

making use of the new Reading Books as desirable instruments in the teaching of English. With these points before us, let us now look at the character of the various series submitted, and note the decision of the Committee in its recommendatory Report.

There were three series presented, each coming from a distinct and separate source. (1) The "Royal Canadian Readers," (Toronto: The Canada Publishing Co.); (2) The "Royal Readers"—Special Canadian Series, (Nelson & Sons, Edinburgh, and James Campbell & Son, Toronto); and (3) The "Canadian Readers," a professed adaptation of a Scotch series, published by W. & R. Chambers, Edinburgh, and issued by W. J. Gage & Co., Toronto.

Now of these three series the only one that is the product entirely of Canada is the first in the list, the "Royal Canadian Readers," upon the editorial, artistic, and mechanical production of which the Canada Publishing Company has spent in the country the large sum of \$25,000. Of the second enumerated, the "Royal Readers," the editorial work alone was done in the country: the matter was set up and the illustrations and plates were made in Scotland. The third set, the so-called "Canadian Readers," has, in the main, been manufactured abroad, though it has undergone some perfunctory editorial revision ludicrously inadequate to its needs. So much for the nationality of the books. A comparison of their literary features will be found equally favourable to the "Royal Canadian;" and this fact is admitted on all sides by competent judges who have examined them. The "Royal Readers," it may frankly be said, have the advantage of a more extensive selection of modern extracts of a high literary character; but the "Royal Canadian," while its modern literary material is less profuse, has the inestimable advantage of a graded scheme of grammar and composition exercises which runs through the whole of the books, besides much useful annotation and questionings, of the utmost value to the teacher. Of the "Gage Series" it is difficult to speak with respect, as its reading matter is almost wholly unsuited to

Canadian schools, and the effort to Canadianize it, editorially and mechanically, is, we say it advisedly, a disgrace to the house that has issued it. Of the original plan of this latter series there are manifestations in the books which save it from utter derision; but the series, in the form in which it has become public, and as submitted to the Central Committee, is so objectionable as a whole that only partisanship, or something worse than partisanship, could have allowed it to compete.

Now we come to the question of a choice, and to the Committee's action in the matter. The Committee, in the official report of its proceedings, does not seem to have been impressed by the fact that it had before it a distinctively *native* series, carefully and elaborately prepared by competent editors engaged in the practical work of teaching in Canadian schools. We judge this to be the case, not only from the absence of comment upon the fact that throughout the series every advantage is taken to familiarize the pupil with matters of Canadian import, but from the Committee's placing it *third* in the order of merit in the competing series, and thus practically ruling it out. That this is an injustice of a grave kind is not only our own unbiassed opinion but that of large bodies of the profession, who justly claim to be the best judges, and whose one voice is in favour of the "Royal Canadian Readers," as by far the best series, for the joint purposes of teacher and scholar, of the three submitted to the Department. One member of the Committee, we note with pleasure, is also of this opinion; for the Report states that he wrote to the Chairman "that if only one set were authorized he would give the preference to the 'Royal Canadian.'" As we have hinted, these Readers were most unfairly excluded, and the selection was confined to the "Royals," with an alternative series in the "Canadian." The latter, it should be stated, have only received a *conditional* authorization, pending the correction of errors and the cancellation of some of its outrageously stupid matter. How the Central Committee, voluntarily, and with any respect for its reputation and