

ling book peddlers, who, pretending to be agents of the State contractors, or asserting that they will sell cheaper than the contract prices, palm on to the libraries inferior and cheap editions of the work selected, or of worthless books in their places, and in common and frail bindings. Every book on this list is contracted for at considerably less than the publisher's retail price for the same in common binding, while the binding provided for by the contract is a much more expensive, as well as durable binding, than ordinary cloth or even sheep binding.

"No book peddler can furnish these books in equally good editions, and in equal binding, for the prices given in this circular.

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"It is hoped that this simple and easy method of supplying the libraries with books will commend itself to the good sense of the people, and will induce a more liberal support of these valuable agencies of popular education. It would be difficult to devise a more simple plan. It is like bringing a large book store home to each district. A large list of good books—more than twice as large as any book store in the State can show—has been carefully selected, with the aid of some of the best men in the State.

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"All orders for books and stationery must be sent to the State Superintendent through the Secretary of the Board of School Commissioners, the Secretary keeping an account of the same," etc.

In the State of New York, the library system has, under the pernicious efforts of itinerant vendors, as just pointed out, greatly declined. The *New York Teacher* thus give some of the reasons for this decline :—

"The trustees refuse to be troubled with the care of the library, thus consigning it to an unfavorable location in the section, and often hide it in some dark corner of the garret, or stow it into some out-buildings where its only visitors are rats, mice and spiders. They exercise a low and pernicious taste in the selection of books. Dark and bloody tales of war and bloodshed, the silly catch-penny publications of unprincipled publishers, and the dry, uninteresting matter of some cheap old book, usurp the place of the instructive, the elevating, the refining, the progressive issues of reputable publishing houses. They seem to regard it as a great evil that they cannot divert this sacred fund from its appropriate channel. Almost daily applications are made to the State Superintendent for permission to apply the Library money to the payment of teachers' wages, and that, too, when the section is destitute of many useful items of apparatus; sometimes even of a globe and blackboard."

STEPS TAKEN BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT FOR ONTARIO TO SUPPLY OUR SCHOOLS WITH CHEAP AND USEFUL BOOKS, MAPS, AND APPARATUS, ETC.

It now remains for us to state what are the steps which have been taken by the Ontario Department to supply the schools with prize and library books, maps and apparatus. In 1850 and 1851, the Chief Superintendent of Education went to England and the United States, and made special and advantageous arrangements with publishers there to furnish the Department with such books, etc., as might be required, at the lowest rates. These arrangements have been revised from time to time. The last revision was made in 1867, when the Deputy Superintendent was authorized to proceed to England to confer with the leading publishers personally on the subject. From his Report to the Chief Superintendent on the result of his mission, we make the following extracts. He says: "Upon enquiry, I found that none of our old publishers were disposed to offer better terms than I had been enabled to make with them some

years ago. The new publishers, too, were as little disposed as the old ones to offer more than the usual trade terms to exporters. With several of the publishers I had some little difficulty, when I first called, to induce them to modify their terms. They alleged that they had already given us their best export terms for cash. After sundry conferences and explanations, they were at length induced, with two or three exceptions, to agree to an additional discount for cash of 2½, 5, 7½ or 10 per cent. (as the case might be) over and above their former rates of discount to the Department. Five per cent. was the average additional discount which I was thus enabled to secure for the Department, together with the advantage, in most cases, as heretofore, of the odd books, viz.:—7 as 6½, 13 as 12, or 25 as 24. This additional discount will be quite sufficient to pay the customs duty which has recently been imposed upon books coming into the Province, and thus enable the Department to supply the schools with a very greatly increased variety of books at the old rates, viz.:—on an average currency for sterling pieces (i.e., 20 cents for the shilling sterling)."

These arrangements for the purchase of books, &c., having been explained to the Committee of the House of Assembly, appointed to enquire into the matter, together with the terms on which the books are supplied to the schools, the Committee reported to the House upon the facts as follows :—

"Your Committee have also made a thorough investigation of the Depository department, and find that the existing arrangements for purchasing stock are satisfactory, and well fitted for securing the same on the most favourable terms. The mode of disposing of the books is equally satisfactory."

REGULATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT FOR SELECTING LIBRARY AND PRIZE BOOKS FOR THE SCHOOLS—LORD ELGIN'S OPINION OF THEM.

In his *Special Report* in 1853, the Chief Superintendent thus refers to the regulations for selecting Library and Prize Books for the Schools :—

"If anything could add force to the official documents referred to [detailing the establishment of our library system], it would be the personal testimony of the Earl of Elgin, who was Governor-General of Canada during the whole period of the establishment and maturing of the Normal and Library branches of the school system, who familiarized himself with its working, and aided on every possible occasion in its development. On one occasion, his Lordship happily termed the Normal School 'the seed-plot of the whole system;' on another occasion, with no less force than heart, he designated 'Township and County Libraries as the crown and glory of the institutions of the Province.' On his resigning the Government of Canada, Lord Elgin prepared and presented to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies an elaborate report of his Canadian administration.

In that report, dated December, 1854, he devotes several pages to a comprehensive view of our school system, including a minute account of the system of public library, and the general machinery and administration of the school law and its results. * * * After adverting to the comparative state of education in Upper Canada in the years from 1847 to 1853 inclusive, Lord Elgin proceeds as follows :—

"In the former of these years the Normal School, which may be considered the foundation of the system, was instituted, and at the close of the latter, the first volume issued from the Educational Department to the public school libraries, which are its crown and completion. If it may be affirmed of reciprocity with the United States, that it introduces an era in the commercial history of the