

the particular school to which they may *voluntarily* choose to send their children.

In our cities and larger towns the average number of pupils in a class is so large that many feel that the teacher cannot in such cases give that personal attention to the pupils, so necessary in making their work thorough and complete. When a substantial number of parents desire to supplement the work of the common school with classical, commercial, religious or other instruction, will it not be a distinct advantage to provide a way by which this could be done in harmony with the State system? It is certainly a manifest injustice to those who wish a liberal education for their children to deprive them of all right to share in the rates levied for the support of a common school education, and to force them to separate from the national system.

On the ground of economy, the encouragement of voluntary public schools will be a distinct advantage to our municipalities. "Financially it seems to me to be the height of folly," writes the Duke of Argyle, "to discourage the greatest of all agencies—zeal for religious truth—in persuading men to support efficient voluntary schools in which they take an earnest interest." The desire to add effective religious instruction to the curriculum of a common school will induce the members of the religious bodies to establish in the school-houses attached to their places of worship voluntary public schools affording a thoroughly efficient common school education. In allowing such schools to affiliate with the Public School system, and in making a per capita grant, "paying them for their work as tested by such methods as may be deemed best," the municipality will secure the education of the common school at simply the cost of maintenance, without being required to make any expenditure on buildings or school accommodation. When we realize that the Public School Board of Toronto is this year asking for \$165,000 in order to increase the common school accommodation in the city, we can appreciate at once the economy. If, for instance, only ten voluntary public schools were established in Toronto, each accommodating one hundred pupils, the sum of \$50,000 might be saved and deducted from this year's estimates. Of course, the buildings used must be suitable. But this can be secured by making reasonable conditions necessary before the school can be rightly affiliated, and the maintenance of such conditions being required for the continuation of such affiliation from year to year.