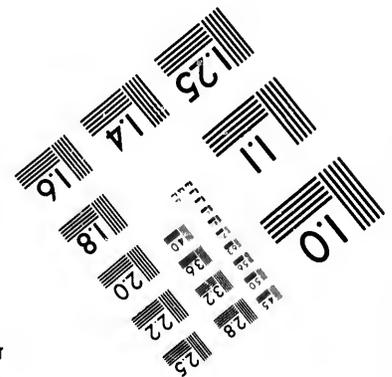
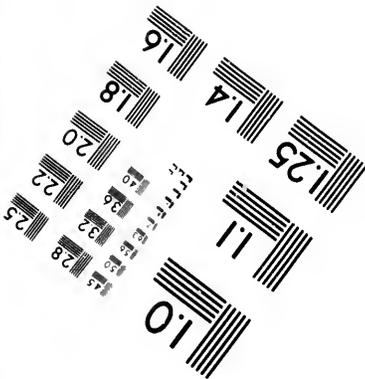
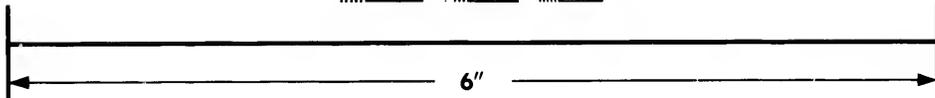
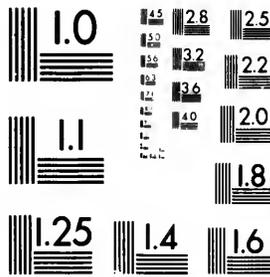


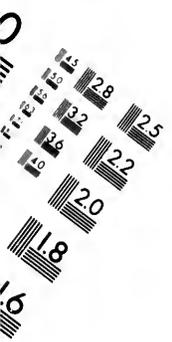
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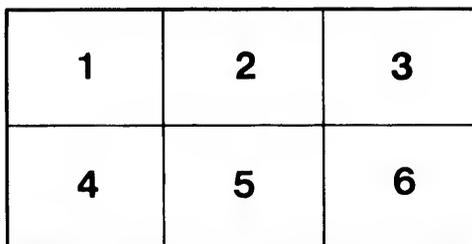
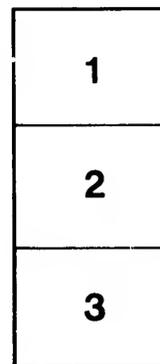
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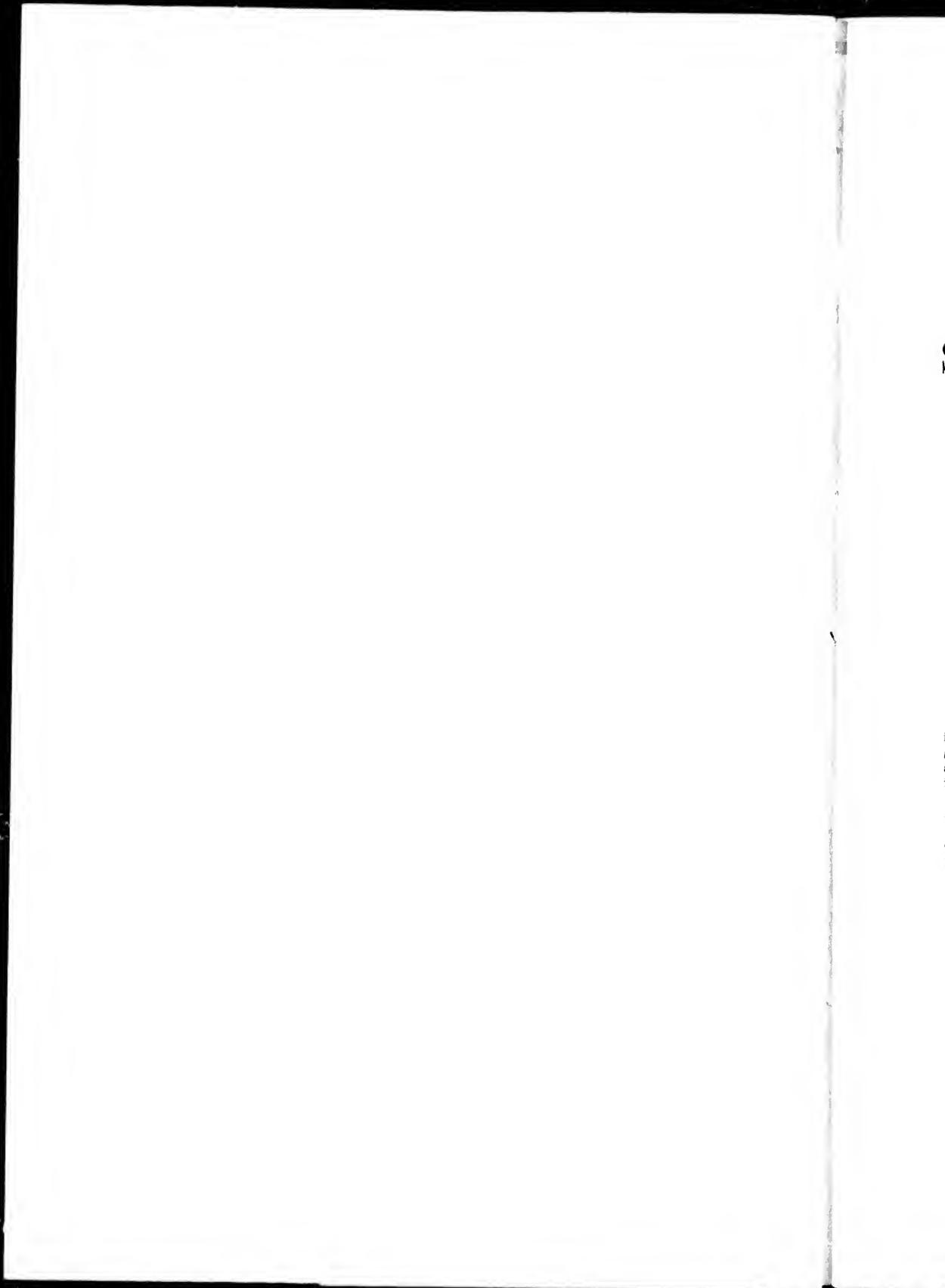
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REPLY  
TO A  
SPECIAL REPORT  
OF THE  
SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION  
ON THE  
THEORY AND WORKING OF HIS EDUCATIONAL DEPOSITORY

OF SCHOOL AND OTHER TEXT-BOOKS, MAPS,  
APPARATUS, AND LIBRARIES.

BY JOHN C. GEIKIE.

"It is essential that the Government should avoid every form of interference which could discourage individual enterprise, the freedom of opinion, and the natural action of literature on the popular intelligence and taste, or of the trade in books in their production and diffusion. The Government is not an author, a holder of copyrights, a publisher of books, nor a patron of methods; much less is it to interfere in the formation of opinion by making schools the organs of its own doctrines.

"I concur with the great publishing houses of London in their objections to any sale of the books of the Irish Commissioners in Great Britain, except through the ordinary channels of trade.

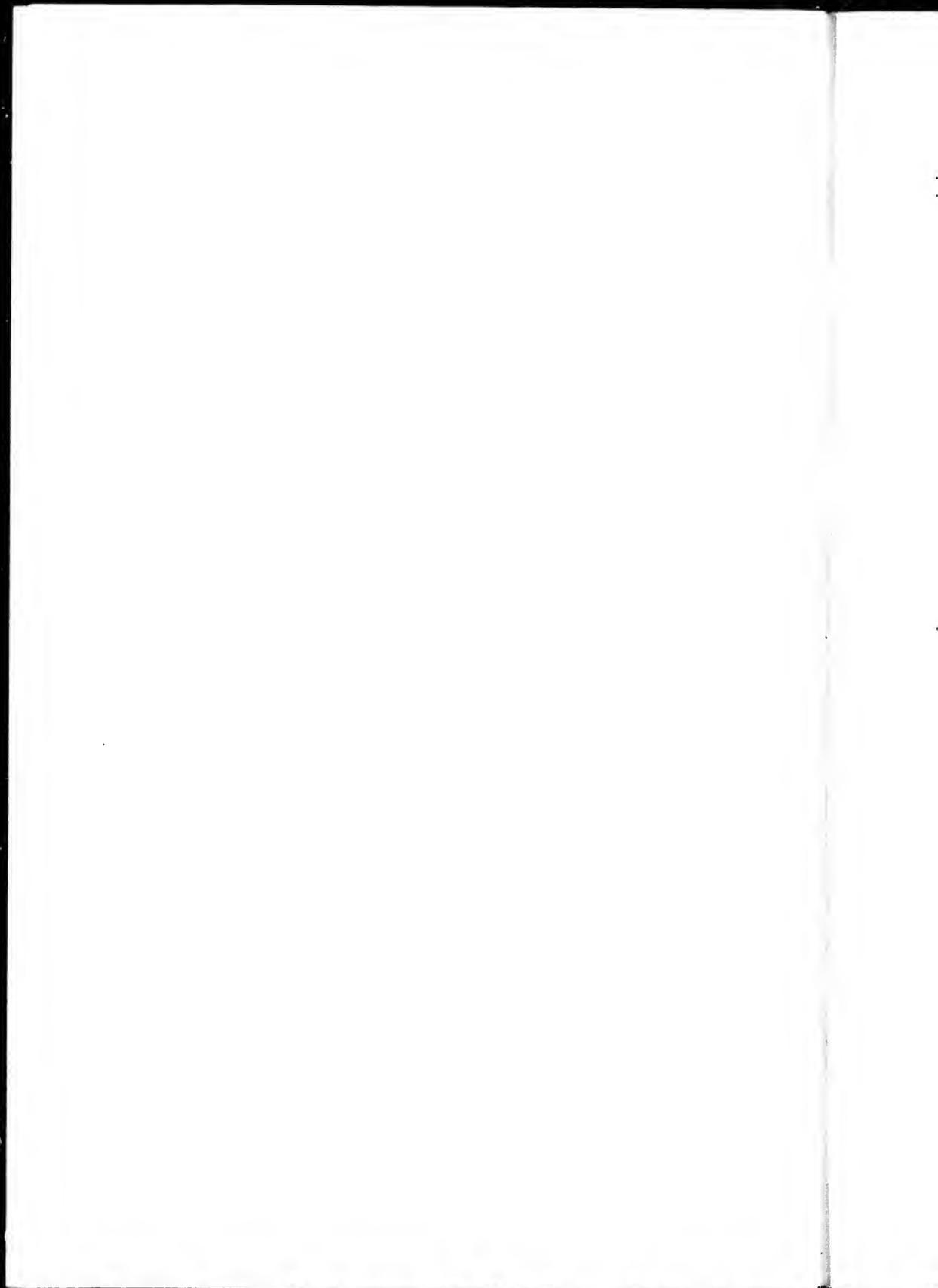
"Lord Melbourne introduced 'the first great plan ever proposed by any Government for the education of the humblest classes in Great Britain. \* \* \* \* To make the households of the poor scenes of christian peace is the first object of the schools.'"—SIR JAMES KAY SMUTTLEWORTH, BART.

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TORONTO:  
PRINTED FOR THE BOOKSELLERS' ASSOCIATION.

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1858.



REPLY TO THE SPECIAL REPORT OF DR. RYERSON,  
ON HIS EDUCATIONAL DEPOSITORY.

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Brevity is the soul of "Replies," as of wit. If so, Dr. Ryerson has missed the mark in the Special Report just presented by him to the House, on his Educational Depository. To refute the objections urged against it, he has printed no less than fifty-eight large pages, at an expense to the public, when eighteen pages on Separate Schools are included, of say £70, somewhere about 5,000 copies having been ordered by him for distribution through every part of the country. Through the chink thus opened into his use of the taxes, the cost of his advertising and et ceteras may be judged. The amount thus spent in this instance is a mere trifling addition to a vast previous similar outlay—how vast none can tell.

The first four pages of the Defence of the Depository informs us, that before 1847 the books used in the Common Schools were at once bad, and endless in variety, and that the introduction of the Irish national series removed the evil. But, as Dr. Ryerson, in the same sentences, owns that a single letter to the Irish school authorities obtained permission to re-print them,—as he tells us that a mere recommendation from the Council of Public Instruction was enough, in his opinion, to secure their use in the schools; and, as he very justly remarks, that "reduction in price would follow as a necessary consequence the use of such a uniform series through the Province,"—a reduction "in proportion to the extent of their circulation and the facilities for getting them"—I need say nothing in addition. Such admissions satisfactorily neutralize any boasting at the difference between the past and the present state of our elementary school books, as if due to special exertion or ability, and

afford a sufficient reason why the Council did not turn printers and publishers, but left the publication of the series to free competition. As, however, there has not been a word of complaint for many years respecting these books, one cannot think what end it can serve to exhume old letters and bits of forgotten reports respecting their introduction eleven years ago.

Dr. Ryerson repeatedly dilates on the evils of an indiscriminate selection of class books in the schools of any country, and fiercely attacks the booksellers who take advantage of their chances of sale where no series is officially prescribed. If he intends to injure the Canadian trade by such a course he will fail. The Booksellers of this Province have no wish to alter the present system of authorized text books for all the Schools; they ask only, that, when the Council of Instruction has prescribed, they may be allowed to supply. What ingenuous purpose can it serve to fill pages with evils we oppose as much as Dr. Ryerson? It is equally irrelevant to swell sentences with the evils of introducing American school books. We are as British as Dr. Ryerson, and perhaps more so, as sons are closer than descendants. Dr. Ryerson has many American re-prints in the sanctioned lists of the Council, and, at this moment, sells the American editions of some books almost exclusively. Nay, more, but for him we should have had, in at least one instance, a Canadian book in all our schools, instead of an intensely American one which he has sanctioned.

Seven pages are filled with letters written by Dr. Ryerson to great people in England, in 1850, respecting the Privy Council list of books, &c.; with a long circular sent to each County Clerk in 1851; and with his own deductions and reflections. We are told that all the British publishers consented to give him the same terms as they give the Privy Council Education Committee. If so, how is it that his prices are very much higher than the mere freight, &c., added to those of the Education Committee would make them? Most of his

maps are 51 per cent. dearer than theirs ; and his books are one-third dearer, in the few instances in which he and they have the same. Where does the clear difference go ? The English prices are simply those charged by the Booksellers : professedly selling at the same rate, as he buys at the same, Dr. Ryerson charges an advance which involves a very large margin of profit. I appeal to the figures in the respective catalogues for proof. Is it right to make profit, supposing it go to aid the School Fund, by trading in books with the public money ?

Dr. Ryerson speaks as if quite a number of his books were selected from the lists of the Privy Council Committee. In general maps there could, of course, be no difference except that he has classical ones of which they have none. In the details of ordinary English education, in the same way, there are necessarily a few the same in both lists ; but there the similarity ends. They have neither Latin, Greek, nor French books : he has a full supply of them and even some German. They confine themselves with beautiful honour to "books suitable for the elementary instruction of children at school," and for the improvement of their teachers : he keeps and advertises books for every school, public or private, up to the University itself. I cannot find a dozen books common to the two catalogues if the usual maps and atlases and the Irish series be excluded. Let no one suppose that the modest philanthropy of England and this scheme in Canada have much in common. As to miscellaneous literature for libraries they have none : Dr. Ryerson has a full sized volume of 231 pages filled with nothing else.

We are favoured with an "extract" from the Privy Council Committee's minutes respecting their terms of sale and grants. Part of it reads that "Books for *the School Library or Prizes* may be included in the application for books and maps at the reduced prices." To get this fancied support Dr. Ryerson has gone back to an old schedule,—in the one in use now, no such words can be found. Part of

his extract still remains in the present schedules, but the words he has italicised, as above, as of special force in his favour, are not in them at all. I can find the words of the first half of his quotation in none of the minutes of the Council: is it not a paraphrase instead of the exact text? But if it be genuine, he is welcome to all the benefit he can get from it in the face of the following statement of the Committee's Secretary, (Minutes of Council, 1850, page 78.) "Their lordships' administration of the Parliamentary grant (in whatever form of assistance it may be applied,) is confined to those schools only in which the principal object of the promoters is to educate the children of the labouring and other poorer classes. The minute of the 18th of December, 1847, (instituting the system,) is therefore inapplicable to middle or superior schools." To have quoted this would have saved Dr. Ryerson whole pages, shall I say of mystification. It settles the merit of the comparison of the two schemes. Britain aids poverty, and is right in doing so; aids poverty such as, thank God, is only with us a terrible memory of our fatherland and has no counterpart here. Dr. Ryerson aids competence and even wealth: takes from a struggling tradesman to give to a rich proprietor. Let there be grants for the poor and no one will object: but let there be no attempt at a parallel between supplying schools of every grade, public and private, as Dr. Ryerson has hitherto done, and the charitable bounty of England to the humble children of labour and sorrow.

The grants of apparatus by the Privy Council Committee are girt in by the same conditions of poverty. It is only another development of the fundamental aim to raise the helpless. One provision of such grants, not quoted by Dr. Ryerson, it would be well he should himself see enforced in Canada. To get apparatus the teacher must pass a searching examination on the science it illustrates, and a Training School for such teachers can only get it if a lecturer be provided who has made "Experimental Science his special study."

The libraries of the Privy Council Committee are so only in name. "Their use is intended (says the Secretary, Minutes 1852, page 64,) to be that of seeing what any particular work is, and not that of employing it in private study." The list from which they are selected is simply a string of maps and school books with some reference books for teachers. They are specially called "specimen libraries." I appeal to Dr. Ryerson's candour not to use words which would confound them with his vast system of libraries proper. A sample copy of all the books on their lordships' lists amounts to £101 4s. sterling (\$506), and they have no money sunk in Depositories: a sample of all the items in his Library Catalogue alone, on the average of 35 pages, from its two parts, amounts to \$5,867; and he is presumed to keep stock of the whole, not to speak of stock of the contents of a School Book, Map, and Apparatus Catalogue, of 98 pages, which he keeps in addition.

The British Government have recently made a gift of their copyrights of the Irish national series to the trade of the kingdom, though they must have cost them a large sum. That the Board of Instruction here, to whom the liberty to re-print them was given, in common with Mr. Ramsay, a private Bookseller of Montreal, and whom they cost nothing, should not have undertaken the course which the British Government now own was the less beneficial and just one—of printing them themselves, is extolled as signal liberality. They never were the private property of the Board, which only did what honour required in leaving them to public competition, as the cheapest means of production.

As the Irish book and map system is identical in principle and aim with the English, I need say nothing on Dr. Ryerson's statement that "it overlooks the interests of no class of society, but supplies every description of requisites for the public schools—from thimbles for the humblest, to apparatus for the high schools." The words of the English Secretary I have already quoted, on the class of schools

assisted by the Privy Council, show the real value of this sounding announcement. Pity that desire of victory should dim the eye to candour. Dr. Ryerson closes his section on the English system by appealing to the reader to decide how untrue are the charges that he acted without the authority of our Government, and at variance with the example of that of England, since he went to Britain under the express sanction of the authorities here, and was enabled to establish the system which, he thinks, has been so efficient, attractive and economical, by the active and cordial co-operation of the Government Boards of England and Ireland. But to be sent home is surely no *carte blanche* to do what one likes when there, nor is the fact that the Boards of the mother country went with him the modest length of their limits any proof that he did not go much farther alone. We must come back to hard facts, which I very willingly leave to speak for themselves.

Leaving Britain, the Superintendent turns to the United States. In a letter recently re-printed in the *Globe*, he stated as a compendious answer to objections, that in "nearly every city and town of the neighbouring States, each Board of Education has its own school apparatus and book depository \* \* from which it not only furnishes its schools, but the individual pupils \* \* at reduced prices." I forthwith wrote to all the chief cities, east and west, and received from the highest authorities a direct contradiction of the statement. From Illinois to New England such a thing was unknown. In Brooklyn alone an example was found of what it was roundly stated was the rule in "nearly every city and town." New York city gives its books for nothing, but this would not suit the case. In the present report Dr. Ryerson has owned the baselessness of his former assertion by repeating it of only "some of the principle towns and cities," instead of "nearly every" one. Still even this is not correct. The rule is the other way. He may fetch some far away example from some other place than Brooklyn, but the great book

merchants of the States pronounce against his statement, except in such an isolated instance. In a court of justice, if a witness be found giving untrustworthy testimony in one point, we know the effect on the rest.

As depositories are scarce Dr. Ryerson fills three additional pages with extracts on the evils of ununiform school books; we, booksellers, endorse their sentiment, and heartily support the Council of Instruction in prescribing those to be used. But what this matter has to do with the present controversy I cannot conceive. Why defend what no one questions? The public will please remember that we are, here, on Dr. Ryerson's side. To the grants of apparatus, libraries, &c., in Indiana and Ohio, to which allusion is made, I shall refer hereafter. In the matter of school books, these states are exactly where we ought to be—a list is prescribed and the booksellers are left to supply them. They have no Depository, nor plan like that of Canada, where the school and text books for public or private schools, and even for colleges and universities, are not only prescribed, but are supplied by the Superintendent of Education. Nothing like it is attempted to be brought forward from even a single State of the Union.

Legally, there is not a shadow of support for Dr. Ryerson's course respecting school books. The act of 1850 gave him power to provide text books for the schools mentioned in the act, that is for the common schools; but there is not a single word of law for his keeping a stock of Grammar School, College, or University text books. So indisputedly is this the case that their cost is not entered separately in the balance sheets of his General Reports, but included in the account for "Public Libraries, Maps, and Apparatus."

Part third introduces us to the subject of our Public Library system. The first page and a half are occupied with a reprint of Dr. Ryerson's application to Government, in July, 1849, to be sent home to arrange for the purchase of the books wanted. The whole of the letter is given except one sentence, which I transcribe from the report of 1852.

“When in England in 1833, I made an arrangement with certain booksellers in London in behalf of the Wesleyan Church in Upper Canada, on the basis of which books have been obtained from that time to this much below the printed wholesale prices”—allusion to his getting the Irish school books follows, and then we are told—“Now I propose the adoption of an extension of the same arrangements to procure books for school libraries.” Thus, this suppressed sentence shows, from Dr. Ryerson himself, that the whole scheme of his Libraries is only an amplification of the plan of a Wesleyan Book Room. The success of Book Rooms generally, I do not know, but this I do know, that Methodist Ministers, for whose good especially Book Rooms are supposed to be established, are a large proportion of my best customers, and excellent men they are. If the Library scheme is to be tested by the merits of its archetype a Book Room; I fear it will carry only a ruffled palm.

Another letter from Dr. Ryerson to the Government, dated September, 1850, next invites us. It renews the application to be let go to Britain, and asks £500 to pay expenses. The request is backed by the information that a number of educational gentlemen met in Philadelphia, having heard Dr. Ryerson's projected plans from his own lips had highly approved of them. That a yet untried scheme, giving great power and patronage to a Superintendent, looked well in the eyes of educational officials, was natural enough. We are all fond of what exalts us. But a scheme on paper and in practice are different things; the patent office supplies any number of contrivances which were faultless as models, but unfortunately broke down in working.

Returned from Europe, Dr. Ryerson, as Louis Napoleon asked France after the coup d'état to appoint him Chief of the State, travelled through the Province to submit to local conventions “the whole question of the mode of supplying and establishing Public Libraries,” after he had just gone over Britain and America arranging for the purchase of the

books for them; after he had "selected about 4000 volumes as specimens," (Report, 1852, page 205,) and after he had got rooms built especially to hold them, (Report, 1852, page 217,) in his splendid education offices. The whole thing being thus already fixed and established, the people, we are told, were treated to a mock choice in the matter, and the present system was fathered on them by an assent where they had no selection. Unfortunately for Dr. Ryerson one part of his Report is always a standing specific for another. The same unanimity of approval, we are assured, was vouchsafed the Separate School Act at the same time: the unanimity, now that that Act has been tried, receives its best illustration from Dr. Ryerson's Special Report in its defence. As with School Books, so with Libraries, the Educational Boards of England and Ireland have all the blame thrown on their shoulders. Their few sheets of school books are declared the fathers of our two Depository Catalogues of 231 and 107 pages respectively.

Lord Elgin is pressed into Dr. Ryerson's service in an extract of two and a-half pages length, from his Report. His Lordship left Canada in the close of 1854, when the Library scheme was in the full glory of its first year's bloom: had he seen it in its faded pride from then till now, his opinion would have had greater weight. An April shower looks for a time like a steady stream.

Indiana and Ohio are next cited to the bar, nothing nearer offering. These two States, while they leave the school books free, have a tax for libraries and apparatus for the government schools. In the former it amounts to the fortieth part of a cent on property, and a poll tax of 25 cents: in the latter to the hundredth part of a cent on the public assessment. This last shadowy impost amounts to a little less than a dime for each child of school age, and is spent in the purchase, once a-year, of a selection of books or apparatus for each Township of the State—the same books being given to all. No Depository adorns the land, or main-

tains a well-dressed staff to surround the Chief. The books, when bought, are forwarded direct to their destinations. Before the selection of any, the Ohio Superintendent applied to a "large number of gentlemen of high education, &c.," to aid him, and when a list had been made out by this labour of many, a circular was sent to the Boards of Education through the State, inviting them to name what books they would like, and if they seemed proper he would get them. Such modesty is not always exhibited by Superintendents.

Dr. Ryerson does not altogether approve of either the Indiana or the Ohio plan, so that they need little further remark. That of Ohio was suspended in 1856, by the objections of the people. In Indiana, as here, the Superintendent having made the purchases paid far too dear for them, Dr. Ryerson tells us; thus enforcing the lesson that if the public money is to be laid out to the best advantage, Superintendents should not turn amateur booksellers. The only point in common with us and these States is, that libraries are bought at the public expense. But, unlike us, neither has thousands of pounds sunk in stock, nor do the officials pretend to engross more than their special province. But even if they were like Canada, are we necessarily to copy from them when they differ from their fellow States and from Britain? Let us do as they did, think and act for ourselves.

New York State is next summoned. That its Library scheme, which leaves the selection of the books to the local Trustees, has been a failure, is advanced as ample proof that, had it been assigned to Library Committees of the educated classes, appointed by each municipality, it would have been no less so. To leave simple Trustees of a country school to choose books is to be deprecated; but are there no lawyers, doctors, clergymen, and gentlemen of education, with whom the choice would be perfectly safe? The favourable opinion of our Library system, quoted from the Rhode Island Superintendent, is based on the assumption that the books are furnished at prices lower than they could be bought else-

where. That he thinks so is only to say that he has read our official Reports. The fact that Booksellers continually sell wholesale as cheap, if not cheaper, destroys one principal ground of his commendation, while the security from improper books, which is the second, could hardly be less complete than at present, by the plan of intelligent Library Committees.

Part fourth is devoted to an answer to objections, and is so unworthy in its style as to have led Dr. Ryerson, of his own accord, to apologise for its coarseness in a foot note. It can be no aid to his argument to style those who question the policy of the Depository "anti-school crusaders"; nor to ascribe miserable motives to any who think it less than perfect. With respect to myself, my readiness to furnish Libraries at his prices, as an illustration of the fact that Booksellers generally could supply the country as well as is done by the Depository, is tortured into an expressed desire that I should get leave to "supply the public schools with Libraries—thus leaving every other Bookseller to take care of himself, as best he can." The whole drift of my letters to the *Globe* having been in every line to speak for the whole trade as well as for myself, with a formal deprecation of any thing specially personal, the ingenuousness of such a charge may be left to answer for itself. That I have the confidence of my fellow-Booksellers, as their spokesman, is a sufficient refutation.

Books, we are told, are supplied to all parts of the country at the same prices, from the Depository. But who, in any business, charges a buyer in Sarnia more than another in Whitby? They are sold cheaper, it is urged, "than has ever before been witnessed in this country." The transactions of any considerable Bookseller in any of our chief towns would soon settle whether this be correct. Books in quantities are continually sold with a profit, as low as Dr. Ryerson sells them "at cost." But, says the Report, "they are sold cheaper at the Depository than they are sold to the public where they

are produced." So they ought to be, surely,—bought as they are for cash, at wholesale rates, sold in a government building, "at cost," and with salaries paid from the public money. But they are cheaper than in Indiana. So much the more blame to the Superintendent of that State; but different shades of black make small approximation to white.

Despairing of the living Dr. Ryerson leads us to the grave, which denies nothing and will hear him out. Mr. Scobie, who died in the end of 1853, when the Depository was only getting under weigh, as he happened to be a Bookseller, and was a member of the Council of Instruction, is played off against the protest of the Booksellers generally. Mr. Scobie was labouring under his death illness from the summer of that year, and had far other thoughts than Book-selling. The greater part of the books ordered by Dr. Ryerson did not reach this till he was in the dust, and the imports for the year before had been only £322. To have anticipated the present developments of the scheme would have required prophetic foresight. The allusion to Mr. Scobie is in many ways unhappy, especially to those who remember a famous midnight visit to him, on Dr. R.'s return from a trip to the then seat of Government, when he had to be waked to be seen, and the sudden results in political views which were visible alike in the *Colonist* and Dr. Ryerson soon after. *De mortuis nil, nisi bonum*, is blessed counsel, but a panegyric like that of the "Report" with a personal end in view, requires that the side light be let in for a moment to reveal the facts.

The Customs returns are next forced to do service by an effort to extort from them proof that the influence of the Depository on the Booktrade has been beneficial rather than the reverse, by the stimulus it has given to the demand for books. I fear the testimony they give would have kept them uncited had it been rightly perceived. In 1851, £13,000 worth more books were imported than in 1850, but, according

to Dr. Ryerson, we are to believe that this increase was largely the result of the dissemination of the previous imports of the Depository, which amounted in 1850 to the sum of £21! It so happens, moreover, that the increase in the last eight years' importations to Lower Canada, where the Depository can have no possible influence, is as great as on those of this western province for the same period. I quote his own tables and leave them to speak for themselves.

Not relying altogether on his statistics Dr. Ryerson tells us, that "he has been informed that some most intelligent and extensive Booksellers are of the same opinion." He then quotes in a note a memorial in his favour from five signers, three of whom, he says, are "the most extensively engaged in the Booktrade of any Booksellers in Toronto." I feel confident the parties referred to were not aware of this till informed of it by Dr. Ryerson. Of the five, one only is a general retail Bookseller at all, and by no means the first—a second is simply the manager of the Wesleyan Book-room—a third sells only from a limited list wholesale—a fourth keeps the Bible and Tract Depository—and the last has neither store nor stock except perhaps of a single book, but only sells what he can by calling from house to house. Nor is this the worst, two out of the five derive direct profit from the Depository, and have doubtless large expectations for the future in return for the use of their names. How much are signatures worth in support of an abuse which the signers are deeply interested in upholding? Another two are simply subordinates who signed without authority from their principals. The fifth I have noticed enough already.

We are assured that a British Bookseller might as well attempt to compete with the Privy Council Committee as a Canadian Bookseller with the Depository. But the fact that the Depository books, so far as they are the same as those of the English Committee, are charged a third more, while the maps are no less than one-half dearer, on the average of a

large number, makes all the world of difference between the two cases. The average reduction on fifteen of the Grammar School text books taken promiscuously from the Depository catalogue, is only fifteen per cent., so that, after giving the usual discount of ten per cent. to teachers, Booksellers, even in selling retail and often on credit, charge only five per cent. higher than the Education Office. But I deny the right or the policy of Dr. Ryerson's retailing at wholesale prices. It is one thing selling libraries or quantities of any book at wholesale rates, but of what advantage can it be to the country that a teacher or scholar should save a chance penny on small purchases by taking a main branch of their livelihood from a whole trade?

Figures are given to show that the value of the importations for the Depository is too small to affect the Book-trade to any extent. £4097 are put down as the total for last year, but the public accounts read "Expenditure for School Libraries" £10,711. So, £2,562 are given as the amount for 1856. But the public accounts for that year afford different figures, setting the expenditure for "School Libraries," at £6,284. So, again, £11,165 are given as the damage done us in 1854. But the General Report for that year gives the outlay for "Books and Maps" as £20,909. It is thus through the series of instances given. Let him reconcile the two statements who can. Meanwhile as Books and Maps are, every where, alike, the staples of the Bookselling trade, the figures quoted by Dr. Ryerson tell only half the story, and are no indexes whatever of the real facts of the case.

The complaint of Booksellers that the Depository injured them by selling School Books, is met by a statement that the sales "of Classical and Mathematical books to Colleges and Grammar Schools, amounted in 1857 to just £198, a fact sufficiently illustrative of the truth and honesty of the allegations of these parties." But, when it is remembered that our "complaint" was respecting the sale of School and Text books of all kinds, and, that, not to the institutions

specified by Dr. Ryerson only, but also to private schools, and to individuals, it will be more easy to decide with whom "the truth and honesty" are found. The "sales of Text books, &c., in the Depository" for 1856, exclusive of those of Maps, Libraries and Apparatus, to the public schools and municipalities, is given in the General Report as £1,546. The Report for 1857 is not yet published, but it is to be hoped it will explain how such sales fell to £198 so suddenly.

It is pleasant to have a bit of humour amidst so many dry details. Let me light up the page with it. The importation of books for 1853 was £23,700 above that of 1852, according to Dr. Ryerson's table. To what is it to be supposed this is owing? To the advancement of the country every way at that time, or to what? According to this special Report it was the result, among other influences of the Educational Office, of the sale of £322 worth of books by the Depository in 1852, and the powerful impulse of Dr. Ryerson's lectures on Separate Schools, and on his Library system, in the winter of 1852--3, added to that of the sending out of his first instalment of libraries in the November following, after the imports for the year had ceased! At this rate it might certainly be said, "Far off their coming shone"! How must the Booksellers have been excited by Dr. Ryerson's lectures to have anticipated such a year's business from their effect as to justify their adding £23,700 to their spring orders?

It is declared "worthy of remark, that the whole Book-trade of the country that was open to Booksellers, is still occupied, exclusively occupied or 'monopolized' by them!" No doubt it would be were there any meaning in the statement. When the Bible printing monopoly existed in Britain it was, according to this logic, ridiculous and disgraceful to complain, because it had always been a special preserve from which all save the holders were excluded. According to this logic, merchants had no right to attempt to remove the East India Company's monopoly of trade with the East, because never having had it, it was no possible loss to them! But,

in the absence of Dr. Ryerson, Britain thought differently in both cases, as with the whole tribe of monopolies she has at one time or another abolished, and drew her pen through the patents alike of Queen's Printers and the India Board.

To apply the word "monopoly" to an open trade which any man who pleases may enter, can only make us hope that among the treasures of the Depository there may be a copy of Webster's Dictionary.

One more flower of reasoning in this paragraph deserves plucking. "Much has been said and written against the powers of public bodies, from the Government downwards, being rendered subservient to the purposes of individual speculation; yet it is the very object and demand of certain Booksellers to speculate out of the public schools and municipal authorities of the country, &c." Terribly wordy this, but yet, hear it, all ye who in any way work for public bodies or sell to them. Mr. Bowes, and perhaps some others with whom Dr. Ryerson is more personally connected, would no doubt be very glad if all speculations at the cost of public bodies or government were as innocent as securing their custom in the open competition of trade.

The often refuted parallel between the case of a Government system of education which endows teachers, and a Government Depository which supersedes Booksellers is, of course, brought forward once more. But as mere repetition is dull argument, I leave such a transparent fallacy to its own weight.

After thirty pages of argument on "general grounds," it is asked "what the condition of more than three-fourths of the Townships of Upper Canada would be could they not procure from the Department of Public Instruction the libraries as well as the maps, globes, and school apparatus they require?" It will be observed that *Dr. Ryerson does not venture to say that we could not supply the school and text books wanted*, so that this is at least one great step gained by his own admission. We are told they would not

have known of many of the books he keeps but for his catalogues—and are asked how many of such aids and books could such township and school municipalities obtain from private Booksellers. It is then hinted that the result would be “a sort of monopoly of certain Booksellers in Toronto,” and high prices from the profits of a number of “intervening agencies” are proclaimed as inevitable, with the addition of no security for the quality and kind of the articles and books required. But do not most wholesale purchasers, such as buyers of libraries are, come to the largest markets, and is it the case that Hamilton, and Kingston, and other principal towns sell nothing wholesale? Why should wholesale Book-selling be a monopoly in Toronto more than wholesale Dry-goods? The Booksellers in every part of the Province who signed the petition against the Depository, could have had no such fears of Toronto engrossing everything, as Dr. Ryerson seems to have. Could there be no such thing, moreover, as a country seller getting a commission to purchase a library and the wholesale dealer halving the profit with him, the perfect check on overcharge by either being the free competition of others in the trade? I have no doubt that, were the libraries free, country Booksellers would act as agents for those in cities, engaging to supply at city prices, and receiving so much for the order from some city house. Nobody supposes that wholesale establishments would spring up in every village, but instead of a central Depository in Toronto alone, we would see the same distribution of first class Booksellers as we now find of general importers. That the whole of Dr. Ryerson’s list of books would not be kept is undoubted, for no man buying with his own instead of the public money would dream of keeping some of his stock. I am quite willing that his catalogue be submitted to any educated jury, and to abide by their decision on the advantage, or the reverse, of throwing out a large part of its contents. There are apparently few who do not think a judicious selection from it would be at once better for the libraries and the public purse than the whole farrago it presents.

An opinion in favour of our Library System is quoted from a quotation made by the Earl of Elgin. But the remorseless question returns, whence was this estimate drawn? A judgment based on our Official Reports and explanations can be of no weight; the testimony of critical experience is alone to be trusted.

The appendix to the Report gives a table of all the Mechanics' Institutes that have been purchasers from the Depository. It is a comfort to see that none have ever gone back to it a second time. The fact speaks volumes as to the attractions of the books supplied or of those offered in the Catalogue. The only case in which it has been possible to test the accuracy of the figures and dates is in the case of the Institute in Toronto, and its purchase was made in 1855, not '56 as stated. The number of volumes supplied appears also to be wrong. Is this a sample of the rest? A note beneath the table informs us that the "managers of the Toronto Institute especially would have purchased of the ordinary booksellers, had they not found, on enquiry, that they could best promote the interests of their associations by applying to the Educational Department." The authority for this statement seems quite unknown to the "managers," so far as I can discover, and its correctness is best illustrated by the fact that since 1855 they have not again troubled Dr. Ryerson with an order, though they have very frequently favoured the "ordinary Booksellers." An instance is quoted of some one coming to town with a list from the Depository Catalogue, who not finding in the stores the whole of a random selection from its thousands of books, of all value and of none, betook himself to the Normal School and got something to please him. Paying cash for a quantity, he, of course, got a discount, and waxed fierce at some Bookseller who had charged him full price for a small retail purchase he had made for himself. Had he selected the many instead of the two or three from the shelves of the trade, he would have found himself supplied as well and as cheaply as

he could have wished. Dr. Ryerson tells us the retail prices were a third higher than his wholesale rates, but this is simply another mistake. The average reduction at the Depository on fifty volumes taken at random from the Catalogue, I find to be only twelve per cent; a number are sold at full price, some a mere fraction less, and the lowest discount seems to be a fifth. Any Bookseller could furnish libraries at such rates, and, were the trade free, the last murmur at a supposed want of variety would soon die away.

The petition of the Booksellers of Canada seems especially distasteful to Dr. Ryerson. His 73rd and succeeding pages are devoted to a criticism of its statements. The opening line is unfortunately another of Dr. Ryerson's mistakes. He speaks of my having canvassed Upper Canada for signers, and having succeeded in "inducing only 48 out of three or four times as many persons engaged in the same branches of business" to sign. The fact is, the petition was sent only to the principal cities and towns of the Province, and, so far as I know, received the signatures of the whole trade in each, one individual excepted, who declined apparently from imperfect acquaintance with the facts which it embodied. In Toronto it was signed by all whom we ranked in the trade with the exception of the two to whom the Depository is a customer, on whom we did not think of calling. Will Dr. Ryerson say that there are three or four times as many Booksellers great or small, in any of the places to which the petition was sent than appear in its favour? In that case there would need to be sixty in Toronto, thirty-two in Hamilton; sixteen in Galt, and so throughout. "Stationers and newsvenders," he says, are included, but he should tell us where to draw the line, since his Booksellers sell stationery and our stationers sell books; and, if newspapers deck the one side of a shop or two, books are sold on the other. The total list of the complainants is 51, not 48; and no inducements were necessary to secure their protest. It is well that Dr. Ryerson admits that even so many as he states are

against him, for it is not long since he informed the public that only two or three "Tooley Street tailors" were with us. The meagre and interested memorial in his favour reverses affairs and transfers them to him instead.

To our statement that he "seeks to engross the supply of all libraries, of whatever kind, in the Province," Dr. Ryerson replies that it is untrue, since he "has declined supplying private libraries." If this be any thing it is an admission that only those libraries which he thus specifies are excepted. But who ever thought or spoke of the books of a private household in connection with our complaint. Who ever heard of a private person ordering a "library?" Who does not know what we meant? I make no remarks on the mental and moral characteristics such an evasion implies.

Dr. Ryerson taxes his ingenuity to defend his supplying the libraries of mechanics' institutes. Because government gives grants to these excellent Bodies for books or whatever else they think proper, he questions whether he has a right to abide by the law, which limits him to supply only "libraries in connexion with the grammar and common schools." He tells us, that, as the grants to them are from the public money, and the Depository has the things they are expected to buy, he doubts whether he be not bound to supply them, since the Depository is maintained by the public money. The sequence of this argument would perplex Minerva and baffle Dun Scotus. Thrown into a syllogism it amounts to this: Pensioners get public money for food and clothing; but whoever gets public money for these things has a legal claim to be supplied by any institution maintained from the public money which has them: the Lunatic Asylum is an institution maintained from the public money which has both: therefore every pensioner has a claim on the Lunatic Asylum for food and clothing.

To let buyers get libraries from Booksellers Dr. Ryerson calls "subjecting them to individual speculation." What right has he to use such insulting language of any respect-

able class of citizens? Among the names at our petition are some who have long stood at least as high as Dr. Ryerson for every thing honourable. To insult Booksellers as a class is to insult the whole mercantile community who receive them as part of themselves. Repeatedly through his report Dr. Ryerson uses selling and cheating as synonymous terms. Are our merchants quite willing to accept the definition?

We are asked how it is that the Mechanic's Institutes in any case go to Dr. Ryerson if the Booksellers sell wholesale as cheap as he. A few words from the Report itself are explanation enough. "The monthly circulation of the Journal of Education in each of the 3,500 school sections of Upper Canada"—each number a long advertisement of the matchless attractions of the Depository—"and the publication and circulation of many thousand copies of extensive classified catalogues;" at a cost to the public, he should have added, of many hundred pounds;—the whole crowned by a continual efflorescence of puffs, in the shape of circulars, lectures, &c., constitute a machinery for alluring customers, before which even the proprietors of the Pantechnetheca may despair.

As the perpetual fall of a water-drop wears the stone, so, Dr. Ryerson seems to think, the steady repetition of even the weakest arguments may at last overcome facts. We are once more treated in the last two leaves to what has been stretched already through tedious pages, on the Irish School Books, and with his views respecting Indiana, Ohio and New York. As we have ourselves to pay for our printing, I must leave him to expatiate, this second time, alone, over fields through which he has led me before. One question, however, I may ask. How is it that Dr. Ryerson so repeatedly takes the whole credit to himself for the liberty enjoyed by the trade of re-printing the Irish Books, when it was not his vote but that of the Council of Public Instruction, of which he is only a member, which gave it us? Why so continually ignore their very existence, or, at best, write as if they

were only so many faincant Kings, and he the Mayor of the palace—they mere titular Great Moguls and he the real embodiment of power?

We are once more assured that Dr. Ryerson “does not permit pupils of either private or public schools, or colleges, to procure text books at the Public Depository, except under the written declaration that they cannot obtain them in the city.” Why, oh, why, thus venture a statement which can be contradicted by any number of witnesses. The “declaration” is simply—“I hereby certify that the foregoing articles are for the use of the school above designated.” Mention of inability to procure them in the city there is none, unless a new form has been drawn up since the rise of the present discussion. Dr. Ryerson might as well deny that he sells books at all, as attempt by any sleight of expression to disprove the facts, notorious as the existence of the Depository itself, that he has made a habit of selling to the pupils of both public and private schools, and to many who were neither. A paragraph intended to be very sarcastic is launched at the doctrine that for government to turn tradesman is a violation of the “fundamental principles of political economy, and of the social compact.” In Dr. Ryerson’s case redundant proof of its truth lies on the surface in the fact, that, however he may play with light and shade in the management of his defence, he cannot adduce even a single instance, parallel to his own, from any country.

The statement of our petition that we furnish books in quantity—as when a library is bought, as cheaply as he, brings down another shower of figures in disproof. “One book,” says he, “advertised by two of the signers of the petition at \$3.50 a copy, is furnished to the school and municipal corporations at \$2.90 a copy, and another edition of the same work at \$2.00 a copy.” We by no means profess to sell single books at a reduction, any more than the rest of commercial mankind. But if a school or municipal corporation were buying a library from us, they would find the one

invoiced to them at least as low as the Depository price, while the second would be much lower, as \$2.00 is the full sum for which we all sell it retail. But let me give another quotation. "A series of books advertised by them at \$1.00 a volume, is furnished by the education department for public libraries at 70c. a volume ; and another series, advertised at \$1.50 per volume, is furnished for public libraries at \$1.00 a volume." I have only to say that, if Dr. Ryerson chooses, we will supply him with any number of some of the "\$1.50" series, at the price which he charges—\$1.00—the price at which we retail them being 75 cents.

But the question between us is not one of the prices of particular books. It would be strange if he never, with all his advantages—limiting our sales and lessening our orders by his unfair competition—could manage to show a few pence in his favour, as in others we can in our own. The sum of our controversy is briefly this. We claim his entire withdrawal from unauthorized sales to grammar and private schools, and colleges, and the university, and from his equally unauthorized sales to individuals, whether connected with any such institutions or not. We claim this as a right even on the unbending ground of law, and no less so on every consideration alike of justice and expediency. On the same double grounds, and with equal force, we claim that he leave untouched the supply of the libraries of institutes and other general public societies. With the school book trade he has no right to interfere, as there is no need that he should. With any but the schools specified in the acts under whose authority he is, he has nothing whatever to do, and even with them the letter of the statute marks the legitimate bounds of his transactions. On the custom of the associations I have mentioned his intrusion is equally unwarranted and unnecessary. I dispute his right to consider prices in either the one case or the other ; although it is certain that we sell in quantities as cheaply as he, our charges have nothing to do with the matter. It is not for him, set as he is over public schools

only, and even over them in a limited relation, to lay the details of the literary trade of the country on a bed of Procrustes of his own contriving, and force them to fit it. The profits of the retail trade are the livelihood of the Province. The rates of a larger traffic regulate themselves by competition. Over freedom to both it is the very province of Government to watch, and it discharges the design of its institution then only aright when it shields the humblest of its citizens in the use and the fruit of his enterprize and industry. A pretty pass things would come to if every Head of a Department were to stretch his facilities to the utmost to attract to himself what he could of the commerce of the country! Buying and Selling are sacred rights, and no St. Simonism, or dreams of Louis Blanc, which would make Government the general producer and trader, can make the world think otherwise. Where so many have failed it is not for Dr. Ryerson to begin.

In the supply of Maps, Apparatus and Libraries for the Common and Grammar Schools, the Depository has the law at its back. Fortified thus, we waive the question of right, on this point, and offer only that of expediency. If Dr. Ryerson's tables be correct, the value of these items supplied to such schools from his Establishment is hardly worth the cost of its maintenance, especially when we know that as good libraries could be furnished as cheaply, and the simple maps and apparatus that are used, no less so, by the growth and competition of free trade, without its intervention. Were the Depository prices like those of the Privy Council Committee in England, it would be different. But is it credible that a large demand could not secure an average deduction of 20 per cent., which is the outside of Dr. Ryerson's discount? In 1856 the expenses of the year, so far as given in the Library account, which allows only £266 as Salaries for the Depository—though \$6,630 are charged in 1857 for those of the various assistants in the office—were £1,258, the total value of sales and grants being ap-

parently £5,823. The expenses were thus 22 per cent. at the least on the gross receipts. Could there be any difficulty in serving the Public Schools as cheaply by private enterprise, when the deductions allowed would be so much clear gain? Supposing even only one half the per centage to be added to Dr. Ryerson's prices, it would make them only ten per cent. less than retail, while there is not a doubt that a Bookseller would give a discount of twenty. I have no disposition to impute any thing dark or disgraceful, but I feel sure that we know only a part of the real cost of the Depository. Were it dispensed with, it is not unreasonable to believe that \$4,000 a-year could be saved in salaries alone. Even on the lower ground of expediency, is it worth while to support an Establishment which is an actual loss to the country, while it is a great encroachment on trade?

If the question turn on the ability of the trade to supply the place of the Depository, I would only ask those who doubt it to visit our city schools, and see how simple the wants are which require supply. The simplest Apparatus, the usual Maps for the wall, cheap picture lessons and sheets, and a judicious selection of library books sum up all. The display of multitudinous literary and philosophical treasures and trifles at the Normal School, unequalled, according to Dr. Ryerson, in the whole world, is only costly playing with the public money. A museum of such things is all very well: a stock of them is simply ridiculous. Thousands on thousands of pounds, what with first cost and expenses since, lie sunk in Dr. Ryerson's rooms. We are not so rich as to be able to let any man put his hands into our pockets and buy what he pleases even for an "Educational Depository," when the same end can be served by the private trader without cost to the country.

But the whole of the Booksellers' grievances do not end with the Depository system. Changes are imperatively demanded in Dr. Ryerson's other relations to literature if it is to thrive in our midst. Booksellers are the employers of

authors, and both suffer as things are. With trade free and prosperous, surplus capital would soon create a literature. It cannot at present. Dr. Ryerson's monopoly of school patronage, moreover, makes him the arbiter of the fate of all educational publications. Mr. Hodgins can get his books sanctioned though they are so severely reviewed, but what Bookseller not in Dr. Ryerson's favour would venture on any enterprise where a similar sanction was required? We can have no educational literature, as things are, except such as grows under Dr. Ryerson's smile. Is it right that any single man should have such power? Let any one remember Milton's splendid pleadings for a free press and his statement of the evils of a censorship, and he will know the effects on the literature of Canada of Dr. Ryerson's self-assumed position. Government could never have designed him to be the autocrat of the literary trade of this country. It is of no use for him to run behind the name of the Council of Instruction; with his opposition it would seem disrespectful to favour any book. The prestige of office, the limited leisure of the Council for educational details, the aversion to debate natural in gentlemen in such a position, leave the fortune of a book or of any thing else substantially in Dr. Ryerson's hands. Of course we are favoured with assurances from his own pen of his patronage of every thing Canadian, but it must be patronage, and patronage implies a suppleness of the knee on the part of the receiver that is rather degrading, and hints at a cold shade for offenders, in a manner altogether incompatible with a free community and the limited authority of a servant of the general public. If Dr. Ryerson wishes instances of his standing in the way of Canadian enterprise I shall give him them hereafter.

Another effect of the Depository is to prevent the growth of the book trade in the villages and smaller places of the Province. It crushes them out. The supply of a grammar school would be the beginning of a book store wherever it was open, but the grammar schools are supplied by Dr. Ryerson,

who even stoops to run in competition with the poor country Bookseller in the sale of spelling-books and arithmetics, for even these he keeps and sells, though he says the sale is given up to the trade. It is hard enough to establish a book store in a thin population without having the difficulty increased by the Superintendent turning a rival.

The result will be, that, except in Dr. Ryerson's libraries, books will not be found out of the towns and cities of the Province—black night must needs reach up to their walls, so far as book shops are concerned. If proofs and instances are wanted I shall quote them. Is this proper? Has any man the right to keep the whole country parts of the Province in darkness unless they choose to read by his light?

Still another effect of the Depository is to establish a number of small monopolies round the central one at the Normal School. Mr. Justice Sullivan declared Dr. Ryerson, long ago, an "insatiable monopolizer," but, still worse, his smile creates monopoly wherever it falls on our trade. To be on his soft side is equivalent to enjoying a quiet little empire like his own great one, and reigning as a king in miniature. Competition is impossible, and literature is divided into principalities between Dr. Ryerson and his satraps.

But there is no use attempting to state the whole case. That no other country, however anxious for education, has let any one build up such an establishment or exercise such a partial censorship is its sufficient condemnation.

To correct a number of cognate evils the only reasonable hope of success lies in our reaching their source. The Depository does not stand alone as the speckled bird of the educational department. Some other of its branches if as thoroughly sifted would be found equally faulty. Could it be otherwise with such a centralizing scheme as Dr. Ryerson has constructed? Every clause of the school acts is only a step by which he rises to his solitary "throne of burning state." Every trace of power and patronage that was worth

the taking has been gleaned, to dignify his office and disparage that of all others by comparison. The Governor General himself is not more irresponsible, and enjoys a far less glorious reign. In 1856 Dr. Ryerson's revenue amounted to £56,000, of which he had the sole and unquestioned expenditure. In 1857 it amounted to £65,392, with the use of an official palace and other additions. To spend £10,000 of our taxes on whatever he pleases for his Depository was only one of his high prerogatives. Another £10,182 have been spent in the last two years on his "Provincial Library and Museum." This vast sum has been expended by him on copies of pictures and on picture frames, and stucco casts, &c. What could he possibly know critically of the fine arts? As an elderly Canadian, brought up in our then unpeopled wilderness, he could hardly have seen such a thing as a really fine painting till his official visit to Europe. In England, a commission, comprising a number of such men as Sir Edwin Landseer, Lord Macaulay and Mr. Grote, was recently appointed to do what Dr. Ryerson has been permitted to attempt alone. Yet who can restrain him if his confidence carry him thus far? Our "National Gallery" is a mere bagatelle which he selects at our cost in his moments of leisure! Is there any other officer in the Province who has clothed himself with like power, for Dr. Ryerson is himself the author of the acts which place us thus at his feet?

If any thing be wanting to shew that a defence by the Superintendent is but questionable proof, it is only to be remembered over what he has thrown his *Ægis* as defiantly as he now throws it before his Depository. Not to call up his Leonidas letters in which he stood forth as the champion of the ruler against the people, we have in the very Special Report before us as fierce a demonstration in favour of a plan of Separate Schools which pleases no single party in the Province, and still later, we have seen him attempt no less unshrinking a vindication of personal acts which the moral sense of the community seems to condemn.

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