

# The Canada Bookseller.

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May be had  
OF ALL BOOKSELLERS  
In the Dominion.

## THE EDUCATIONAL DEPOSITORY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOKS, &c.

IN the *Journal of Education* for the month of July, we are favored with a *Departmental Notice*, on the question of supplying Books to Sunday Schools, in which the public is informed that "the Department has no authority to grant the one hundred per cent. upon any remittance for Library or Prize Books, Maps or Requisites, except on such as are received from Municipal or Public School Corporations in Upper Canada. Books, Maps, and other requisites suitable for Sunday Schools, or for Library or other similar Associations, can however, on receipt of the necessary amount, be supplied from the Depository at the net prices, that is, about twenty-five or thirty per cent. less than the usual current retail prices."

This looks very fine on paper, and would, doubtless, have made an impression on the minds of Sunday School Superintendents, and others, throughout the Province, but for the unfortunate explanation contained in the succeeding paragraph of the same "notice," which says, "The admirable books published in England by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and by the London Religious Tract Society, are furnished from the Societies' catalogues at currency for sterling prices (i.e. a shilling sterling book is furnished for twenty cents Canadian currency, and so on in proportion.)" Surely one would have expected an approach to accuracy in the arithmetic of the *Educational Department* of the country; but we, who make no pretensions to extensive mathematical training, are certainly puzzled to know how the above quotations can possibly be "twenty-five or thirty per cent. below the usual retail prices."

As a rule the shilling sterling book is retailed throughout the Province at twenty-five cents, and the trade has been accustomed to regard 25 and 30 per cent. off that price, as meaning 19 cents and 17½ cents respectively. Instead, therefore, of allowing 25 and 30 per cent. as it pretends, the

Department allows 20 per cent. only. So much for price.

But how do these apparently favourable terms affect the purchaser? Does he really obtain his books from the Depository 20 per cent. cheaper than he could purchase from the trade? Let us see! We have already stated that English books are retailed, with few exceptions, at 25 cents to the shilling sterling, and we believe it is an almost universal custom with the trade throughout the Province to allow a discount of 15 per cent. to Sunday Schools. Thus, the advantages offered by this Government Book Store are reduced to a margin of 5 per cent. off the retailers' prices.

Against this margin the purchaser has to reckon express or freight charges, and any similar charges upon books unapproved and returned. He has also to pay down the amount of his proposed purchase before he can receive a single book; and, in the event of those sent him not being approved, he can only receive other books in exchange, on condition of their being "returned promptly and in good order," and it might have been added, *with all charges paid*. The Department, we believe, never returns cash.

Thus this Government establishment, supported by the public purse, enters the list of competition with the legitimate book trade of the country, and the only bait which it can hold out to public patronage is a discount of 5 per cent. *for cash with order*.

It says nothing of the vast sums voted annually from the public revenue, for the maintenance of this establishment, of the salaries, rents, taxes, trade expenses, and a thousand and one other items of expenditure of which no one hears, excepting in the gross sum contained in the annual estimates. It says nothing about the gross injustice it is to the honest and industrious tradesmen who have invested their capital and their energy in the "Book Trade" of the Province, to have to compete with an establishment supported by the Government, and to be compelled to contribute to the taxation which, at once, pays its officials and robs them of their legitimate business.

We invite the supporters of this grand farce to put the establishment on its own