

viduals thus cheapened, will private schools decline, and the interests of private teachers be affected? The same objection lies equally against all endowments or public aid of colleges, as the trade of the private tutor is thereby injured and for the most part extinguished in regard to the whole business of collegiate teaching. The interests of a class of private teachers are as much entitled to protection against the competition of public schools, as are the interests of a class of private booksellers to protection against the competition of government in supplying the public schools with the requisite maps, apparatus and libraries. If the interest of an individual, or a class, are to be placed before those of the community at large, then there can be no system of public instruction whatever, nor any public aid to any branch of the education of the people. But such an objection has never been admitted in the government and legislation of any enlightened country.

"The ground on which the public schools and municipalities are provided with school requisites and libraries, through the medium of a public department, and by means of public grants, is as unquestionable as it is simple and obvious. It is the legitimate consequence of having public schools, for if a people determine through their legislature that they will have public schools at all, it is clear that those schools should be made as efficient as possible, and that nothing should be omitted to render them so. If it is, therefore, the duty of the legislature to promote the education of the people by the establishment of public schools, it is equally its duty to provide all possible facilities and means for supplying those schools with the maps, apparatus, and libraries, which render them most instrumental in educating and instructing the people.

"The legislature will, therefore, no doubt, make the same provision for aiding public schools and municipalities in providing themselves with school maps, apparatus and libraries, as it has done for the training and support of their teachers; and the unseemly opposition which has been attempted by two or three newspapers in the interest of as many mistaken booksellers, has hitherto found no echo in the voice of the press generally, and not a single response within the halls of the legislature.

"The objection, too, is founded upon a false view of the legitimate sphere of government duty and private enterprise. It is as much the duty of government to adopt the most economical and effective means to furnish the public schools with all the needful appliances and instruments of usefulness, as to provide these for any one of its own departments. The extent and manner in which it does so, must depend on circumstances, and is a matter for the exercise of its own discretion, irrespective of any pretensions of private against public interests. The private bookseller has a right to sell his books as he pleases; and each school section and municipality, and each public body of every description, as well as each private individual, and not less the government, has a right to purchase books where and of whom they please. Each municipality, as well as the Legislative Assembly itself, may have its own library procured and imported by a public agent, and not by a private trader, to whom large additional prices must be paid for his risks and profits.

"Besides, nearly all the maps and other articles of school apparatus, and most of the books for the libraries, were unknown in the country and would have been unknown, had they not been introduced by the agency of a public department. I believe that private booksellers have largely profited by what I

have done in this respect; that they have found demand for many books which no doubt have first been made known in the official catalogue and through the medium of the public school libraries. They have the entire and exclusive possession of the field of private trade; and with this they should be satisfied, without claiming to be the sole and uncontrolled medium of supplying the public schools and municipalities with books and school apparatus.

"I have also considered it my duty to import nothing that could be produced in the country. I get most of the maps mounted, and many of them colored in Toronto; I have introduced models of school furniture, and encouraged its domestic manufacture, so that it is now becoming an important branch of business. All our common school books are now printed in the country; and I hope the day is not far distant when, in the largest sense, Canada will be a book-publishing, as well as a book-reading country.

"Having noticed, perhaps more formally than was necessary, this only and narrow objection against public libraries, I will now state the steps which have been taken to establish this vitally important branch of our system of public instruction, and some of its results and advantages.

"The first practical step towards establishing public school libraries in Upper Canada, was taken in the autumn of 1850. In that year the preliminary arrangements were made with the chief publishers in England and the United States, to supply the department with quantities of such works as might be selected by me, and approved by the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada.

"In 1853, the arrangements in regard to this important branch of our system of public instruction were perfected; and towards the close of that year—(having obtained the necessary supply from England and the United States)—the first library was dispatched from the department. Since that time, the officers of the department, charged with this special duty, have been incessantly engaged in receiving books, and in despatching libraries to every part of Upper Canada.

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"It will be seen by Table K, of this Report, how widely the advantages of these public libraries have already been diffused. Each of the forty-two counties in Upper Canada, with the exception of Addington, Bruce and Victoria, have availed itself of the facilities which the Department, through the liberality of the legislature, has been enabled to afford. They have been equally open to the most distant school sections as well as to the metropolis—to the most remote and thinly inhabited municipalities as well as to the most populous and wealthy. Each has been aided from the legislative grant, and supplied with books according to the extent of their own exertions and the amount of money contributed from their own resources.

"As a singular instance of how little influence distance can have in preventing the establishment of public libraries, I may mention that, while very respectable libraries have been ordered and despatched to the extreme northern townships of the province, bordering on the Ottawa River, not a single book has yet been procured for public school libraries in either of the populous and important cities of Toronto, Ottawa or London; while the school authorities in each of these cities complain of a want of some additional inducements to encourage the idle boys in their streets to attend the schools and enjoy the advantages of instruction. It is but reasonable to suppose that, if the induce-