

of inquiry was sent to a few representative towns to ascertain the results. The answers received from over twenty towns are found to prove:

1. That the new mode of furnishing the means for school work had increased the school attendance from five to ten per cent. In the high schools there had been a much larger increase, amounting, in one town reported, to twenty per cent.
2. That the children of poor parents are kept longer in school by the use of the free books, as by the aid thus furnished they are enabled to enter upon a high school course of study.
3. That the new system has reduced the cost of books about one-third of the amount paid under the old, and the cost of supplies about one-half of that amount.

In summing up the advantages of the system above described, Mr. Dickinson dwells specially upon the two economies effected—in *expense* and in *time*. The economy in cost of books and other supplies is largely due to the fact that the Boards, purchasing in large quantities, are able to deal directly with publishers and manufacturers. Every teacher will be able to appreciate the saving of time that would be effected by having all pupils supplied at once with articles needed, especially at the commencement of school terms. Mr. Dickinson also deals trenchantly with the two chief objections that have been made to the new system, viz., that it cultivates the spirit of dependence, and that it tends to socialism. The *Christian Union* puts the answers as follows: "The same objections may be urged against free instruction, free libraries, free parks, free sewerage, or free highways. Socialism increases, not where people are well treated, but where they are badly treated. The spirit of dependence increases where favors are conditioned upon the pleading of poverty, and not where all are offered the same conditions. It is ignorance and not education which takes away self-respect and independence." To which it may be added that free text-books are the necessary complement of a free public school system, and the logical outcome of a system of compulsory education.

A SIGNIFICANT commentary upon the above is furnished by recent occurrences in London (Eng.), where attempts to collect the school tax from delinquents has led to a largely diminished attendance. It would seem as if a little thought should convince any one that the English system of enforcing payment of fees from all but those who are in a position to plead abject poverty is after all the system best adapted to promote a spirit of dependence and pauperism. In order to enforce it the authorities are obliged to carry on an inquisition into the circumstances and exact incomes of householders, which must be humiliating, if not degrading, in England, and would be intolerable in America. And yet the educational journals, which are published generally in the interests of the church schools, are almost unanimous in opposing free schools.

THE remarks of Sir Richard Cartwright at the opening of Queen's College present a view of the question of university consolidation which we have always thought should carry much

weight. He referred to discussions he had had with the late Rev. Dr. Litch, with whose views he coincided, to the effect that if a well-considered scheme were submitted, by which a uniform degree could be granted without the colleges losing their autonomy or requiring a change of residence, a good deal might be said in favor of it. But he was a federalist—an individualist—one favorable to the fullest freedom of thought and action—a friend of local self-government in all shapes and forms. He opposed centralization, because the location of colleges in various places promoted healthy competition—it promoted individuality of character and independence of thought. The present order of things was favorable to diffusion, not to consolidation. It is certainly no light objection to any scheme of consolidation that one of its tendencies must be towards a monotonous uniformity in courses of study and methods of instruction. If by competition the speaker meant competition in regard to thoroughness of instruction and equipment, it seems to us that the more active competition in such matters would be evoked by placing the colleges side by side around a common centre. But if the reference is to the power of the institutions to attract students in increasing numbers from all parts of the country, that end will certainly be better attained by having them distributed in various local centres. It cannot be doubted that the general law that the attractive force diminishes in geometrical ratio with the distance from the attracting body holds good also in moral spheres and in reference to institutions of learning. And this really is a matter of the very first importance. Educators, in their zeal for thoroughness, are too apt to lose sight of the fact that numbers, *quantity*, is at least as important as quality in higher education.

WE have clipped from the *Ohio Educational Monthly*, and shall publish at the first opportunity, one of the best educational essays we have met with in a long time. It is entitled, "Discipline as a Factor in the Work of the School-room." Its author is Dr. J. P. Wickersham, who read it before the Pennsylvania Teachers' Association. The subject is treated under the following heads, which are themselves suggestive of a masterly mode of handling: (1) *The Discipline of Force*, (2) *The Discipline of Tact*, (3) *The Discipline of Consequences*, (4) *The Discipline of Conscience*. We do not often announce our good things in advance, but we think this paper worthy to be made an exception. Teachers, look out for it. We may give the first instalment in next issue.

FRIDAY, October 15th, was a high day at the Cobourg Collegiate Institute. It was Commencement Day, the first, it may be hoped, of a long series, extending no one can say how far into the future. Nine male and six female pupils, having finished the course, received their diplomas from the hand of the Minister of Education. Principal McHenry may be specially congratulated in view of the fact that he was the originator of the scheme of High School graduation. It was by him put into practical shape and submitted to the Department for adoption. The idea is an excellent one. It sets a