

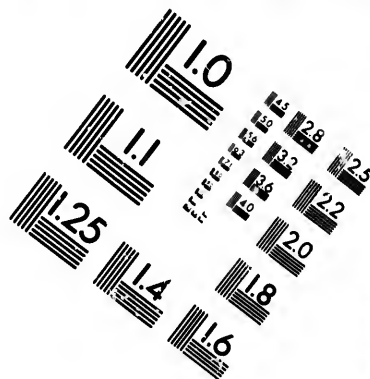
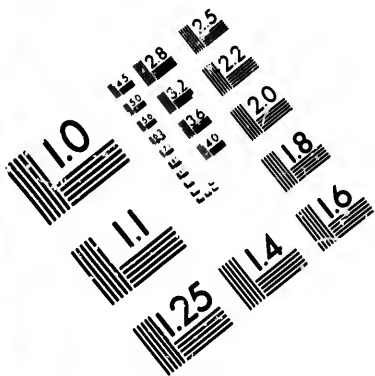
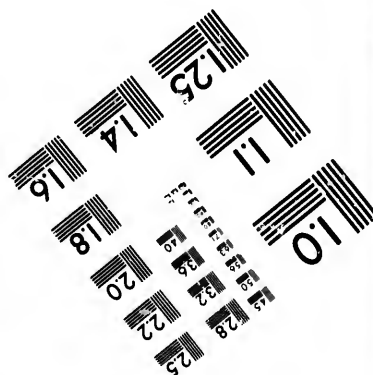
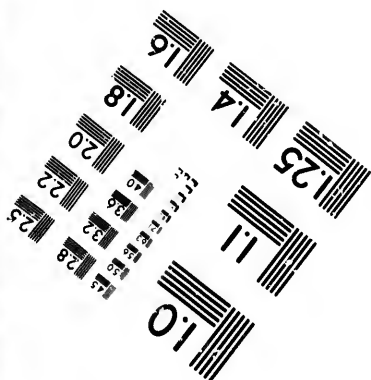
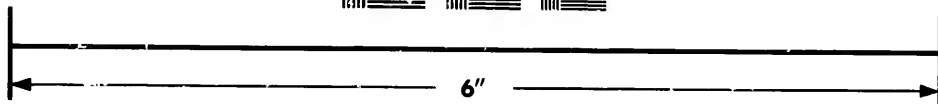
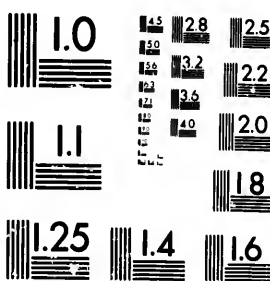


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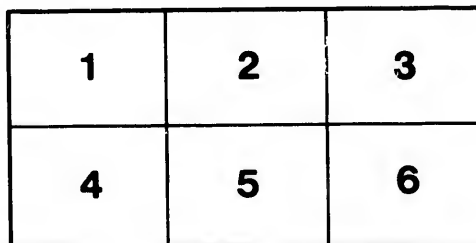
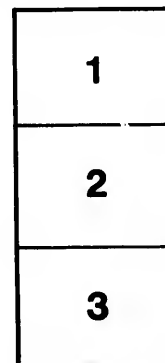
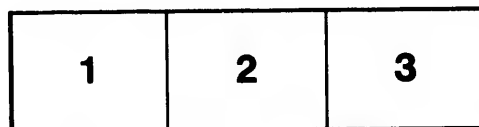
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SPEECH

DELIVERED BY THE

HON. G. W. ROSS,

MINISTER OF EDUCATION,

ON THE

MOTION TO CONSIDER THE AGREEMENT RESPECTING THE
PUBLICATION OF A NEW SERIES OF READERS,

IN THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO,

MARCH, 1885.

TORONTO:

PRINTED BY THE "GRIP" PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1885.

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THE READER QUESTION.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED BY THE

HON. G. W. ROSS, MINISTER OF EDUCATION, IN THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO, MARCH, 1885.

ON calling the Orders of the day Mr. Ross, of Middlesex, moved the following resolution :—"That the House approves of the agreements laid before the House by command of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, bearing date the twenty-sixth day of November and the fourth day of February, respectively, and expressed to be made between W. J. Gage & Company, of the City of Toronto, Thomas and William Nelson, of the City of Edinburgh, the Canada Publishing Company (Limited), of the one part, and Her Majesty the Queen of the other part."

Continuing he said, in asking the House to approve of this resolution, it becomes my duty to enter into certain explanations, some of an historical character, others more of a business nature, regarding the much-vexed Reader question.

You are aware, Mr. Speaker, that for many years it was the policy of the Education Department to authorize but one series of Readers. From 1846 down to 1883 this policy was uniformly carried out, and the wisdom of it had apparently become the settled conviction of those more immediately connected with our school system. It

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might be of interest, however, to point out that the policy of Ontario in this respect was somewhat unique. In every State of the Union, with one single exception, a diversity of text-books always prevailed. A similar policy prevails in England and Scotland, and in a somewhat limited degree in the other Provinces of the Dominion.

When the necessity arose in 1882 of preparing a new series of Readers for our public schools, my predecessor felt that the example of other countries was worthy of consideration, and although he did not go as far as to admit of free trade in Readers, as is the case in the United States, he thought a diversity of text-books was desirable. With this object in view he made the following announcement in a Circular, dated 25th January, 1882. * * * *

"Experience has, however, justified the conclusion that in the production of needed text-books the business enterprise of competing publishers can be well relied upon for their preparation, and that the possession by the Department of the copyright is less effective in control than the conditions imposed upon the authorization of any text-book or any new edition.

"To secure competition it is necessary that two or more text-books should be authorized in elementary subjects, and the improvement in all new text-books since 1877 proves its practical success.

"The only subject in which this principle was not applied in 1877 was that of Reading, and the then Canadian Series of Readers was left the only authorized series, from hesitation to make any change, the copyright being in the Department, and assumed to govern as to price and quality. These Readers had been prepared in 1868, and dissatisfaction with them prevailed in 1877, and has now become general."

In carrying out this policy he received applications from various publishers for the new series of Readers. Nelson and Campbell submitted the Royal Readers; the Canada Publishing Company, the Royal Canadian; Messrs. Gage & Company, the series known as the Canadian Readers, all of which were at different times submitted to the Central Committee for consideration. Owing to the illness

of my predecessor and his absence from the country, the Education Department was placed by Order-in-Council under the supervision of the Honourable Mr. Hardy, Provincial Secretary, who in carrying out the well-understood policy of Mr. Crooks, authorized two series of Readers. I do not propose to discuss the educational merits of these Readers; suffice it to say that each met with the approval of a certain section of the community, and each had merits peculiar to itself.

The question considered by the public, however, was not so much the merits of the Readers as the inconvenience and expense to which they were subjected by want of uniformity.

As was natural to expect, a certain amount of political acrimony was also imported into the discussion, and the advantages of a diversity of Readers lost sight of. On my accession to office in 1883 I determined that this policy should be changed—that we should revert to the former system, and have but one series of Readers for all our public schools. I need not here enter into a consideration of the reasons for this change. It will be apparent at once that the policy to which the people had become accustomed, which enabled the child in one portion of the Province, if he removed to another, to bring his text-books with him without loss—which enabled our teachers, no matter in what school they taught, to avail themselves of previously acquired information—was one which for simplicity as well as for effectiveness should not be rudely set aside.

We are sometimes charged with having changed our policy in this. I think there is nothing in that charge, Mr. Speaker. An individual may be perfectly justified in shaping his course according to new ideas, and so in a matter of this kind in regard to which there was room for a difference of opinion—in regard to which there are precedents both ways, I think we are quite justified in bowing to the public opinion of Ontario, and reversing a decision previously arrived at.

And what applies to Readers, applies to text-books on every elementary subject. I readily admit that in the study of the

sciences it is absolutely necessary to consider great principles from different standpoints. We cannot in a spirit of economy lay down a hard and fast rule, and say we shall study but one author. There are various schools of political economy, science and classics. In all the higher branches of thought, the greater varieties of mind that can be brought to bear on the study of the question the better. But in geography, grammar, etc., we can very well afford to limit the child to one text-book, trusting to the intelligent, well-trained teacher to add to the necessary limitations of a text-book out of his own mental storehouse, and in this way supply that variety of illustration and fact which it would be impossible as well as inadvisable to attempt to supply in any other way. And I trust the change I have been able to inaugurate will be extended to Geographies, Grammars, etc., so that where there are now nine of the former there will eventually be but one, and pupils and parents will thus be relieved of the inconvenience and expense to which they are subjected at present. Now this brings me to the time I assumed office, and I am free to confess that this question was a very perplexing one.

Notice the position: The series of Readers in use since 1868 was by Order-in-Council to be cancelled in August, 1885. There were two others authorized, and a third before the Government, pressing its claims for authorization.

Now here were certain vested rights which could not be ignored, particularly in the case of the two series that received the *imprimatur* of the Government. The publishers had invested a large sum of money in their preparation, and in setting them aside the principles of common justice required that due consideration should be given to the amount they had expended. Besides, many schools had already adopted certain portions of them, and any change of policy required an honest review of all these considerations. To cancel their authorization at once would put many parents and children to expense. I came to the conclusion, therefore, that we must allow any school where new Readers had been introduced to continue to use them for a reasonable time. Then how were we to dispose of the vested rights of those whose Readers were authorized? We were open to two lines

of action: One was to repudiate their claims, the other was to grant reasonable compensation. Repudiation, however, was not for one moment to be considered. It might be held that these publishers had no claim which could be established in any Court, yet the authorization granted by the Department had led to an expenditure which would be at least a claim in equity, and as we believe that no Government can afford to do wrong even to a private citizen on the grounds of public policy, we felt that in any settlement of this claim, the element of compensation must be considered. Now, how was this to be done? We might have asked the house to vote a lump sum in lieu of all loss, but then how were we to arrive at this amount? An effort was made to ascertain what the loss really was, but then claims were set up for prospective profits, consequential damages, and so on, and thus it was impossible to fix upon a sum. Then it was proposed to select from the three series authorized such numbers as would form a composite series, and thus each publisher having one or more books in the new series would, from the sale of these books, be able to recoup himself for the cancellation of others. This question had also to be considered from two standpoints. First, we had to make such a selection as would educationally secure a suitable series. Unless the books forming the composite series were properly graduated, the new series thus formed would be so faulty as to be detrimental to the best interests of the schools; and no matter what might be the difficulties of the settlement, any arrangement which did not give prominence to the educational interests would be necessarily faulty. The other consideration was such a selection as would equalize the profit and loss. It might be quite easy to make such selections from the three series as would secure one well graded series for reading purposes, and yet at the same time the relative profit and loss of the owners out of the books would not be properly proportioned. From the Return laid before the House it will be seen that the Central Committee made such a selection as would no doubt meet the educational difficulty, but then, as the series consisted mainly of the most valuable books prepared by one of the publishers, it is quite apparent the financial settlement could not be satisfactory to the other publishers,

and so it turned out. Having, therefore, failed to make such a settlement on this line as would financially and educationally meet the case, the only alternative was the preparation of a new series. I frankly confess that this solution of the question was not a pleasant outlook. Knowing well the criticism to which a new series of Readers would be exposed; knowing well the difficulty of securing proper editors, engravers and typographers, I hesitated long before committing myself to this policy. The duties of my department were sufficiently onerous without this additional labour, but nevertheless I felt it would never do to shrink from duty if the interests of our school population required the sacrifice. Accordingly I undertook the more difficult task of preparing a new series of Readers, and it is for the country to say how far I have been successful. There were circumstances, however, in connection with the undertaking which afforded me encouragement. The criticisms on the series of the previously authorized Readers were fresh in the public mind; I was fully informed as to the elements which were necessary, as developed by these criticisms, to a suitable series of Readers. I had before me such books as were found suitable in the United States and in England, and on these lines I felt assured that with reasonable attention the difficulty might be overcome, but it was necessary first to make such arrangements for the publication of the new series as would fully protect the public interest. The only advantage of the system prevailing in the United States is that competition between the publishers secures excellence in typography and the other elements of the mechanical outfit of a book. The experience of our uniform series has shown that unless publishers are placed under the most rigid restrictions the public interest would be sacrificed, and books of poor quality would be thrown upon the market. Now the literary excellence of a book is one thing, and its mechanical qualities are another. Both, however, are important, and it was in regard to mechanical details I had first to provide. Accordingly in the agreement entered into with the first publishers they are under heavy bonds to manufacture books of the very best quality.

(1) The typography, binding and paper must be approved of by the Department, the quality of each being fixed by the agreement.

(2) An officer of the Department is empowered under our agreement to enter the establishment of any of the publishers and examine every sheet as it issues from the press, and every book as it issues from the bindery. By this close supervision we hope to maintain the high standard which the samples already issued are found to possess. Under Dr. Ryerson's administration there was no such agreement with the publishers. The rule was, upon the issue of a new edition to place the sample of such edition in the Department, but there was no supervision by which the excellence of that sample could be maintained, and a uniform standard of excellence continued.

(3) As the publication was confined to three firms it was necessary to see that the retail trade upon whom the ultimate sale of the books depended were amply protected. Under Dr. Ryerson there was no provision made whereby any discount was guaranteed to the retail trade. They were entirely at the mercy of the publishers, and although it may be assumed they were fairly dealt with on the whole, yet this was not owing to any provision in the regulations of the Education Department. Under our agreement we have provided that the retailers shall have at least a discount of twenty per cent., and this on a staple article might fairly be considered reasonable, as I will show further on. We have also provided that any person purchasing in small quantities shall be allowed a similar discount, so that boards of trustees who supply their pupils with books, as provided by law, can avail themselves of this privilege.

(4) We have also protected the public against unnecessary alterations and changes in the text of the Readers. A common practice for a publisher, after he has placed a book upon the market which has a somewhat extensive sale, is to make a few unimportant alterations and then announce a new edition of the book. This has caused the retail trade loss, and has led to much expense, because a new edition is eagerly sought for as being supposed to possess elements of excellence not contained in the discarded edition.

(5) If it appears that the new Readers afford too large a profit to the publishers, or are sold for more than what would furnish all parties concerned a reasonable profit, we have the power at the end of five years to reduce the selling price to the consumer. Of course it must be quite clear that it is a very difficult matter for any person not an expert in the business to ascertain the real cost of producing a book. In fact, at best, it is largely a matter of comparison, and so careful have we been that no loss should accrue to the public that we have taken the power, at all events, to revise the prices of the text-books and reduce them if it be found, as already stated, that the cost of manufacture has been over-estimated, or if it be found that they can be more cheaply produced.

(6) In the event of the publishers violating the conditions of the contract in any substantial way, we have the right to cancel the contract and offer the publication to some other firm; but if, on the other hand, the contract is in all material respects kept inviolate, then it remains in full force and effect for ten years. It may be said that this is too long a period. However, it must not be forgotten that the old National Readers remained authorized for twenty-one years; the old Ontario Readers for sixteen years, and in all probability the new Readers will be authorized for double the period allowed by this contract.

(7) It is also a condition of the agreement that our books should be printed and published in Canada. The earlier editions of the Irish Readers were published in Great Britain, the old Ontario Readers in Glasgow, the Royal Readers in Edinburgh, and Gage's in the United States. For the first time in the history of Ontario it may be said that we have a purely Canadian Series. Not only was the editorial and the greater portion of the artistic work done by Canadians, but nearly all the material and the whole of the workmanship is Canadian. And although on this account the Readers may not necessarily be superior to any previously published, still I may safely say that we are entitled to no small credit for endeavouring to produce in our own country what heretofore was the work of foreign workmen and artizans.

(8) We have retained in our own hands the copyright of these Readers, and on that account have a control which could not have been secured in any other way. It has been said, however, that to control the copyright is no new feature in connection with the publication of text-books. It is generally supposed that under Dr. Ryerson every text-book was copyrighted by the Department. This is not the case. Out of sixteen text-books prescribed and authorized prior to 1872, the copyright of only eight was in the Department; and out of forty recommended for use the copyright of only ten was held. I regard it as of primary importance that persons responsible for the publication of text-books should have the fullest control over them, and I sincerely trust that before long every text-book in use in our public schools will be similarly controlled by the Department.

(9) As a certain *quid pro quo* for the extended right of publication, we have charged the publishers with a certain portion of the cost. It might be said that they should have borne all the expense of preparing the new Readers, and that they could well afford to do so. I hope to show before I have done that as a matter of fact those who publish these Readers will recoup the Department for every dollar incurred in their preparation, and that the sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars, which they pay immediately, is but a small portion of the amount yet to be realized. Now it might be asked if, after all, this settlement is intended as compensation to the publishers, how it can be shown that the public are not the losers. The answer is quite simple. Under the previous agreement the Department had the right at any moment to cancel the authorization of the books; whatever profits accrued to the publishers were uncertain. Under this arrangement the profit, whether large or small, is certain, inasmuch as they are confirmed in their right of publication, providing they comply with the agreement, for the period of ten years. The element of uncertainty is therefore removed, and the compensation arises, not from any increased profit but from the fact that the profit is constant, and extended over a fixed period. In dismissing this portion of the subject I hope

I am not overstating the matter when I say that the bond entered into with the publishers secures the highest quality of workmanship, permanence of publication, reasonable profits to the retail trade, and does justice to those whose books were cancelled in order to make way for the new series of Readers. But it may be said that this bond creates a monopoly, and that the Government has no right to lend itself to any system by which free competition will be excluded. My answer is, that under any system calculated to secure uniformity of text-books it is impossible to prevent a monopoly. By the regulations issued by Dr. Ryerson, under which the old series of Readers was published, it was provided that the first publishers, Messrs. Campbell & Son, should have the exclusive right of publication for one year, and that afterwards any other publisher would have a right to publish provided he recouped Messrs. Campbell & Son for any outlay which they had incurred in placing their books upon the market.

Notwithstanding the freedom thus permitted, Messrs Campbell & Son really enjoyed the exclusive publication from 1868 until 1871, at which time Warwick & Son were given the right of publication. Now observe, although there were no restraints upon this right so far as all the other publishers in Ontario were concerned, yet we find that these two firms remained the sole publishers of the Readers from 1871 until 1878. Was not this a monopoly? Did not this give exclusive and special advantages, and even with the advanced facilities which later years supplied we find that down to 1883, the time at which the new series were authorized, there were only four publishers at one time supplying the Canadian public with Readers. What advantage then has competition over the present system? In my own opinion it has none whatever, especially when we consider that this competition existed under an agreement so liberally construed and so limited in its restraints as not to prevent the deterioration of the Readers, and serious loss to the consumers. As a matter of fact, three out of the four who were the exclusive publishers of the old Readers are now publishers of the new Readers, and the difference between a monopoly of four and a monopoly

of three, if you choose to call it such, is so infinitesimal as not to be worth discussion for one moment. Besides, these three firms are, after all, competing with each other. They are not in partnership; their interests are diverse, and if by superior binding or by superior paper or in any other way one can secure a larger sale for his books than the other, the public will have the advantage of such competition. And even if we had thrown open the publication of these Readers to the public, the number of firms competing with each other would necessarily be limited. The plant and machinery necessary for their publication at such a high standard of excellence as we require are necessarily expensive, and it may be safely stated that in the Province of Ontario not more than six or seven firms are at this hour competent to enter upon such an undertaking. Besides, if combinations are so much to be deplored under the present system, how was it that combinations were not prevented under the old system. In a letter to a leading newspaper from Mr. Warwick I find the following statement:

"After the trade was thus made free to all, other three went 'into the business, and eventually an understanding was come to 'among us five—that was Campbell and the rest of them—that we 'should charge one uniform price to all retailers. This went on for 'some time, till a particular kind of binding was used by one of the 'firms which was proclaimed far and wide to be much superior to 'any other sort. I immediately said that if we were all to be 'bound down to a uniform price, we should all have to be put on 'an equally advantageous footing as to this process of binding, for 'if the professedly superior was to be sold as low as what was 'represented as inferior, the business would go all one way. That 'was not agreed to, and I accordingly withdrew from the 'ring.' That was a ring under the system of open competition—a ring, declared to be so by one of its members. Hear what he says in another letter:

"You are aware that the copyright of the public school Readers 'was obtained by Dr. Ryerson on behalf of and now belongs to the 'Province, and that therefore any person on complying with certain

"conditions, can issue an edition of all these books, without being responsible to anyone for the manner in which he does this, or for the price he may charge, so long as the Departmental regulations are complied with. While thus the trade in these books is nominally free, practically it has fallen into the hands of five firms, of whom mine is one. The Department has in each case named a maximum retail charge, which cannot be exceeded; and it was thought that private competition would so keep down prices even below the figures mentioned, that the public would always be sure of getting supplied at the lowest possible figures. This, however, as a matter of fact, has not been realized in the past, and bids fair to be still less so in the future. Some time ago the firms spoken of formed a combination by which they bound themselves not to sell to the trade under a certain figure, say eighty-five cents."

In another place he says :

"We talk of the iron rings, and the woollen rings of the States. There is as complete a school book ring in Toronto as is to be found on this continent. I have been in it and I know."

Now this is a declaration of Mr. Warwick himself, who for seven or eight years, along with Mr. Campbell, was the publisher of the old Readers under the boasted system of open competition. Now I say that even if the publication of the Readers were open to the Dominion of Canada, there might be a combination formed. I have no doubt there would be a combination. We know that railway corporations, cotton and woollen manufacturers and oil refiners all form combinations, and the mere fact of free competition is no guarantee whatever against a combination. But anticipating the evil of a combination, which otherwise we might not be able to control, we have made such a contract that if the publishers do combine, they cannot inflict any injury upon the public interests concerned. Certainly there is greater security in the three, than there could have been when only two firms were publishing these books. Now I have given you the result of the old system in Ontario. In the United States even, where free competition, as Hon. gentlemen call it, prevails, there are combinations. Certain firms agree that they

shall not push the sale of the books in certain counties. In Quebec, where the dual system prevails, a certain man says: "Give me the "right to sell in these counties and you may take certain others." I have known even men of the high moral standard of newspaper publishers form combinations as to the price of advertisements. I have known even lawyers to do that sort of thing. I would not wonder if the Hon. member for London has an agreement with some others that they should charge certain prices for deeds, mortgages, etc. Such things happen in the best regulated communities, have happened in the case of publishers in the days gone by, and I have no doubt they will be made if regulations and bonds and agreements cannot be framed to prevent it. They say that love laughs at locks and keys, and I suppose book publishers will laugh at any contracts framed to prevent them looking after their own interests.

MR. MEREDITH.—They will laugh at the Minister of Education.

HON. MR. ROSS.—Yes; and they will laugh at the leader of the Opposition when he gets up to discuss this question.

Now, I come briefly to consider the Readers on their merits. If I can show that, apart from all trade reasons, the new books have merits peculiar to themselves, I will have furnished the House with at least one strong reason why the policy of the Education Department should be supported. I noticed incidentally that as a manufactured article they were the product of our Canadian industries. I might here add that, in addition, from a literary and artistic point of view they are also Canadian. I noticed recently an article in a public newspaper reflecting upon Canadian talent. The purpose of the article was evidently to minimize the literary culture of Canadians and their entire unfitness for the task of preparing text-books. I need not say that I do not sympathize with such an estimate of Canadian talent, nor am I assuming too much, Mr. Speaker, when I say that this House will not sympathize with it either. True, Canadians have not yet shewn that high culture and literary productiveness which characterize older countries, but we must remember that this is comparatively a new country; that a high degree of culture and refinement is the

product not entirely of the schools. Social ease, wealth and independence, all contribute to its development. Here, where the struggle for existence absorbs all the energies of our people, it could not be expected that the same attention would be given to literary pursuits as we find prevails either in England or in the older portions of the United States. And yet our history furnishes abundant proof that we are not wanting in that refinement and culture from which much may be expected in the near future. Sir William Dawson has contributed to the scientific productions of the age material of the highest value. Our own Dr. Wilson has more than a provincial reputation. Writers of Canadian history, and even a few writers in the higher fields of poetry and fiction, have made themselves known over the whole continent, and I think it is both becoming and proper that we should resent in no unmeaning terms the imputation to which I have alluded which was cast upon the literary efforts of our own people. In the preparation of text-books Canadian authors have been peculiarly successful. A Canadian history, written by Mr. Jeffers, has met with the universal approval of the profession. The work on mental arithmetic, by Dr. McLellan, has been reproduced in the United States as well as in England. O'Sullivan's manual, "Government of Canada," is now a text-book on the Course of the Law Society. But even if it were impossible to find in this country the highest talent for the work undertaken by the Department, it would be admitted on all hands that such a work should be Canadian in sentiment and sympathy. It cannot be said of the Readers hitherto used in our public schools that they were at all adapted to this country. Not only were the selections largely from a foreign literature, but in some subjects, particularly in Geography, they exalted foreign countries at the expense of Canada. I have sought to remedy this, and I hope I have not been unsuccessful in my efforts.

You will permit me also to remark that literary culture is not the only requisite for the authorship of a text-book. It is now conceded that no one but a teacher can prepare suitable examination papers. The same rule holds good in other departments of the teacher's work. The man who has studied a subject thoroughly

may convey his ideas clearly enough, but it is only the man who has taught the subject, who knows the standpoints from which it is regarded by the pupil; who knows the weakness with which a child sometimes grasps an idea, and the mode by which ideas can be best presented to the child's mind, that can properly prepare a text-book. The most successful books in the United States are those prepared by teachers. The best law books are those written by practical lawyers. The best biographies by those who are most thoroughly acquainted with the person of whom they write.

The editors of the Readers were all practical men. One, Mr. Little, was a teacher of over twenty years' experience, and an Inspector since 1871; Mr. Bryant is a gold medallist of Toronto University, and the Principal of one of our best Collegiate Institutes; Mr. Embree has an equally high standing. Editorially we had all the necessary culture, combined with the professional experience necessary. Besides, as I said before, we had the books prepared by the other publishers. We had over ninety samples of the books used in the United States and England, and it would be almost impossible for us with ordinary prudence and foresight to go astray.

Next, let me consider the plan of the new Readers. It will be observed that the First and Second Primers are larger than any previously published. The reasons for this are obvious. (1) In order to properly graduate the books it was necessary that the reading matter should be increased, and the scholar by a variety of lessons better prepared for the advanced books. The great complaint of the old primers was that they left the scholar unprepared for the Second Book. Every experienced educator takes the ground that the foundation for good reading is laid in the primary classes; that a variety of word forms is necessary to this foundation, and that in order to familiarize the child with word forms they must be repeated over and over again. Besides, if you are to interest the child in reading as an exercise you must embody the word forms which he is expected to remember in anecdote and narrative. This was not done in the old primer, but it is done in ours, and the same

rule is followed in Sheldon's, and Barnes', and Butler's publications, all extensively used in the New England States. I need not say that in studying variety in word forms we have also considered that literary excellence which the teacher can never with safety overlook if the purity of our English tongue is to be preserved and the child's vocabulary enlarged. And although confining ourselves to monosyllables we have in a certain sense been unable to secure the same elasticity of expression, still I think it will be found that but few sentences are either stilted or incomplete. In the advanced Readers it will be found this difficulty has been entirely overcome, and together with that variety which characterizes every text in reading will be found selections from such writers as Macaulay, and Longfellow, and Carlyle, and Huxley and scores of others which I need not wait to mention. (2) It will be found that the new Readers, particularly the primers, are phonetically arranged. So far as the uniformity of the language will permit, our sentences are all formed on this principle. Indeed, we have carried the principle further than has ever been done in any other text-book. Professor Meiklejohn has laid great stress on this arrangement of a primer. Those who teach reading phonetically will find great assistance from the plan of the new books. I am well aware that in recent primers in the United States, but little regard is paid to this principle; educators are not quite agreed as to its value, but, until it is shown to be valueless, it is not well, I think, to set aside what heretofore has been regarded as an essential part of a child's text-book.

Next in order I would notice the typography. Owing to the manner in which many of our school-houses are lighted, and to the indifferent character of the letter-press, I am informed by medical men that myopia has become quite a prevalent disease. The only remedy for this is better lighting and a larger letter-press. In this respect our books are equal to the best published anywhere, and are much in advance of any series hitherto used in Canadian schools. I would like to call special attention to the illustrations, not only on account of their artistic finish but on account of the

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lessons they teach. It may be said to be one of the advanced movements of the times to illustrate artistically every book placed in the hands of children. In no respect has popular education taken a greater stride than in this respect. The publishers of children's papers such as *St. Nicholas*, *The Boys' Own Magazine*, *The Band of Hope*, and other publications of a similar kind, have spared no pains or expense in securing the best talent, and in presenting forms the most life-like and attractive to their readers. Every true teacher recognizes the value of pictorial representations in the work of the school-room. He knows right well that nearly all the knowledge acquired by the child was knowledge presented in its objective form. Birds and flowers, animals and trees, are a reality to him. They are not creatures of the imagination, but objects that have made a distinct impression on his mind. Through them, and in similar ways, he has learned colour and form, the effect of light and shade, and all the other qualities by which he is able to distinguish one object from the other. In transferring the child from this what might be called nature's school to the more artificial surroundings of the school-room, the proper method of transition is by means of illustration. And he that is able to recall the pictures in the school-books of twenty years ago can realize the great improvement in the Reader of to-day as compared with the Reader of his boyhood years. On these illustrations, as well as on the literary work, we have employed Canadian artists. The sketches were drawn by Messrs. W. Cruikshank, Homer Watson, Robert Harris, Mrs. C. M. B. Shreiber, A. D. Patterson, J. L. Forster, T. M. Martin, F. M. Bell-Smith, E. S. Shrapnel, Arthur J. Reading, J. H. McFaul, F. C. V. Ede, and others.

The engraving was done by Mr. Charles State, a native Canadian ; and the electrotyping by the National Electro and Stereotype Company of the City of Toronto. In this way we have furnished another testimony of the progress which Ontario is making in the fine arts. But besides the beauty and finish of the pictures, it must not be forgotten that, as material for instruction, this quality alone would not be sufficient. The great difficulty in teaching reading is to get the

child to realize the meaning of the word-form. The object he knows from experience. The picture calls up the object. But the word-form has no resemblance to one or the other. How to train the child so that when he sees a certain word-form the mental camera will reproduce the idea of the real object, is a great difficulty. So far as a primer can assist in this process, our new Primers do assist, and out of the lesson the scholar may read almost every word contained in the letter-press. We have pursued the same plan as far as the Third Book, at which stage we feel the child's mind is sufficiently strengthened and his habits of thought sufficiently matured to enable him to dispense with the assistance of illustrations.

We have also endeavoured to render our books efficient aids to the young pupil in drawing. It is universally admitted now that what was an offence in the pupil of long ago, namely, a disposition to make pictures, is now a habit to be studiously cultivated. The young child, with only three or four recitations a day, finds time hanging heavily on his hands. The only way to occupy his mind is by giving him something to do. The drawing in the First and Second Primers supply that something, and while perhaps to him it may be amusement, the teacher sees in that diverting occupation a valuable exercise of hand and head.

Running parallel with this drawing course there is also a course of writing. The very first lesson taught is to be found in script as well as in ordinary letter-press, and the teacher who understands his work will not forget to require, as part of the daily work of the child, attention to these exercises. This, in a general way, is an outline of the work from the teacher's standpoint, and that I have succeeded tolerably well in meeting the teacher's idea I have the evidence of the most experienced to show. When the Primers were finished I sent copies of them to leading teachers in Canada and the United States, and will trouble the House to listen to the opinions of a few :

(1) THOMAS KIRKLAND,

Principal, Normal School, Toronto.

In accordance with the request contained in your letter of the 21st January, I have carefully examined the samples of the new Readers ; I have compared

them with recent English and American Readers, and I have conferred with the teachers using them in the Model School, and I find them superior in several respects to all the books with which I have compared them.

I. In teaching elementary reading there are two methods in common use :

(1) The *Look and Say Method*, which begins by showing children words and requiring them to be recognized as a whole and pronounced.

(2) There is the *Phonic Method* which avoids the names of the letters at first altogether, and simply seeks to teach their powers.

Each of these methods has its merits and defects, and good results have been obtained by the exclusive use of each, but probably the best results have been obtained by a judicious combination of the two. The recent American Readers have been so constructed as to compel the use of one method exclusively. The Ontario Readers are constructed so that either methods may be used, or that both methods may be combined.

II. In the recent English Readers the lessons are composed of detached sentences, and therefore wanting in interest to the pupil. In the Ontario Readers the lessons are narrative and descriptive of the picture at the head of the lesson.

III. The Ontario Readers are superior in gradation and in review lessons to both the English and American Readers. The review lessons are so constructed that the object and the word-symbol, which denotes the object, are brought to the mind at the same time.

IV. Spelling is introduced at an early stage ; this is an especial feature in the Ontario Readers, and in this respect they are superior to both the English and American books.

V. The illustrations are exceedingly good, and are such as to appeal directly to the mind of a child. In this respect they are superior to the books with which I have compared them. In the samples which I have, the illustrations are not as well brought out as in some of the American Readers, but this, no doubt, will be remedied in future editions. The printing, binding and general get up of the books are equal if not superior to anything I have seen.

(2) J. H. McFAUL,

Drawing Master, Normal School, Toronto.

As per request, I have carefully examined the Ontario Readers, Parts I. and II., and beg to record the following points of merit in their favor.

I. As to the general plan of the Readers :—

(a) The plan is based upon the principle that in acquiring a knowledge of any subject we should proceed from the known to the unknown. This principle is applied throughout the books by means of the Word and Phonic Method of teaching word recognition in three successive steps.

First. The child is taught to recognize the word-signs of a few words already familiar to him by sound.

Second. He is taught both to distinguish and to give the sounds of the letters composing the word-signs now known.

Third. He is taught how to utilize the letter-sounds in determining the sounds of new words, a fact which belongs to no other known method of teaching word recognition.

In addition to the above, as another result of Phonic drill, the child acquires a clear and distinct enunciation, not to be attained so effectively in any other way.

(b) As a second feature in the general plan, I observe that the lessons are based upon pictorial illustrations, designed with a special view to stimulate the mind to activity, and bring into constant use the laws of association, by means of which they (the lessons) are rendered interesting, instructive and impressive.

(c) A third feature is the practical character of the slate exercises intended for the silent occupation of the pupils when not otherwise engaged.

The introduction of exercises in script and drawing to replace the old printing process, I consider a wise innovation, the advantages of which are too patent to be particularized.

II. As to the grading of the lessons.

(a) While the sequence of the lessons and the exercises in phonic drill have been properly made progressively more difficult, they have, at the same time, been so carefully graded, as to render phonic analysis, phonic synthesis and word recognition both easy, pleasant and effective.

III. As to the character of the lessons.

(a) In point of difficulty they are not beyond the comprehension of the pupils for whom intended, the words used being such as form the juvenile vocabulary of nearly every household.

IV. As to the material, workmanship and typography.

(a) The paper is of the very best quality.

(b) The books are substantially bound, and well printed in large type.

(c) In point of size and mechanical execution, the illustrations are not inferior to those of the best English and American school books now before the public.

V. As to the size of the Readers.

They are of a convenient size, and, in my opinion, contain enough, and yet not too much, to constitute a fair basis for promotion to the Second Book.

Finally, I consider them abreast with the times, and well calculated to meet the requirements of the status of our Public Schools.

(3) JOHN A. MACCABE,

Principal, Normal School, Ottawa.

The old plan of teaching reading by obliging the child to learn the twenty-six letters of the alphabet, then introducing him to such unmeaning syllables as:—*ah, eh, ib, etc., ac, ec, etc., ba, be, etc.*, and allowing him, after some months,

to *fall by accident* into learning to *read* is now happily stored away with other instruments of mental torture. The drudgery consequent on this work ; the hopelessness and cheerlessness with which the child must have gone through it, seeing no brightness in his path, and no bright world beyond ; the injury to the mental powers, consequent on this unmeaning work, must have been very great. The habit of inattention, of which so many teachers have to complain, is due in a large degree to bad methods of teaching the early reading lessons, or rather to the matter of these reading lessons, the unmeaning syllables, the unfamiliar words.

The plan of teaching but a few of the letters of the alphabet, and of using these as soon as possible to form words, was a slight improvement. But the radical defects of the alphabetic method remained. The *names* of the letters were still taught, there generally being no guide to their sounds singly or in combination ; and the combinations used were not words presenting familiar ideas.

In order that the child gain the all important training, that of *thinking* on what he reads, every word in the early reading lessons should present a *familiar* idea. The early reading lessons should contain stories of his own little world.

The step from single letters to words of two letters, thence to words of three letters seems to be the natural order, but so very few words of two letters present *familiar* ideas (ideas of familiar *things*), and words of three letters, which bring us at once into the field of familiar significant terms—being as easy to learn as words of two letters, it seems strange that this step was not taken at once.

Again, for young children, the *book itself* must be attractive—good, *clean* type, properly arranged matter, full illustrations done in the *best* style of art. Poor paper, poor printing, poor pictures are serious defects in any Reader, but more especially in an elementary Reader. The *taste* of the child must be enlisted in the service, in attracting him to the lessons.

The new elementary Readers, whether as to selection of words, arrangement and grading of lessons, printing, artistic excellence of pictures, are far in advance of any Readers formerly used in this Province. The best modern educationists recommend for the teaching of early reading lessons, a combination of the object word method and the phonic method. This system is admirably carried out in the new Readers. Teachers and pupils will find that they have at last got a book which will help the one to teach, the other to learn how to read with an ease and a pleasure heretofore unknown.

(4) SIR J. WILLIAM DAWSON, LL.D., F.R.S., C.M.G.,

Montreal.

I beg to thank you for the specimen of Readers you have been so kind as to send. They appear to be very well got up and likely to prove admirably adapted to their purposes. I shall have much pleasure in bringing them to the notice of the professors in the Normal School and others best fitted to judge of their merits from a practical point of view.

- (5) S. P. ROBINS,
McGill Normal School, Montreal,
 To SIR J. WILLIAM DAWSON.

I have examined the Ontario Readers, copies of which you sent me. In respect of all essential features of elementary reading books, I think them admirable. The arrangement of the lessons conforms to the systems of instruction approved by experience as the best for teaching reading, commencing with reading-at-sight, as it is termed, and proceeding to phonic analysis. The illustrations are abundant, apposite to and illustrative of the reading lessons. The typography is very good and clear. A very good feature is the admirable set of engravings suggestive of useful black-board illustration. All this can be said without descending to minute criticism. The only adverse remark I feel bound to make is that the binding is poor, the muslin too easily slips from the paste-board of the cover.

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- (5) L. R. O'BRIEN,
President, Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, Toronto.

Thank you for letting me see the new First Readers. They are admirably illustrated and beautifully executed throughout. Few people know the trouble and cost of getting such work so well done.

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- (6) Rev. S. S. NELLES, D.D.,
President, Victoria University, Cobourg.

I am glad to have had the opportunity of examining Parts I. and II. of the First Reader, and am very much pleased with them. I do not see that they could have been better in any particular, and am sure you have acted wisely in requiring the publishers to bring out the books in the best style as regards paper, printing, and illustrations. You have indeed done the Ontario people and their children great service in this matter.

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- (7) J. B. SOMERSET,
Supt. of Education for Protestant Schools, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

I am very much pleased with the two First Books authorized for use in Ontario, and shall offer them at the next meeting of our Board for authorization for supplementary use in our schools. * * * * *

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- (8) Professor W. H. PAYNE,
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

I have examined the Readers with some care and am much pleased with their general plan and with their beautiful appearance as to type, illustrations, paper, etc.

(9) UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING Co.,
New York.

We have your favour of 20th January, and the copies of the Ontario First Reader, Parts I. and II., for which we thank you. They are attractive looking books. The plan on which they are made strikes us as a good one, with many excellent features. We hope the series may prove a fine success. We shall be pleased to see other numbers as they appear.

(10) E. H. BUTLER & Co.,
Publishers, Philadelphia.

We are in receipt of your esteemed favour of the 20th January, also of copies of Parts I. and II., of the First Reader of your new series, for which please accept our thanks. We have looked over the books and consider them very handsome, the presswork being particularly fine. We shall be glad to see the remaining books of the series, as issued.

(11) A. S. BARNES & Co.,
Publishers, New York.

The copies of the 1st and 2nd of the Readers prepared under your direction are received. They are the handsomest we have ever seen from an English press. It will not soon be charged that Ontario is unmindful of advanced educational methods. * * * * These new books of yours are a marvel of cheapness.

Now, it may be said, notwithstanding all these excellencies, the new Readers are dear; that a cheaper book would serve the purpose quite as well, and that it is unfair to tax parents and guardians for an article that ought to be produced for less money. In the first place I do not admit that the books are dear, but even if they were, as compared with other Readers, I contend that the purpose of the book is educational, and that a small additional outlay is of no consequence compared with the educational results. As a matter of fact, the excess in price is but five cents over the old series, or as \$1.35 is compared with \$1.30. Assuming that a child commences school at five years and leaves at fifteen, the extra expense is but

half a cent per annum during the school life of the average pupil. Who is prepared to say that this additional expense is not made up a hundred times in the improved quality of the books, their arrangement, excellence, etc. Let me submit the following comparisons—for after all the price of a book is largely a matter of comparison—to show the relative prices of the new series with those previously authorized or prepared.

Authorized Series.	Pages.	Cost.	Cents per 100 pages.
Gage's.....	752.....	\$1 31.....	17½
Royal	972.....	1 50.....	15½
Royal Canadian.....	955.....	1 80.....	18¾
New Readers	976.....	1 35.....	13¾

Or, let me put it in another way: The average price of the series discarded is \$1.53; the price of the new series is \$1.35, shewing a difference of eighteen cents in favour of the new series.

I have already said that the price of a book is largely a matter of comparison. Let us then compare the price of some of the new series of Readers with other books authorized, of which large numbers are sold annually. The primer of Canadian history contains 180 pages and is sold for thirty cents, the new Reader (second book) contains 184 pages and is sold for twenty-five cents. Morris' Grammar contains 215 pages and is sold for twenty-five cents, has no illustrations and can be run through the press at three times the rate of any illustrated book. The Epoch primer contains 139 pages and sells for thirty cents. Kirkland & Scott's arithmetic contains 185 pages and sells for twenty-five cents. These comparisons shew that in regard to books that have been on our authorized list for many years our Second Reader, containing an equal number of pages, is much cheaper and at the same time of superior typography and binding.

Again, if we compare our books with those published in the United States, it will be seen what an excellent bargain we have made for the public. Allow me to submit a few comparisons in tabulated form:

Authorized Series.	Pages	Price.	Cents per 100 pages.
Wilson Series.	911.....	\$1 79.....	19½
Sheldon's New York	890	1 92.....	21½
Swinton's " "	922.....	1 80.....	19½
Appleton's New York	694.....	1 72.....	24½
McGuffey's Cincinnati	656.....	1 39.....	21
Barnes' New Reader	894.....	1 75.....	19½
Lippincott's.....	818.....	1 57.....	19
Collins' (English)	694.....	1 22½.....	17½
Collins' (Progressive)	692	1 10½.....	15½

Or, if you prefer, let me give my comparisons in another form :

Average of all the Canadian Series, First Reader, 35 pp., price 6½c., compared with Ontario First Reader, 64 pp., 10c.
Average of all the Canadian Series, Second Part, 77 pp., price 12½c., compared with Ontario Second Part, 94 pp., 15c.
Average of all the Canadian Series, Second Reader, 199 pp., price 30c., compared with Ontario Second Reader, 184 pp., 25c.
Average of all the Canadian Series, Third Reader, 267 pp., price 43¾c., compared with Ontario Third Reader, 280 pp., 35c.
Average of all the Canadian Series, Fourth Reader, 356 pp., price 55c., compared with Ontario Fourth Reader, 344 pp., 50c.
Average of all the American Series, First Reader, 70 pp., price 16⅞c., compared with Ontario First Reader, 64 pp., 10c.
Average of all the American Series, Second Part, 84 pp., price 20½c., compared with Ontario Second Part, 96 pp., 15c.
Average of all the American Series, Second Reader, 150 pp., price 33c., compared with Ontario Second Reader, 192 pp., 25c.
Average of all the American Series, Third Reader, 222 pp., price 49½c., compared with Ontario Third Reader, 280 pp., 35c.
Average of all the American Series, Fourth Reader, 316 pp., price 65c., compared with Ontario Fourth Reader, 344 pp., 50c.
Average of all the English Series, First Reader, 100 pp., price 16c., compared with Ontario First Reader, 64 pp., 10c.
Average of all the English Series, Second Part, 90 pp., price 14½c., compared with Ontario Second Part, 96 pp., 15c.
Average of all the English Series, Second Reader, 146 pp., price 23½c., compared with Ontario Second Reader, 192 pp., 25c.
Average of all the English Series, Third Reader, 187 pp., price 30½c., compared with Ontario Third Reader, 280 pp., 35c.
Average of all the English Series, Fourth Reader, 220 pp., price 39¾c., compared with Ontario Fourth Reader, 344 pp., 50c.

Now these books are all prepared at the risk of the publisher ; have to enter into competition with each other, and under such circumstances the element of price would naturally enter. Take a book of first-rate quality at a low price and there is no doubt but it would very soon control the market. The standard fixed by these publishers

was no doubt arrived at in view of the competition. Similar considerations no doubt influenced the publishers of the Royal Canadian and the Royal and the Gage series, and yet we find that side by side with any or all of them, our books will compare very favourably. The next objection made to our arrangement with the publishers is that we have not dealt fairly with the trade. In the early part of my remarks I stated that under Dr. Ryerson's arrangement the matter of discount was not considered; that whatever discount the trade got was the voluntary offering of the publishers. We have guaranteed the trade a certain discount. Now the contention is that this discount is inadequate and is an unfair division of the profits with the publishers. I think I will be able to show that both contentions are unsound. It must be remembered that the Reader is a staple article; that every book may be said to be a legal tender for its selling price. Under such circumstances a large profit should not be expected. Besides, the profits allowed under our agreement are far in advance of those allowed by American publishers. The following extracts from letters from leading American publishing houses will fully bear out this statement:

- (1) E. W. BUTLER & Co.,
Publishers, Philadelphia.

We make a discount of $\frac{1}{8}$ for large orders of our books. This is the best discount we make to the trade, and frequently we allow only 10 % or 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ off.

- (2) IVISON, BLAKEMAN, TAYLOR & Co.,
Publishers, New York.

Our discounts from the printed prices are from 5 % to 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ %. the latter, our maximum rate of discount, to the jobbing trade, 10 % from this list is allowed to school officers introducing our books, the maximum discount named above being granted only to jobbers, and in certain instances to cities and towns purchasing direct.

- (3) UNIVERSITY PUBLISHING COMPANY,
New York.

* * The list we send you gives our price for our books to anybody and everybody. Our regular discount to the trade is 10 %, our best $\frac{1}{8}$. * *

(4) D. APPLETON & Co.,

Publishers, New York.

We make 10 % discount to the small trade from the list, and $\frac{1}{2}$ discount to the larger buyers. On Readers we make our discount from $\frac{1}{2}$ % to 20 %, special. Very few retailers get a discount of 20 %.

(5) A. S. BARNES & Co.,

Publishers, New York.

We have but one price for our series of Readers, which is practically retail in our own vicinity. * * * This price is known technically as the "trade price."

Our regular discount is 10 % from list (trade) prices. We sometimes increase this to 16 $\frac{2}{3}$ %, but never more.

Now, as to the profits made by the publishers. From the Return laid on the table of the House a few days ago it will be seen what was Mr. Gage's estimate in regard to the Canadian Readers. This estimate was made at the request of Mr. Hardy, who was then Acting Minister of Education, and is no doubt a fair statement as to the matter in question. According to that estimate it appears that on Mr. Gage's primer of 32 pages, which was sold for 6 cents, the profits on one thousand copies amounted to \$1.61; on Part II. of First Book, 64 pages, sold for 10 cents, the profits on one thousand copies amounted to \$3.06; on his Second Reader, 144 pages, sold at 25 cts., the profits on one thousand copies amounted to \$30.78; on his Third Reader, 192 pages, sold for 40 cents, the profits amounted to \$90.29; on his Fourth Reader, 320 pages, sold at 50 cents, the profits on a thousand copies amounted to \$84.12.

Now, if this was a fair estimate—as we have every reason to believe it was—of the profits on the Gage Readers, there is no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the profits to the publishers on the new Readers cannot be excessive; and if any doubt remained the following from the Queen's Printer and the Assistant Accountant of the Education Department ought to be conclusive:

OFFICE OF THE QUEEN'S PRINTER.

To the HON. G. W. ROSS,
Minister of Education.

The undersigned respectfully report :—

That after making a careful estimate of the cost of publishing the "Ontario Readers," we find the profits to be made by the publishers fair and reasonable.

That we are also of the opinion, after having regard to their beauty, the quality of the paper used, and the strength of the binding (judging from those now issued), that the prices at which they are being sold are lower than any series of school books ever published in this Province.

That the average profit to the publishers will not in our opinion exceed 25 per cent.

That the estimate was made at a time when paper and other material, entering into the manufacture of books, could be purchased at unusually low prices.

(Signed)	JOHN NOTMAN, <i>Queen's Printer.</i>
"	GEO. E. THOMAS, <i>Asst. Queen's Printer.</i>
"	H. M. WILKINSON, <i>Asst. Accountant,</i> <i>Education Department.</i>

But it is said that Mr. Warwick has offered to publish the books for one-third less than the price at which they are now sold. Let us examine this statement closely and see what it means. To sell the books at one-third less than the present price is to sell them for ninety cents. From this has to be deducted the profits of the retail dealers, say twenty-five per cent. on the usual terms of sale, which also means five per cent. additional for cash. Now, deducting these discounts from the ninety cents, at which Mr. Warwick proposed to sell the books, would necessitate their production, including the profits of the publishers, for sixty-three cents. Will any reasonable man say that such is possible. Even Mr. Warwick's own actions disprove his statement. When Mr. Nelson was seeking for somebody to purchase his interest in those books Mr. Warwick, among other publishers, made him an offer of \$1,750 per annum for his (Nelson's) right. Now, if this was all Mr. Warwick was prepared to offer Nelson, he was either deceiving Mr. Nelson as to the profits of the old Readers, or else he is endeavouring to deceive the public by an offer which he knew was not open to acceptance. If we

assume that the annual cost to the country for the purchase of Readers is \$100,000, and I think that is a fair estimate, Mr. Warwick, if his statement is true, could well afford to have given Nelson four or five times more than he offered and then retain a handsome margin. But the fact of his offering Nelson only a small sum of money proves the insincerity of his proposition. It is also stated that on account of the price at which the first and second primers is sold, the country will be put to a serious loss.

Now I think I have shown pretty clearly that educationally the books could not be prepared for less money. I think I can also show that, as a matter of expense, the country is not put to any loss. By the last return received by the Education Department it appears that we have 100,000 pupils reading in the first part of the First Book. At the usual estimate of two books for every pupil the extra cost in this case would be \$10,000. We have 64,000 in the classes using the second part of the First Book, and I estimate that yearly the extra cost would be \$6,500, or a total of \$16,500. Our system of grading is such that I am able to say, on the authority of the most experienced teachers, any pupil can pass through the new second book in one year. Under the old system it required a longer time to get through the Second Book, consequently each pupil, as a rule, required two Second Books. By avoiding this extra expense we save a Second Book for 106,000 pupils in the Second Reader, or a saving of \$25,000. Our Third Reader is cheaper by five cents than the old or any other Third Reader ever published in Ontario, and this to 110,000 pupils amounts to \$5,500. We have, therefore, a saving of \$30,500 against a loss of \$16,500, or a profit of \$14,000.

The only subject now remaining for the consideration of the House is the cost of preparing the Readers. By the statement submitted it appears that the total cost is \$18,686, against which we have \$7,500 in cash, and about \$7,000 in wood cuts and type, and a set of electrotypes worth at least \$2,500, leaving the actual loss to the country at less than \$2,000. It is well known to every person acquainted with the trade that the set of electrotypes furnished the publishers will require renewal a good many times in

the course of ten years. The only possible way in which a new set can be obtained is by application to the Department. We are then in a position not only to receive \$7,500 from these firms for the first set of electrotypes, but also to receive from them constantly a revenue for any renewals of the same; and I expect that during the ten years the entire cost to the country will be made up in this way. Besides, when the ten years expire other firms will be allowed to publish, and their electrotypes must be purchased from the Department, and so the possibility of loss is clearly avoided. That the work was prepared at a reasonable cost may be seen from the statement regarding the cost of the books published by other firms. The series issued by the Canada Publishing Company cost \$31,843; the Royal Readers, \$25,000; the Gage Readers, one-third less in size than ours, cost \$19,175; and in each and all of those cases only two sets of electros were prepared, whereas in ours we had four. In asking the House then to ratify this agreement I feel assured that I am asking it to approve of an excellent bargain. The School Act confers the power upon the Education Department of making an agreement of this kind without the approval of the House. I have, however, so far conceded to parliament the right of review; and I am so confident that the arrangement made is in the interests of the country that I have no hesitation in submitting, as I have done, fully and unreservedly, the details of the scheme for your consideration. From those who honestly investigated the matter there is but one opinion in regard to the wisdom of our arrangement with the publishers; and although looking at it more closely, as perhaps I am better able to do, than those who have not had the responsibility of all the details, I may admit that my duty has not been discharged without shortcomings, still I can appeal to honourable members on both sides of the House for that approval which I am satisfied the merit of the work deserves.

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