

MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE UNITED COUNTIES  
OF YORK AND PEEL, AND THE CHIEF SUPER-  
INTENDENT OF EDUCATION.

The following correspondence has passed between the Municipal Council of the United Counties of York and Peel, and the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada.

WARDEN'S OFFICE, Toronto, 15th June, 1858.

THE REV. E. RYERSON, D.D., }  
Chief Superintendent of Education. }

DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in forwarding the enclosed copy of a resolution of the Municipal Council of the United Counties of York and Peel, adopted on Saturday last.

I am, my dear Sir, yours truly,

(Signed,) JOSEPH HARTMAN,  
Warden, U. C. Y. & P.

*Resolved unanimously*.—That the Council having had the pleasure of visiting the Normal and Model Schools, desire to express the gratification they felt in seeing the beautiful selections of Sculpture and Paintings, and also the admirable School Apparatus, and Maps of Canadian manufacture. They desire further to express their opinion that Upper Canada owes a debt of gratitude to the Chief Superintendent for his devotedness to the cause of Education, and for the high standard which our present system has already obtained, and trusts he may be long spared to discharge the responsible duties of that office.

(Signed,) J. E. ELLIOTT,  
Clerk Council U. C. Y. & P.

EDUCATION OFFICE, Toronto, 18th June, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 15th inst., enclosing a resolution in reference to the Educational Department and myself, adopted unanimously by the Municipal Council of the United Counties of York and Peel, and to express, through you, my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Council for this spontaneous and unexpected expression of their good will towards myself, and of their kind appreciation of my public services in the cause of Education and knowledge for our common country. I regret that I was not present to receive the Municipal Council as I should have been happy to do; but perhaps my absence enabled its members to examine with more freedom and less interruption the doings of a department the most difficult and varied in its objects of any connected with the public service of the country. Under any circumstances I could not but feel encouraged and grateful for such a unanimous expression of opinion from a body of the representatives of the people belonging to all political and religious parties; and more numerous than were the members of the Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada when I first witnessed its proceedings—gentlemen who have several times visited the department, and obtained hundreds of maps and thousands of volumes from its depositories, for the improvement of the schools and the diffusion of knowledge in their several townships, but I feel doubly grateful for such an expression of feeling at a moment when our school system, as well as myself, is the object of a combined and unprecedented attack—an attack which, in regard to myself, I have little solicitude. My chief anxiety has been lest anything appertaining to me should be construed and applied to the injury of that school system in which is involved the municipal rights and best interests of the people of Upper Canada—an anxiety which is shown to be groundless by the Resolution of the large and

intelligent Counties' Council, over which you have so long and so worthily presided.

The expression of patriotic feeling by the Council in regard to our school system is but a response to the practical feeling of the country at large; for it appears by the statistical tables of my forthcoming report, which have been completed since I received your letter, that the people of Upper Canada have substantially provided and expended for the education of their children under the school system during the year no less than £303,085 11s. 4d.; it being an increase of £33,558 0s. 7d., on the receipts and expenditures of the preceding year for the same purposes.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Your obliged and faithful servant,

(Signed,) E. RYERSON.

Joseph Hartman, Esq., M.P.P.,

Warden, United Counties, York & Peel, Toronto.

#### IV. ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

*A Lecture by Rev. John Barker, D. D., President of Alleghany College.*

On the general question of Libraries, as repositories of the learning and the genius of our own or former ages, I do not propose to speak at present. In the distribution of the life giving salutary waters of knowledge, these are reservoirs which receive and retain them, and from which, sometimes at once, sometimes after the lapse of ages, they are again sent forth on their errand of mercy, to refresh and gladden the nations of men. If it were the last attainment of art, to give a local habitation to that emanation of the intellect called thought,—which is nowhere, and yet at will is carried to the utmost bounds of the universe; to make that ever-during, which is more fugitive than an echo; and as it were, to embody and symbolize, to the eye and ear, that which is spiritual; if language and letters are such noble inventions as to have divided the opinions of mankind in regard to their original, it must not be forgotten that the conception of the library, the assembling in one room, and ranging side by side, all the wisdom of the past, and its preservation unhurt by the ravages of time, completes the beneficence of this invention, and makes, and alone makes, any great thought uttered or written, the common property of mankind. Public School Libraries, however, are created for a specific end; and are not to be regarded as repositories of all that has been written, that is now extant; nor do they embrace in their range the whole field of human knowledge. It must never be omitted from any review of them that they are school libraries, and further that they are appurtenances attached to the public schools of the country. They are auxiliaries of the system of popular education, devised by the wisdom and beneficence of the State, for the education of the masses.

The number and character of the volumes of which such a library is composed will of course be regulated by the use to which it is applied, the persons who are privileged to consult it, and the functions which it is expected to perform in the work of popular education. Two circumstances characteristic of most of those who are admitted into the public schools, will determine the character of the literature which it is profitable for them to peruse; and also will enable us to determine what are the special advantages of an arrangement, by which every child in the country has access to a large and a well assorted library. It is childhood and youth, who for the first time and with wondering eyes, are exploring the paths of the literature and science, that are admitted by this judicious benevolence into the flowery land of letters. Of course this condition of the readers, must preclude all works of abstruse speculation, and all that require extended knowledge as a preliminary to read them with profit and pleasure. In the history of the early life of any one, the imagination is far more vigorous and lively than the rational faculty. Long before we are capable of any sustained effort of reasoning, we listen with inexpressible delight to narratives of "moving incidents by flood and field," with slight discrimination between truth and falsehood, or even between that which is conformable to nature, and that which is preternatural and impossible. The imagination draws its inspiration primarily from the senses, and hence narrative and descriptive compositions must form the staple of every collection of books that children will read with interest, and that will permanently affect their principles and conduct.

In a narrative, the truth is clothed with flesh; it lives, it speaks to us as a familiar friend; we are permitted to look at its features, to grasp its hand in sincere friendship, and call it ours by the fondest names and recollections. Examples and associations which make examples prevalent, almost infinitely outweigh any array of precepts, however, judicious; and hence all professedly didactic essays might as well be omitted from a catalogue of books to be read voluntarily by