

"to the various Districts, one of which I had intended to make during the latter part of the current year. Should the plan thus briefly explained be approved by the Governor-General in Council, I propose to devote the next three or four months to its accomplishment, by going to the United States and England, to make the arrangements suggested, and to select and procure specimen books for the school libraries, to lay before the Board of Education for Upper Canada, for their examination and judgment.

"With these remarks I submit this important subject to the favorable consideration of the Governor-General in Council; and should the task I have proposed be approved of, I will lose no time in prosecuting it. In the meantime, I would respectfully recommend that John George Hodgins, Esq., Senior Clerk in the Education Office, be authorized, by the Governor-General in Council, to act as Deputy Superintendent of Schools for Upper Canada during my absence, as I have entire confidence in his integrity, knowledge, and ability."

(Signed,) E. RYERSON.

The Honorable James Leslie,
Secretary of the Province, Montreal.

Any further steps for giving effect to the plan thus proposed, were deferred for more than a year.

In 1850, the Chief Superintendent again submitted a plan for the establishment of school libraries to the consideration of the Governor-General in Council, in a letter, of which the following is a copy.

(Copy.)
EDUCATION OFFICE,
Toronto, 21st September, 1850.

"SIR,—I beg most respectfully to solicit the attention of His Excellency the Governor-General, in Council, to the letter which I had the honor to address you the 16th July, 1849, on the steps preparatory to the introduction of School Libraries in the several Counties, Cities, Towns and Villages of Upper Canada. That letter was printed as part of the correspondence in the School Law of Upper Canada, laid before the Legislature at its last session, and printed, pages 55, 56. I hereto annex a copy of it [See the letter last above quoted.]

"I am fully satisfied of the propriety and practical character of the recommendations contained in the annexed copy of that letter. During the last few weeks I have attended at Philadelphia, a National Convention of three days' continuance, the object of which was the universal diffusion of thorough Christian Education throughout the several United States, embracing a consideration of the several systems of Public Instruction and Educational Institutions from Primary Schools up to the Universities, their defects and remedies for them. This Convention was attended by State Governors and State Superintendents of Schools, Presidents and Professors of Colleges, Educationists and distinguished Teachers, from various States. In my intercourse with many of these gentlemen, of large experience in matters of popular Education, I found, without exception, the most unreserved approval of the plan which I propose for the introduction of School Libraries into Upper Canada. I was informed by several of them, that the most serious drawback to the success of their system of School libraries with the older States is the heterogeneous collection of unsuitable books which have been largely introduced into them, by the pressing competition of the rival publishers and itinerant book vendors, in the absence of any judicious State Board to select and recommend Library Books. Repeated attempts have been made in the States of Massachusetts and New York, to remedy this evil, which has brought discredit upon their library system, and paralyzed it in many places; but though the subject has been discussed in books, pamphlets, and addresses, and pressed in official reports, the evil continues, from opposition made by the rival parties who are each interested in selling his own books, and at as high prices as possible. I was assured without exception, by these experienced American Educationists, that had they at the commencement of their State system, adopted regulations and measures similar to those provided by law in Upper Canada, in regard to School Text and Library Books, the progress of their Schools and Libraries would have been much more rapid and satisfactory; and some of them expressed the opinion that there was little hope of much improvement in their Common Schools, beyond the limits of Cities and Towns, until some such system as had been provided by law amongst us, should be adopted among them in regard to Text and Library Books, and the inspection of Schools. Indeed, one gentleman, who has for some time been President of the Board of Education for the State of Michigan, and who devotes most of his time to delivering Educational lectures throughout the States, applied and obtained from me documents that would enable him to prepare a lecture

"on the system of Public Instruction in Upper Canada, which he intends to make the subject of one of the short course of four or five lectures which he is accustomed to deliver in each of the Principal towns in the State. The Connecticut State Superintendent of Schools (who has been an Educational State Officer for many years, has visited Canada, and made himself familiar with our system and School statistics), stated on one occasion, that more progress has been made in Upper Canada, in the system of Common Schools, during the last five years, than in any state of the American Union, and that the new School law in Upper Canada, was an improvement upon that of any of their States.

"Such opinions from such quarters were not a little gratifying and encouraging to me; and I found by conversation with Booksellers that the plan detailed in the annexed copy of letter, in regard to the mode of procuring and selecting Books for School Libraries will be found eminently economical and advantageous to our local Councils, and all engaged in the establishment of public School Libraries.

"I propose during the next three or four months to make the necessary tour and arrangements for carrying that plan into effect, and therefore pray that His Excellency will be pleased to order a warrant for five hundred pounds (£500) to issue in my favor, to be expended and accounted for in the manner stated in the annexed copy of letter."

(Signed,) E. RYERSON.

To the Honorable James Leslie,
Secretary of the Province, Toronto."

The following is a copy of the Provincial Secretary's reply to the foregoing letter:—

(Copy.)

"SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
Toronto, 27th September, 1850.

"REVEREND SIR,—I am commanded by the Governor-General to inform you that His Excellency has had under his consideration in Council your letter of the 16th July, 1849, and the 21st instant, suggesting the propriety of your proceeding to Europe, for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements for the establishment of School Libraries in the various Townships in Upper Canada, and requesting the issue of an accountable warrant for the sum of £500, for that purpose, to be charged on the grant for establishing School Libraries in the various Townships of Upper Canada.

"His Excellency has been pleased to direct the issue of the warrant in your favor for the above amount, and has also granted you leave of absence to proceed to Europe, to make the arrangements contemplated in your letter. His Excellency has also been pleased to authorize John George Hodgins, Esquire, to act as your Deputy during your absence."

(Signed,) J. LESLIE,
Secretary.

The Reverend E. Ryerson, D. D.
Chief Superintendent of Education for U. C."

In a Report to the Legislature 1858, embodying these letters, Dr. Ryerson remarks as follows:—

"Having proceeded to England, I was enabled by the aid of the Privy Council on Education, as narrated in a preceding part of this report, (pp. 29-34) to make advantageous arrangements with publishers in London, Edinburgh and Dublin, for the purchasing of books for our Public School Libraries, and made considerable selections for examination from their catalogues. I afterwards made similar arrangements with publishers, and similar selections from their catalogues, in Boston, New York and Philadelphia. The examination of the books thus selected occupied a great part of my morning and evening hours during nearly two years.

"But before deciding on the kind of libraries, and the mode of establishing them, or submitting regulations for that purpose to the consideration of the Council of Public Instruction, I made a tour of Upper Canada, and, as previously announced in a printed circular, I submitted the whole question as to the mode of supplying and establishing public libraries to a convention in each county, consisting of the Municipal Councillors, Clergy, Magistrates, Local Superintendents, Trustees, and as many other persons as chose to attend, and received an expression of strong, and in most cases unanimous approbation of the system which has been adopted, and is still pursued for establishing and extending public libraries in the various Municipalities of Upper Canada.

"Thus, so far from acting on the mere imaginings of my own mind, without authority, and at variance with the example of the mother country, I have had the express authority and aid of the Governor-General in Council, have largely advised with experienced and able educationists in the neighbouring States, have followed the