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## FREE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF UPPER CANADA.

We have much pleasure in inserting in this number of the Journal the annual statement of the progress of our free public library system in Upper Canada. The statement is in a tabular form, and shows the number and classification of all the library books which have been dispatched to the public schools by the Educational Department from November, 1853, to the end of December, 1861. It also includes an account of the number of prize books sent out to the public schools from January, 1857, to December, 1861, as well as a statement of the mechanics' institutes, &c., which have been supplied with library books during the same periods.

One or two other tables have been added. That relating to prison libraries, &c., will no doubt be regarded with especial interest by those who look upon such agencies as a silent yet important means of influence for good with a class of the community who are often regarded as the outcasts and pariahs of society, incapable of being reclaimed, or unworthy of an effort to do so.

The extracts and documents relating to Prisons and Reformatories in the Province, which we publish in connection with these tables, will be found to present many interesting facts illustrative of the comparative success of the ameliorating influence now brought to bear upon the inmates of the various prisons and reformatories in the Province. Such an influence may prove a potent means, when others fail, of recalling many an erring one to the paths of religion and virtue.

The contemplation of the facts embodied in the tables relating to the extension of libraries in our public schools, will excite lively gratitude in the minds of the lovers of the educational advancement of the country, as it has already elicited the admiration of numerous strangers who visit this country from time to time, especially the American educationists who have made this part of our Canadian school system a subject of enquiry.\*

Very much remains yet to be done in this branch of the system of public instruction; but it is worthy of remark, that not a month has elapsed during the eight years since its establishment without more or less books having been sent out, as may be seen in the table on the following page. From this table it will be seen that the total number of library books sent out up to the end of 1861, was 193,217; the number of prize books sent out from January, 1857, to December, 1861, was 67,128; and the number of volumes of books sent out to mechanics' institutes, &c., was 7,815; making a grand total (after deducting 616 volumes returned for exchange) of 267,544 volumes. The value of these books, together with the value of the maps, apparatus, and other articles sent out from the Map and Apparatus Depository, we give in the following table, which will prove highly interesting to the friends of public schools in Upper Canada.

Table shewing the value of articles sent out from the Educational Depository during the years 1851 to 1861 inclusive:

YEAR.	Value of articles on which the 100 per cent. has been apportioned from the Legislative Grant.		Articles sold at Catalogue prices, without any	Total value of Library, Prize, and School Books.
	Public School Library Books.	Maps, Appara- tus and Prize Books.	apportionment from the Legisla- tive Grant.	Maps, and Apparatus despatched.
	\$ cts.	\$ cts.	\$ cts	\$ cts.
1851	•••		1,414 25	1,414 25
1852			2,981 13	2,981 13
1853		· · · · ·	4,233 14	4,233 14
1854	51,376 23		5,514 18	56,890 41
1855	9,947 15	4,655 53	4,389 40	18,992 08
1856	7,275 82	9,320 87	5,726 76	22,323 45
1857	16,200 92	18,118 28	6,451 20	40,770 40
1858	3,982 99	11,810 28	6,972 05	22,765 32
1859	5,805 64	11,905 02	6,679 30	24,389 96
1860	5,289 56	16,832 17	5,416 64	27,538 37
1861	4,084 22	15,781 74	4,160 70	24,026 66
Total	\$103,962 53	\$88,423 89	\$53,938 75	\$246,325 17

\* See Journal of Education for May, 1860, page 65, and also pages 21-24 of the Journal for February, 1861.