

HIGH SCHOOLS VS. PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

There is no doubt but our High Schools were designed to be a link in the great scheme of a national education system, to connect our Public Schools with the University. Theoretically, the design of providing such a link is excellent, but practically, we fear very much, the result has been a *failure*. In discussing this matter as we propose, briefly, we do not set out at all with the design of questioning the ability of those men engaged in High School work. No doubt they are, in some respects, at least, qualified, otherwise they would not hold the position they do. We believe, however, there are several objections which can be rationally taken to the basis on which the whole fabric of High Schools has been reared, which not only operates unjustly to the Public Schools, but which has impaired the High Schools themselves.

First, the injustice to the Public Schools. It is universally admitted that the Public Schools are the real foundation of our educational system. The higher schools, whether High, Collegiate, or University, are but the development of what began with the A B C classes of the Public School. Admitting this, then, it must follow, that the greatest care should be taken with the *feeder*, or with the foundation (if you choose) of this fabric. Both in the pecuniary support given and the care taken in the selection of teachers—school organization—inspection, and all the other *et ceteras* of a Public School. That considerable attention has been paid to the education of Public School teachers and school management generally, there is no room

for doubt. And yet it is certainly on the face a glaring mistake to find that for twenty years only one Normal School existed to supply teachers for a large Province like Ontario, when the demand was really so great, whereas, in the matter of training for High Schools, we had a University liberally supported to provide teachers for our High Schools, where the demand was only one fiftieth of our Public Schools.

But, although this injustice will soon be a thing of the past, another yet exists. By the Report of the Chief Superintendent for 1872, we find that High Schools received from Government a sum more than twenty times greater in proportion to the pupils taught, than the Public Schools. While the Public Schools received barely forty cents for each scholar attending school during the year, the High Schools received \$8.75. Nor is this all; while a Public School scholar costs the country for his education \$4.04, the High School scholar costs \$20.45.

Now, with such liberal support, both from the Government and the country, we have a right to expect corresponding results. We are well aware that as a scholar is advanced to a department of school work, in which the education is more expensive, that his *education* will be more thorough and substantial, and that he will be so much better qualified to reward society for what that education costs.

Well, is this true with regard to High School education? As we are not able to answer this question from observation, we