

some it is described as a blessed reservoir for the irrigation of the Province with a wholesome, useful, entertaining literature; by others the question is asked whether teachers and parents, including farmers, mechanics, business and professional men, are to have their choice of literature limited or suggested by a few individuals, who certainly are in no appreciable respect wiser or better than themselves. So far as this continent is concerned "the idea of a common school library" (says Horace Mann) "originated in the State of New York. In the year 1835 a law was passed by the legislature of that State authorizing its respective school districts to raise by tax the sum of twenty dollars the first year, and ten dollars in any subsequent year, for the purchase of a common school library. In the year 1837 the Legislature of Massachusetts also authorized each school district in that State to raise by tax a sum not exceeding thirty dollars for the first year, and ten dollars for every subsequent year, for the purchase of a library and apparatus for the schools." Such were the American precedents for common school libraries. That such libraries may be a great benefit, especially in rural districts, seems beyond a doubt; but the best method of procuring them is a question about which men may very innocently differ. So also with respect to the mode of obtaining school apparatus of whatever kind. Practical educators may be glad to inspect all sorts of plans and models which have relation to their business, but may still desire, without incurring heinous guilt for entertaining or expressing the wish, to be free to purchase such things as they require in an open market, unaffected either by bounties or restrictions. It is well known that Dr. Fraser, (now Bishop of Manchester), when he visited this Province a few years ago, both privately and publicly argued against the perpetuation in Canada of a provincial book and apparatus depository, which he uniformly represented as unsound in principle and injurious

in practice. Dr. Fraser candidly admitted that a precedent for such institutions had been set by the English Committee of Privy Council on Education, which, however, he affirmed had seen and acknowledged its error, and had freed itself from the encumbrance and the opprobrium it involved.

The Normal and Model Schools of Ontario constitute, in general opinion, an important part of our Public School system. It is true that a teacher, like a poet, is, in the highest sense of the word, born, not made. But it is also true, that for any particular employment or profession, special preparation is a very desirable addition to natural aptitude. A knowledge of materials and of methods is not innate, and can only be acquired; and such acquisition may be the result of long continued and toilsome personal effort and experiment, or may be greatly promoted by the instruction of those who have gathered and stored the results of numerous observations and varied experience, and have so arranged those results and so practised their application that others may share, at a greatly diminished cost of time and mental and physical exertion, the advantages which they have attained. From the recognition of such principles, all normal or training schools and model schools have originated. The Normal School of Ontario has undoubtedly sent forth many able and efficient teachers, some of purely native growth, and others who, having been well instructed and trained in Great Britain or Ireland, have found it to their advantage to obtain at our provincial institution a provincial certificate of qualification, which, until the year 1871, could not be procured but as the result of passing through its course. Other teachers from the old country, equally well instructed and trained, and probably even more experienced, have not been willing to lower themselves, as they have considered it, by again passing through a state of apparent pupilage, and although legally authorized by a County Board of Instruction