

cost of less than one thousand dollars a year, to the saving to the country of more than fifty thousand dollars a year in the prices of the books alone, apart from their uniformity and best adaptation to the schools."

As a first response to this proposition, the Chief Superintendent has received the following from G. W. Ross, Esq., M.P., Public School Inspector for No. 1 Lambton:—

"NAPANEE, September 10th, 1875.

"MY DEAR SIR:—I read your letter in this morning's *Mail* on my way to Ottawa. While not venturing an opinion on the general question in dispute, I would like to say that your suggestion about submitting text-books to a committee of teachers and inspectors for revision is, in my opinion, the *true one*. I would like very much that this suggestion of yours would prevail. Nothing would satisfy the teachers and inspectors so well. It would be both practical and popular, and you will get my cordial support, as well as all the assistance I can render you through the *Ontario Teacher* in carrying out that idea. Excuse me for troubling you, but I considered your plan so reasonable and so *good*, that I could not refrain from writing.

"Yours truly,

"GEO. W. ROSS,

"Inspector, Div. No. 1, Lambton.

"The Rev. E. Ryerson, D.D., Toronto."

The following proceedings of the Council of Public Instruction also relate to the revision of the Canadian Series of text-books:

According to the printed minutes of the Council of Public Instruction, on the 16th of October.

The Chief Superintendent requested the Committee to consider the mode of applying the grant of \$1,000 for revising text-books.

Ordered,—That the attention of the Committee on School Regulations and Text-Books be called to the existence of the grant, and that the letters relating to the subject be referred to them.

Subsequently, in December, the following resolutions were proposed by the Chief Superintendent:

"1. That the Legislature of this country, by successive Acts of Parliament, and under successive administrations of government, has sanctioned and provided for the application of the principle of uniformity of text-books in our public schools, a principle which is sanctioned by all countries, both in Europe and America, where systems are established for the education of the mass of the people in public schools.

"2. That when the present system of public education was established, more than twenty-five years since, a great variety of text-books were found in the schools then existing, to the acknowledged injury of the schools, and the great expense of parents of pupils.

"3. That the Council of Public Instruction adopted a prudent and patriotic course of proceeding, by gradually lessening the variety of text-books in the schools, and at length adopting from the Irish National Board of Education a uniform series of text-books most extensively approved and used in both England and Scotland, as well as in Ireland, translated into continental languages and an edition of them printed in the United States.

"4. That since the introduction of a uniform series of text-books in our public schools, leaving the printing and sale of them open to the competition of free trade, the prices of books to parents have been greatly reduced and the efficiency of the schools greatly promoted, parents being relieved from the expense of buying new books on removing their children from one school to another, their children from the loss of time, and the burden of learning in new text books; and teachers from the labour and perplexity of using new text-books after having familiarized themselves with one series of approved books.

"5. That our own Legislature, as in the case of other educating countries has prescribed the subjects to be taught in the public schools; but it does not follow that, because all youth are required to be taught the same subjects, or that a uniform series of text-books is used in teaching those subjects, that therefore the minds of either teacher or youth are thereby cramped or cast in the same mould, as is manifest in our colleges, where prescribed text-books are used by both professors and students, and as is manifest in such cities as Philadelphia, New York, Boston, &c., as well as in European educating countries, and where uniform series of books are used in all their public schools.

"6. That no author has any pecuniary interest whatever in any text books sanctioned by the Council of Public Instruction; that

the copyright of these text-books is exclusively the property of the Province, that the Legislature recognising the provincial character and ownership of these text-books has provided both in 1874 and 1875 for their thorough revision under the direction of the Council, so that anything found to be objectionable in them may be removed and that their defects may be remedied, and that the intentions of the Legislature should be fairly and honestly carried into effect by this Council in the revision of those text-books.

"7. That as in the High Schools and Collegiate Institutes the greater part of the books used in teaching the classics of ancient and foreign modern languages, and the higher subjects of English Education which are not published in this country, but must be imported from abroad, option as to the text-books may be allowed to a considerable extent, without materially interfering with the efficiency of the schools or causing great additional expense to parents.

"8. That in regard to the Public Schools, strong objection is entertained by the local school authorities generally, to changes of text-books, as appears by correspondence on the part of Public School Inspectors and Teachers addressed to this Council by its invitation in public advertisement, but a desire is expressed that the books in use should be carefully revised.

"9. That in view of the experience of the past, and the general wish of local school authorities, the authorized series of text-books for the public schools be carefully revised as far as may be found expedient; that any one or more of them which may have been found unacceptable or defective may be dropped from the authorized list, after due notice, so as to protect the interests of publishers and parents, and others substituted for them; or that the option of two books specified may be authorized, so that the less acceptable or less suitable book may generally fall into disuse and be superseded by the better book without causing disorder in the classes of the school, or needless expense to parents.

"10. That to encourage Canadian authorship and the interests of Canadian publishers, prizes be offered for the best revision of text-books, and for any new text-books required, according to specifications laid down by the Council."

After discussion of the subject the following resolution, moved by Rev. Bishop Canavan, was unanimously adopted:

"*Ordered*,—That the report of the Committee on Text Books be recommended for their consideration and subsequent report; also that the Chief Superintendent be requested to furnish the Committee with the resolutions prepared by him as a substitute: that it be an instruction to the Committee to provide for the admission of a choice of text-books, under due restrictions, as well as for the revision of the present series."

THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS IN CALIFORNIA.

Probably few of our readers have an idea of the rivalry and competition existing among school-book publishers, and of the varied resources and appliances which they bring into play to accomplish their aims and purposes. The entire country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, constitutes one vast battle-ground upon which they contend and wrestle, with ever-varying results; and what is worse than a real conflict of arms, the struggle is never ended. Every inch of vantage ground has to be hotly contested for, and then when gained, no amount of intrenching will insure its retention. The victor to-day becomes the vanquished to-morrow. All the fruits of one day's hard fighting are lost by a flank movement or a night surprise. Instead of having one foe to watch and contend with, a score of opposing forces are constantly bearing down front and rear, ready to join hands for the time being, and make common cause against the common enemy: to wit, the victor in the last struggle.

California has just been the arena of one of the hottest of engagements between these publishers. The agents or generals of the respective houses suddenly swooped down upon us like a thief in the night; they came from New York, they came from Boston, and they came from Chicago and other points, snuffing the battle from afar, and all eager for the fray. The State Board was to select school-books for a period of five years, and each one of the contestants arrived in fighting trim. There was the festive Soper, small of stature, but quick and wiry in his movements, and a firm believer in the old proverb that more flies are to be caught with molasses than with vinegar. Wm. M. has established quite a reputation out here as a story-teller. If you ever fall in his company, get him to tell you how he subjugated South Carolina and took captive her dusky legislators. Soper had had the advantage of real military service, and he unfurled the banner of the Appletons with