

tory, that the books supplied and for which the public were taxed, were of a good, moral and literary tone. The selection, if not so varied, was always judicious, and no injurious effect could follow the perusal of the literature furnished. In dispensing with the Depository it becomes a question of some importance, whether trustees should be allowed to make such a selection as they saw fit or, whether the Education Department should still exercise a sort of paternal *surveillance* over the catalogue from which a choice should be made. We are free to admit that the latter course may be the safest. Doubtless if trustees were allowed full latitude in selecting their own libraries, in some instances the stock might be of an inferior character. It might not be safe to trust the matter entirely into their hands. It is very important that the reading furnished our young people should be of the most chaste and wholesome character, and that nothing should be done to prejudice their minds against universally admitted principles of science and religion. The tone of the public mind depends largely on the mental pabulum in our libraries. It would be a great calamity indeed if this pabulum should be deteriorated, or if anything else but the most wholesome literature were generally distributed throughout the country.

Another consideration is the price at which this literature is furnished to the public. We know it is strongly contended by the advocates of the Depository, that so far as cheapness is concerned, the Depository can furnish libraries much cheaper than the book-stores. We are not able to express an opinion of our own on this point, but submit the opinion of the Convention of Booksellers held in Toronto a short time ago. We might say in regard to this Convention, that it fully represented the *trade* in this Province, and its conclusions are deserving of some consideration. The

following are the remarks of one of the leading booksellers of Toronto:—

“Mr. W. C. Campbell said that though there might have been some reason for the existence of the Educational Depository in the past there could be none now. It had not kept up with the progress of the country. He read statistics from the reports of the Educational Department, contending that they showed either that at their old rates of twenty cents on the shilling they had been making very considerable profits, or that at their rates, since the passing of the late Act, they had been selling at a loss of several thousand dollars per annum to the country, and that in an unfair competition with the regular booksellers who had just as good a right to the trade. (Hear, hear.) The imports of the Depository in one year had been \$20,315 while the imports and home manufactures of the regular trade were in the same year about one million dollars, so it was absurd for those connected with the Depository to arrogate to themselves the right of saying what books were proper for prize-books. He found from their last catalogue that about 500 of their books were entirely out of print and that many of the publishers were long since dead or out of the trade. There were Derby, of New York, who had died fifteen years ago; Ingram, who was drowned in Lake Erie years ago; Day, who failed in business eight years since, and so on. He found also that no less than 175 different books on the catalogue for 1874 were now sold by wholesale dealers in Toronto at about two-thirds of the net price as quoted in the Depository book list. These facts showed that the man who compiled the catalogue did not know his business, and that the booksellers were better qualified to supply books for such purposes than were those connected with the Depository. He found from the statistics published by the Department that they sent out Sunday-school books, public libraries and books