the masses up to a certain point, but it would not spend the public money in fitting young men for the professions nor for the various trades