

Edw. at. H
F

[Ferguson, John]
" "

329940
8. 36.

SCHOOL BOARD AMALGAMATION.

To His Worship the Mayor and the Members of the Council of the Corporation of the City of Toronto :

MR. MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN:

For some time there has been an agitation on foot looking to the amalgamation of the Public School and Collegiate Boards of this city. So far the advocates of this change have advanced no arguments that are of such a character as to justify the change.

I think it is due to the Council that the facts should be laid before it somewhat fully, as the matter is one of very great importance to the City. The Collegiate Trustees, who represent the Council in this matter, and who are responsible for the administration of the affairs of the three Institutes, have never been asked for their opinion. As I have been a member of the Board for a number of years, and have been honored by my colleagues with the position of Chairman of the School Management Committee for the past three years, I shall take the liberty of dealing with the whole matter under discussion, and in doing so I feel that I voice the sentiments of a great majority of my colleagues on the Board.

The organization and management of our Collegiate Institutes differ from those in any other city, because of the fact that we have three Collegiate Institutes, while in every other city or town in the Province there is not more than one. This, of course, is the cause of many items of expense not found in Hamilton, London, Ottawa, or any of the other cities or towns having only one Institute. On the other hand, this distribution of the Collegiate Institutes is a great advantage to citizens. Many bitter things have been said both in conversation and in the public press about the efficiency and economy of the management of the Institutes; and some have rather hastily concluded that amalgamation would be the cure for some alleged defects in the present method of management.

1.—EFFICIENCY.

The lack of efficiency has been charged against our Institutes, but the charge is without foundation. The following facts will amply justify my assertion:

In selecting teachers the Board exercises the greatest possible care. No consideration but that of fitness for the position is allowed to come into consideration. I have never known the Board, nor any member thereof, make any attempt to appoint a teacher on any other ground. The result is that in the three Toronto Collegiate Institutes we have a body of teachers that

rank at the very head of the profession. Such a body of teachers would not be guilty of discharging their duties in a faulty manner.

That our Institutes are efficient is shown by the condition of the buildings, libraries, science appliances, grounds, gymnasla, etc. In all these respects they are now in excellent condition, and meet with the approval of the High School Inspectors from time to time as they make their official visits. This is a matter of no small moment to the one thousand pupils whose care and comfort the Board has in charge.

But it is clearly shown that they are doing good work from the simple fact that our three Institutes, with thirty-two teachers and an average of about 850 pupils, sent up to the University examinations last year a number of candidates so thoroughly trained as to compete with those sent up by all the other Institutes and High Schools, with five hundred and fifty teachers and twenty-four thousand pupils; and, in the face of this, our pupils obtained some 45 per cent. of the honors and rewards. This is saying a great deal for our Institutes; but it is only one of the scholastic tests of efficiency that could be advanced. While I state these facts, I am not casting the first reflection upon other Institutes or High Schools. They are all doing good work; and a work that fits into the local requirements of the city or town in which they are situated. This very important consideration must not be forgotten.

Tested by the results of the past, our Institutes have always held a high place in public confidence. The city and country are full of ladies and gentlemen holding high and important positions, and standing well in the various professions, who received their secondary education in one or other of our Institutes. The honor roll of this class is a long and worthy one.

Unfortunately, there is often a tendency to belittle the work done in our Collegiate Institutes without carefully looking into the facts. The laudatory notices of successful results of local High Schools published in town and village papers in the Province are observed by citizens of Toronto who were natives of these places, and they conclude that the Toronto schools are inferior because columns of our metropolitan journals are not taken up with similar notices. The work in Toronto is done in such a manner as to be much less obtrusive upon public notice than in the smaller places.

2.—ECONOMY.

Amalgamation has been strongly urged in some quarters on the ground of economy. Every statement of this kind merits careful consideration. It is well, therefore, to look into this with more than usual attention, as it is a very important question to the ratepayer. The following are the means

that might be resorted to to effect a reduction in cost, and I shall leave them with the public to determine whether it would be wise to attempt any of these methods:

There might be made a reduction in salaries. When the cost of living in Toronto is considered and the qualifications of our teachers kept in mind, it will, I think, be at once admitted that the salaries are none too high. If they were cut down to the level of many of the other Institutes, we could neither secure, nor retain, the services of the class of teachers that are most desirable. We have now in our Institutes several teachers who have been successful principals of High Schools or Collegiate Institutes. I have not spoken to any amalgamationist who suggested any salary reduction; nor was it favored when mentioned.

Then the fees could be increased. But it must be again remembered that the fees could be made too high and become practically prohibitive. This would serve no good end. Further, the Collegiate Institutes are not intended for the children of the wealthy merely; but they have always had in attendance many children whose parents could not afford too large fees. If they were too high the number of pupils would be lessened and the actual cost increased, as the Institutes would then be maintained and doing much less work than they are at present. Ottawa and Belleville only have higher fees than Toronto.

It has been suggested by some that the average attendance might be allowed to increase. This is true to a very slight extent. The Collegiate Institutes could accommodate additional pupils without additional cost for accommodation. But it must be remembered that the regulations of the Education Department fix the numbers at 30 pupils per teacher, and the Toronto Board has tried to live up to these regulations. Then, if the average is allowed to become too high, the quality of the work must suffer. For good work, things are well regulated as they are at present; and good results are of more importance than a trifling saving in cost per pupil.

But, some say, spend less money on libraries, apparatus, maps, globes, etc. This would surely be a penny-wise and pound-foolish policy. The aim of the Board has been to maintain the appliances of the Institutes in a thoroughly efficient condition, and yet not to spend one dollar on any needless object. This very matter has already received careful consideration by the Board.

It has further been suggested that the three Collegiate Institutes might be governed by one principal. This would be quite unworkable. He would be a highly paid official, and would lose far too much of his time going from one Institute to the other. Besides, he could do no teaching, as

the principals now do. But one of the specialists in each Institute would be required to act in his absence as a deputy principal, and would in this way lose much valuable time. Thus there would be three specialists losing part of their time, and the high-paid principal practically all of his time, except such results as would come from his supervision. This would not be great enough to justify the change.

The idea needs only to be suggested to be at once rejected, that sufficient money should not be expended upon the buildings to keep them in a state of repair and avoid deterioration in value.

Present office rent, \$120, and secretary-treasurer's salary, \$500, might be saved by amalgamation. The former will be saved in any case when the new Court House is occupied, and the latter would most likely still be required, as a separate set of books must be kept, and it is not probable that the present Public School staff would have time for this additional labor.

It is vigorously stated that there is a great loss, because the classes during certain periods are small; and that teachers could handle larger classes. It is quite true that they could instruct larger classes in the highest form. But it is one of the necessary features and conditions of secondary and University education that such a state of things should exist. The numbers in any given class depend upon the number of pupils attending the Institute and studying with a certain object in view. A science master, for example, may have six in one class, ten in another, twenty in another, and thirty-five in another. This is not the fault of organization; nor does it indicate that the master is not well employed in the interests of the public. Yet the number and grade of subjects taught, and the qualifications of the teachers, are after all in compliance with the "High School Act."

It has been suggested that the senior classes might be grouped together in one school, and a saving effected by reducing the number of specialists required for this upper work. But this means that the work in the middle and lower forms, a good deal of which is now done by the specialists in each school, would be wholly entrusted to a cheaper class of teachers. It can be easily understood that the effect of withdrawing the specialist in any department from a school would be to immediately lower the whole tone and level of that department in that school. There would be at once a loss of prestige which would be felt through the whole school, and the trifling economy in expenditure would be far more than offset by the disastrous effect upon the classes. The true way is to maintain each department in the highest possible efficiency in each school. Further, the pupils would be compelled, in many cases, to travel great distances to attend these classes.

3.—OVERLAPPING.

Overlapping of studies is another of the evils proposed to be remedied by amalgamation. This overlapping means that there are classes in the lower grades of the Collegiate Institutes doing practically the same work that is being done in the higher grades of the Public Schools. This statement is only partially correct, as additional studies are taken up in these grades of the Collegiate Institutes. Even if the work does overlap in the English and Commercial subjects, no harm is done when the classes are full, and there is no waste of teaching power caused by the unnecessary multiplication of classes.

Amalgamation would not prevent overlapping unless the Public School course were to end with the fourth book classes, where the High School course really begins. In that event about 2,000 pupils now in the fifth book classes would have to be provided for in the Collegiate Institutes, and that, too, free of cost, as the people can demand education free of cost to the end of the Public School course, that is, to the end of the fifth book. To complete this extended Public School course beyond the fourth book, or High School entrance standing, two years are required. The first form, or the first two years of the High School course, must thus be free to all High School pupils, and this is the plan adopted in most other places to meet this difficulty. In the Toronto schools that would mean a loss of \$3,000 to \$4,000 a year, even with the low fee now charged in the first form, besides the additional cost of giving a High School education to about 2,000 pupils who are not asking for it, and would require at least five additional new Collegiate Institutes as large as those now in existence for their accommodation.

The proper remedy for what is called overlapping is to have the Public School pupils branch off after passing through the fourth book. The free fifth book classes should be maintained in the Public Schools, and I am sure every member of the Collegiate Board desires to see them efficiently maintained, for the purpose of imparting a good English and Commercial education, with the addition of manual training, if possible, for those who do not wish to take up a High School course. The pupils who take up the High School course should do so at the end of the fourth book, and should be required to contribute towards the cost of their education.

It is plainly seen, therefore, that overlapping affects no one, unless it be those who are undecided as to the course they wish their children to pursue, and who keep them in the fifth book classes a year or two, and then have them enter upon the High School course. In such cases there is no doubt some loss of time, but amalgamation would not provide a remedy for this. The only remedy would be free High Schools and the abolition of the fifth book classes—a rather costly arrangement for the accommodation of the few pupils who lose time because of their parents' neglect or indecision.

It has been suggested that some effort should be made to correct overlapping. In answer, it may be said that upon this subject the School Management Committee of the Collegiate Institute Board met the School Management Committee of the Public School Board more than two years ago. After a very full and friendly discussion of the question, it was agreed by the Public School authorities, as far as possible, to have it made known throughout the Public Schools that all who desired to take the languages and a High School course should enter the Collegiate Institutes at the end of the Public School fourth class. As far as I am aware this understanding has been carried out on the part of the Public School officials and teachers, so that this matter has already been adjusted as far as is necessary and possible.

Some urge as an argument in favor of amalgamation that the fifth book classes could be instructed in the first form of the Collegiate Institutes. I have just shown that this would be very expensive; but it is also entirely erroneous in theory. The Public School system, to the end of the fifth book, must be national, free, and, as far as possible, obligatory. The Collegiate system, on the other hand, must be supplementary and optional. The Public School is not a feeder of the Collegiate Institute. To provide the latter with pupils is not the primary object and duty of the former. As a matter of fact less than 4 per cent. of the pupils in the Toronto Public Schools ever enter the Collegiate Institutes.

A prominent educationist the other day, in writing you, stated that there is no need for theorizing, as we have the practical evidence of the success of union Boards, and quotes Hamilton and London as examples where union Boards have long existed. Let us examine these two cases:

In London there are no fifth book classes. As soon as pupils pass through the fourth book, they pass into the Collegiate Institute. Now, the cost of education for each pupil in the Public Schools of London, not including the fifth book, is \$23 a year, on the basis of average attendance; and in the Collegiate Institute the cost per pupil, including the fifth book, for average attendance is \$42. Thus, the union Board has the fifth book classes taught at an annual cost of \$42, as compared with \$23, the cost of Public School pupils; or, in Toronto, of \$20.35, where we have separate Boards.

Let us now turn to Hamilton. We find that in that City only 6 per cent. of the Public School pupils go to the fifth book, whereas in Toronto 10 per cent. become fifth book pupils. The education of the Public School pupils in Hamilton, on the basis of average attendance, is \$24 a year. Thus, what little appears to be gained in the Collegiate Institute is fully lost in the cost of the Public Schools.

Some now complain that too many enter the Collegiate Institutes and find their way into the professions. The practice in London and Hamilton is to increase this tendency, as you can readily see that when a pupil once

enters a Collegiate Institute the likelihood is that a full course will be pursued. Such a method of curing overlapping would incur very heavy expense, and require at least five additional Collegiate Institutes, each one capable of accommodating 400 pupils.

But one word more on London and Hamilton as compared with Toronto. In London the cost of education per pupil, both Public and Collegiate, combined, on the basis of average attendance, amounts to \$25.32 a year. In Hamilton, on the same basis, it is \$25.10 annually. In Toronto, on the other hand, it costs only \$22.46.

The experience of London proves that to combine the fifth book pupils with the Collegiate Institute pupils costs on an average \$42 a year per pupil. Public School pupils in Toronto now cost about \$20. To introduce this method of dealing with overlapping would cost the City for 2,000 pupils now in the fifth book an annual additional expenditure of about \$22 per pupil, or a total of some \$44,000. It would be more expensive still to close the first form in the Collegiate Institutes and have language classes in the Public Schools. Besides, this latter plan would work ruin to our Collegiate Institutes.

4.—ONE LARGE INSTITUTE.

Much has been said from time to time about the advisability of closing one or more of our Institutes, and consolidating the work into one large central building. But what would this lead to?

Which one should be closed? Would the Parkdale section permit its Collegiate Institute to be closed, which it brought into the city in good faith at the time of the annexation? Would the people residing east allow Jarvis Street Institute to be blotted out? Harbord Street Collegiate Institute was ordered to be built on its present site by a vote of the ratepayers, after the advantages of other sites had been fully investigated. These questions must first be answered before any attempt at consolidating the teaching into one large central Institute could be carried out. If these sections of the city objected to having their Institutes removed, this would no doubt settle the matter; and it is almost certain that this opposition would be met with.

But grant for the sake of argument that they were all closed, and one large Institute erected in some central part of the city. The present buildings could be used for no other purpose than Public Schools. For this purpose I doubt if they are conveniently located to meet the present requirements of Public Schools. But, allowing this to go, it would require a large expenditure of money to fit them for Public School purposes. Perhaps it might be safely said, as I am informed by a good architect, that \$40,000 or \$50,000 would be required, and then there would be loss on the gymnasia, etc.

Then a new site in some central part must be secured. On this a new building capable of accommodating 1,000 pupils must be erected. This would mean an outlay of perhaps \$150,000 or \$200,000. This one central building would be far removed from very many of the pupils, and cause great loss of time in transit.

The Government grant is a vital matter that must be considered in all this. Our Institutes now receive over \$4,100 annually from the Provincial grant. If there were only one Institute the grant could not exceed \$1,400 or \$1,500. This would be a serious loss.

It is safe to say that the change to one central Institute would compel at least 400 pupils to use street cars in addition to those who are now using them. In the year this would mean to the parents sending these pupils about \$5,000. Toronto, for its population, is a very large city in area. The local conditions here differ entirely from those met with elsewhere.

But the massing of 1,000 pupils together might give rise to an agitation for separate High Schools for boys and girls, such as exist in Boston and some of the other large cities of the United States. Even if there were not two separate High Schools, it might become somewhat difficult to arrange for the co-education of 1,000 pupils. So many of the pupils would come long distances that a very large number would have to lunch in the building. This might give rise to the necessity for one prolonged session each day, which is always injurious to health.

If we had one large Collegiate Institute with a staff of 30 or more teachers, and an average attendance of 1,000 pupils, the principal could not undertake much class work, if any. As things are at present the principals are actively engaged in the work of teaching, and thus come into living contact with the pupils. In the case of one large Institute the principal's time would be almost all consumed in supervision work.

5.—COST HERE AND IN OTHER CITIES.

As to the cost of High School education in Toronto when compared with the cost in other cities, it is unfair to take into the estimate the total expenditure as given in the reports of the Minister of Education, without deducting the amount spent on building account. If this deduction were made, it would be found that the disparity is not so great as appears in the press comments. Of course the cost of both Public and High Schools is sure to be higher in Toronto than in smaller places, and this is equally true of other civic expenditures. It is well known that labor is necessarily more costly in cities than in towns, and it is equally true that the purchasing power of money is less. As, then, we must pay more for land on which our schools stand, for the labor employed in the erection and keeping in repair

of these schools, and for the labor which is giving to our youth the knowledge which alone will make them good citizens, we must be prepared to make a greater outlay than is necessary in smaller places where property and labor are cheaper. Hence such comparisons as assume the absurdity of a dollar in Toronto and a dollar in a country town being one and the same thing are misleading and at variance with elementary economic principles. A fairer, if not the only fair mode of comparison, is to compare the rate for High and Public School purposes in Toronto with the rate in other places. Toronto has the lowest rate for High School purposes in the Province, being less than one-third of a mill on the dollar; and if a comparison is instituted between the four largest cities in the Province, we get the following results:

In Toronto and Ottawa—with separate Boards—the average rate for High School purposes is about two-fifths of a mill; and in Hamilton and London—with united Boards—the average rate is more than twice as large, being nearly one mill on the dollar. Putting the assessment of Toronto on the same basis per ratepayer as that of Hamilton or London—where the ratio is practically the same—the High School rate would be less than half a mill on the dollar, still the lowest in the Province. The Public School rate on this basis would be five and one-third mills. Comparing the High and Public School rates in these cities, we arrive at the following results:

	High School Rate.	Public School Rate.	Ratio of Public to High School Rate.
London	1 $\frac{330}{1000}$	4 $\frac{850}{1000}$	3 $\frac{2}{3}$ times as great.
Hamilton	8 $\frac{00}{1000}$	4 $\frac{400}{1000}$	7 $\frac{1}{3}$ " "
Toronto (with present assessment)	3 $\frac{23}{1000}$	3 $\frac{738}{1000}$	11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " "
Toronto (on the basis of assessment as in Hamilton or London)	4 $\frac{70}{1000}$	5 $\frac{310}{1000}$	11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " "

It will be seen from the above tabular statement that while the Public School rate is higher in Toronto than in the cities named, the High School rate is lower. One reason for this is that the pupils of the Collegiate Institutes in Toronto pay a larger proportion of the cost of their education than in the cities under united Boards, thus making the cost less burdensome to the general ratepayer. The tendency of united Boards is to cheapen High School education to those who benefit directly from it, as was proved by the report of the Sub-Committee on Amalgamation presented a year ago. When this is done, of course the difference in cost is made up by municipal grants, which must be proportionately larger.

But there is another way of looking at the question. The municipal grant made by the various cities for High School purposes may be compared with each other on a basis of the population in these cities, as collated from the Dominion census:

City.	Population.	Grant.	Per Capita.
Belleville	9,916	\$ 7,973	\$0.80
Brantford	12,753	6,700	0.60
Chatham	9,052	4,700	0.50
Guelph	10,537	5,674	0.54
Hamilton	48,973	16,400	0.34
Kingston	19,263	7,870	0.41
London	31,977	20,360	0.63
Ottawa	44,142	12,120	0.30
St. Catharines	9,170	4,110	0.55
St. Thomas	10,366	5,952	0.57
Stratford	9,500	5,000	0.53
Toronto	181,209	35,175	0.20

The municipal grant per pupil for High School purposes based on average attendance stands thus in the following places:

Guelph, \$38; Hamilton, \$33; London, \$32; Ottawa, \$39; Stratford, \$41; Toronto, \$41; but for the total number taught, only \$26. Yet this is often quite misleading, as considerable money may have just been spent in improvements to buildings, as was the case in Toronto in 1896-7. Next year the cost to the municipality in Toronto will be much reduced, while in Hamilton and London it will be largely increased because of valuable improvements in the accommodation in these cities now in progress.

The Globe, a short time ago, took Kingston, St. Thomas and Woodstock, with an average High School attendance of 810, and compared the cost with Toronto, with an average Collegiate Institute attendance of 835. But if these three places be taken for Public School comparison we find that in Toronto the Public School cost per pupil for average attendance was \$20.55, whereas in the above named places it was \$15.44; while the average for the whole Province, including Toronto, for the year 1896, was \$8.61 per pupil, and \$14.78 in Toronto for all the pupils, and \$8.57 in the above three places. Now this is not stated with any desire to find fault with the Public School system, but to show that school management generally is higher in Toronto than elsewhere.

It will thus be seen that the expense of our three splendid Collegiate Institutes to the City of Toronto compares favorably with other large cities. For the excellent advantages that our Institutes afford, the pupils are called upon to contribute a considerable portion of the total income. This cost to

the pupil is not a hardship in many cases, and, compared to the disadvantages of going a greater distance to one central school, that some think could be managed at less cost than the three, is a positive advantage.

6.—SEPARATE HIGH SCHOOL.

The relation of Separate Schools to the High Schools in the event of amalgamation is worthy of consideration. If the union of the Boards were effected, the representative of the Separate School Board must have a place upon the Board of Education. Will the Separate School supporters be satisfied with one representative? And if they have not a satisfactory representation, will they not have the right to demand a Separate High School, to the support of which will be appropriated the taxes for High School purposes now collected from them? In the City of Toronto, where unfortunately the line between Public and Separate Schools is so strictly drawn, would the new Board care to have the Public School business transacted with the Separate School representative present? Or would the business of the two classes of school—Public and High—be transacted on separate nights? If Separate School supporters are driven to demand a separate High School, will they not also have the right to demand a return of the taxes levied upon them for the erection and equipment of the present buildings?

7.—PUBLIC SCHOOL LANGUAGE CLASSES.

An intimation in the nature of a threat has been made that if the union of the Boards is not effected, language classes will be formed in the Public Schools. It would be difficult to justify the expense of maintaining such classes as a part of the free Public School course for the sake of the few who can get the necessary instruction by paying for it in the High Schools, as they should be obliged to do whether the Boards are united or not.

8.—UNION BOARDS.

The Public School Board of Toronto prepared twelve questions, which were submitted to thirty-one union Boards for answer. A Sub-Committee of the Collegiate Board carefully examined the replies, and reported the following results in April, 1897:

“With respect to the advantages of union Boards fifteen of the thirty-one claim that they are more economical, but several, if not most, of these have had no experience of separate Boards. Particulars are given in only a few instances, three of the fifteen claiming economy in having one set of officials, and in the purchase of supplies, and three others in having the schools under one roof. Eight claim harmony and unity of interest as advantages arising from union, and four claim as an advantage that, in Boards

of Education, where there are appointed members, a better class of trustees have a voice in Public School affairs, and that there is not such a great danger of hasty legislation.

" The reports received from these thirty-one schools, as summarized above, do not appear favorable to union Boards.

" As, however, many of the thirty-one Boards reporting represent small schools in small towns and villages where the conditions are widely different from those existing in Toronto, your Committee have thought that it might be helpful in arriving at a wise conclusion to present some comparative statistics of the Collegiate Institutes, which are situated for the most part in the cities and larger towns of the Province. These statistics were obtained from the latest Report of the Minister of Education.

" It may be assumed that, with hardly any exceptions, the best secondary schools of the Province are those that have reached the rank of Collegiate Institutes. These now number thirty-seven, of which twenty-three, or 60 per cent., are under separate Boards, and fourteen, or 40 per cent. under united Boards. Of the former, three or 13 per cent., and of the latter, seven or 50 per cent., are free to resident pupils.

" In all the Collegiate Institutes, the fees constitute 18 per cent. of the total receipts; in the twenty-three schools under separate Boards 22 per cent.; and in the fourteen schools under united Boards only 11 per cent. The fees amount to 25 per cent. of the salaries paid in all the Collegiate Institutes, while they are 31 per cent. in the twenty-three schools under separate Boards, and only 14 per cent. in the fourteen schools under united Boards. It will be seen that where there are separate Boards, the pupils bear more than twice as great a percentage of the cost."

The tendency is, where tried, towards free High Schools. A careful study of the returns made to the Education Department from year to year, and of the replies received in answer to inquiries, shows that this holds good. The income from fees yields a much smaller percentage to the general expenditure in union School Boards than it does in places where the Boards are separate. If we had free High Schools here, it might tend to impair the fifth book forms in the Public Schools; and certainly would demand a large increase in the number of Collegiate Institute teachers and in accommodation. This would entail relatively much greater cost upon the municipality than does the present system.

But it is contended by some that the Public School course should end with the fourth book. This I have shown to be impossible, as the law calls for free education to the end of the fifth book. If, on the other hand, we did

not afford High School Education to all who wish it, they would be forced to go somewhere else for it. It is no part of the public's concern whether too many go into the learned professions. This is a right of choice that must always belong to the individual. From Toronto there are at present about 1,300 persons who desire secondary education. Now, if they had not our Collegiate Institutes these pupils would be forced to sojourn in Hamilton, London, and elsewhere, during this period of their studies. The citizens would not tolerate this.

The Collegiate Institute Board two months ago appointed a second Committee to look into the subject of amalgamation and report. Let me quote from the report of this Committee, "that having received from the Toronto Public School Board, a communication of the 'reiteration by resolution of its desire' for amalgamation, must express regret that the document contains no statement whatever of any reasons for such amalgamation."

It is rather surprising, if amalgamation can cure overlapping, and curtail many of the expenses of High School education, that so many towns and cities with flourishing High Schools, Collegiate Institutes, and Public Schools, should not be seeking amalgamation. Such places as Ottawa, Brantford, St. Catharines, Collingwood, Picton, Goderich, Stratford, Port Hope, Galt, Niagara, Newmarket, Weston, Listowel, Orangeville, Toronto Junction, Elora, Barrie, Brampton, Berlin, Walkerton, Mitchell, Markham, Chatham, Caledonia, Grimsby, Bradford, could be mentioned as among those where separate Boards exist, without an attempt to deal with overlapping, etc., by forming union Boards.

It has been urged on the Collegiate Board and elsewhere as a reason for amalgamation that the tendency of our Collegiate education is to send far too many into the professions of medicine, law and theology, and that our teaching ought to be of a more commercial character. Now, what are the facts? There are in Toronto about 28,000 Public School pupils; of these not quite 4 per cent. enter the Collegiate Institutes. Out of the Institute pupils, less than 5 per cent. annually enter the University. When these obtain their degrees, at least one-half become High School teachers by way of the Collegiate Institutes; the remainder of the Collegiate pupils, who spend from one to four years, go into teaching, business, banks, etc.; or settle down to a domestic life. This cry must surely, in the face of these facts, be dropped.

It may be noted that years ago amalgamation of Boards had become such an evil that the Legislature of the Province intervened to put a stop to it in the interests of both High and Public Schools. Some two years ago the prohibition was withdrawn; but there has been almost no desire

shown to take advantage of the new permission. Kingston is the only place where a union Board has been formed since the change in the Act. For many years there had been friction between the two Boards, and it was hoped amalgamation would cure this. The conditions prevailing in Kingston now are: (1) No fifth book classes in the public schools; (2) No fee for commercial pupils; (3) All others, including those doing fifth book work, \$10.

If a union Board was formed here by a vote of the Collegiate Institute Board to meet the wishes of the Public School Board, there would result a body of 44 persons to form the Board of Education, and wrangle over the terms of management, and the relative strength of the two sections, appointed and elected.

It is worthy of note that a number of important schools in different parts of the Province, after having tried the working of united Boards, resolved to change the system, and are now working under Separate Boards. Among these are the Collegiate Institutes at Strathroy, Stratford, Brockville, and St. Mary's, and the High Schools at Port Hope and Bowmanville. The testimony of these places, which have tried both plans, is emphatically in favor of separate Boards.

CONCLUSIONS.

Although I am one of your representatives on the Collegiate Institute Board, I feel it to be my duty to lay before you the results of my study of this important question, and would summarize what I have said as follows:

1. The union would introduce a controlling number of elected members. Local and ward influences would therefore be likely to be felt in the management of the Collegiate Institutes.

2. Our three Collegiate Institutes are now in a very high state of efficiency, and doing good work for the citizens of Toronto.

3. There is no waste of money. Any undue restrictions forced upon the Board would impair efficiency. But I have shown that as the buildings are now in a good state of repair, and have accommodation for further attendance without additional outlay, or the engaging of additional teachers, the cost in the future per pupil will decrease considerably.

4. Before amalgamation is brought about, it might be well to consider the fact that at present you have really the control over the Collegiate Institutes, through your representatives on the Collegiate Board. In the case of a union Board, your representatives would be in the minority.

5. The tendency of union Boards is towards free High Schools.

6. The following statement of fees in Toronto and some other cities, goes to show that this would likely be the effect of union here:

City.	Kind of Board.	Fees.
Toronto	Separate	Jr. Form, \$10; II. Form, \$17; III. Form, \$26.
London	Union	Free to City; \$1.00 to County.
Hamilton	Union	Junior Form, \$2.50; other Forms, \$10.
Ottawa	Separate	Resident, \$25; Non-Resident, \$40.
Kingston	Union	Commercial, Free; all others, \$10.
Guelph	Union	Free to Resident; Non-Resident, \$20.
Perth	Union	Free to Resident; Non-Resident, \$10.
Windsor	Union	Free to all Classes.
Brantford	Separate	Resident, \$10; Non-Resident, \$16.
Stratford	Separate	Resident, \$10; County, \$20.
St. Thomas	Union	First Form, Free; other Forms, \$10.
Chatham	Separate	Free to Town; County, \$9.
St. Catharines	Separate	Non-Residents, \$16.

7. The claim that a better class of trustees would, after the union, have a say in the management of the Collegiate Institutes, is really a censure upon the City Council. It has been stated that ward heelers now secure appointment on the Collegiate Board. If the City Council, which has been elected by the people, cannot free itself of the ward influence sufficiently to make good appointments to the Board, then there is but little hope that the elected Board would be free from such influences.

8. In many of the places with union Boards the question of separation has been discussed at one time or another. There was, therefore, a feeling of dissatisfaction with this system in these places.

9. With the many interests we have in this city, its Public and Separate School systems, and its numerous private schools, sending pupils to our Institutes, I am of the opinion, after very conscientious study of the subject, that our three Institutes can best be managed in the interests of the people, both on the grounds of efficiency and economy, by a separate Board.

The above is a fair presentation of the advantages and disadvantages of the several suggestions that have been made at one time or another to effect economy in the management of our Institutes. Clearly, most of the suggestions, when examined fully, could only work mischief, and set back the progress of education in this city for a long time to come. Some of the suggestions are impossible, because of the existing laws, or because they would be directly opposed to the wishes of the people, while others, if carried out, would add greatly to the expense of education in this city.

Not one of the changes that have been suggested is of such a character that, if possible at all, or desirable, it cannot be carried out as well by a separate as by a union Board.

A year ago I believed that there might be some advantages to the rate-payers as well as to the cause of education by an amalgamation of the two Boards. During the past twelve months I have given the matter my most earnest and careful consideration, and am bound to advise you that as a result I have satisfied myself that amalgamation is not in the interests either of education or of the taxpayer. This view is also, as I have already declared, entertained by the great majority of your representatives on the Collegiate Institute Board.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

JOHN FERGUSON.

TORONTO,

January 21st, 1898.