

Public School system, having sufficient uniformity and yet flexible enough to meet the varying demands of different classes of the community. The healthy rivalry created by the establishment of these schools must have a beneficial effect on the whole system. One school reacts on the other in the common aim to produce the best results for the time and money expended. The fact that there are so many private elementary schools is evidence of the demand for a diversified form of education. I cannot do better than quote here the words of John Stuart Mill, which are well worth considering. He says: "That the whole or any large portion of the education of the people should be in State hands, I go as far as anyone in deprecating; all that has been said of the individuality of character and diversity in opinions and modes of conduct involves, as of the same unspeakable importance, diversity of education. An education established and controlled by the State should only exist, if it exist at all, as one among many competing experiments, carried on for the purpose of example and stimulus to keep the other up to a certain standard of excellence."

Why should we not encourage Voluntary Schools to affiliate with the State system, the condition of affiliation depending on the employment of duly qualified teachers, the use of common textbooks, and submission to the same inspection? This would secure all that the State requires, and opportunity would then be given to parents to supplement the ordinary work of the common school with such classical, scientific, commercial, religious or other instruction, as any substantial number may desire, who are willing *voluntarily* to contribute the money required to support such additional instruction.

In presenting to you a scheme for the affiliation of Voluntary Schools with the Ontario School system, let me clear away two very common misconceptions in regard to it. Many assume, without I think consideration, that the scheme is simply an extension of the separate school system; while it is nothing of the sort. In fact, it is the very opposite. An affiliated school cannot be a separate school. Others are opposed to the State undertaking in any way to impart religious instruction, and make this the grounds of their opposition to the proposal; while, as a matter of fact, the State has *absolutely nothing* to do with the special instruction imparted in Voluntary Public Schools, whether it be religious or secular. The State alone is concerned in securing at least an efficient common school education for the children of all classes, and