

geography for Canada. In connexion with the National Geography, the Board of Education have recommended the use of *Morse's Geography* in our schools; and it is beginning to become generally known, and will doubtless soon be generally used. It will be seen by Abstract C, that in 1847 the National Geography was used in 230 schools; Morse's, in 651; Olney's, in 344 (!); Stewart's, in 92; various in 331.

6. *Book-keeping* is taught in 523 schools. The National Elementary work on this subject is used in 296 schools, and various works in 227 schools.

7. *Mensuration* is taught in 294 schools. The excellent work of the National Board is used in 156 schools; various in 148 schools.

8. *Algebra* is taught in 144 schools. Bonnycastle's *Algebra* is used in 48 schools; and various in 96 schools.

9. *Elements of Natural Philosophy* are reported as having been taught in 77 schools, but the books used are not stated.

10. *The Bible and Testament* are reported to have been used in 1782 schools, nearly two-thirds of the Common Schools in Upper Canada. This fact is the best answer to the objection of those who have represented our Common Schools as "Godless," as excluding Christianity, instead of providing for the inculcation of its principles and precepts. The question of the Holy Scriptures and religious instruction in schools is the rock on which every attempt hitherto made in England to establish the public system of elementary education has been broken to pieces; and the means of solving this question occupied my most earnest inquiries for more than a year in various countries of Europe and some States of America. The results of those inquiries, not as embodied in theoretical discussions, but as practically developed in both Roman Catholic and Protestant countries, are stated in my *Report on a System of Public Elementary Instruction for Upper Canada*, pages 22-52. In harmony with what is there stated, I have endeavoured to develop this most important and, at the same time most difficult department of our Common School system. With this view of the sixth Section of the sixth Chapter of the *Forms and Regulations* was prepared, headed "Constitution and Government of Schools in respect to Religious Instruction;"—a section which was submitted to both the Protestant and Roman Catholic Bishops of Toronto, as well as to other clergymen, before its final adoption; and to which no candid Roman Catholic can object, and more than which no enlightened Protestant can reasonably desire. In the same spirit I addressed a Circular to Trustees, containing the following counsels and expositions of the law on this subject:

"On the all-important subject of the Constitution and Government of schools in respect to religious instruction, I beg to refer you to the *Book of Forms, Regulations, &c.*, Chapter 11, Section 6. The law carefully guards against any interference with the rights of conscience, by expressly providing that no child shall be compelled to read any religious book, or to join in any exercise of devotion to which his or her parents or guardians shall object. But by this restriction, the law assumes that which has been considered by many as above civil authority to enact—which has been enjoined by Divine authority—the provision for religious exercises and instruction in the schools. The Government does not assume the function of religious instructor; it confines itself to the more appropriate sphere of securing the facilities of religious instruction by those whose proper office it is to provide for and communicate it. The extent and manner in which this shall be introduced and maintained in each school is left with the Trustees of each school, the chosen guardians of the Christian educational interests of the youth in each school section. If Trustees employ a drunken, a profane, or an immoral teacher, they act as anti-Christian enemies, rather than as Christian guardians of the youth of a Christian country; and if the atmosphere of Christianity does not pervade the school, on the Trustees chiefly must rest the responsibility. On the fidelity with which this trust is fulfilled by Trustees, are suspended, to a great extent, the destinies of Upper Canada."

Thus without kindling the flames of religious contention on this subject, and yet maintaining inviolably the principles of Christianity as the basis of our educational system, each school municipality or section is authorized to provide, according to its own judgment, the nature and extent of the religious exercises and instruction that shall be observed and given in the school. I am not aware of a

single complaint on this subject; and the extent to which the Holy Scriptures are used in the schools indicates the character both of the people and the system. It is true that those who wish the common schools to be the hand-maid of one or more religious persuasions, or to place the common education of the youth under the exclusive control of the clergy, may not be satisfied with this system; but to those who are contented with the inculcation of the doctrines and spirit of the Ten Commandments, Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, and the discretionary use of the Holy Scriptures* will, I am satisfied, regard our Common School System as established upon the proper foundation of the common Christian faith of our country, in connexion with the common religious rights of all classes of its inhabitants. It is also to be recollected that our Common Schools are not *boarding* but *day* schools; and, therefore, can have nothing to do with those parts of religious instruction which belong to the parental fireside and the Christian Sabbath. The churches and the parents' duties are not merged in those of *Common* or *Boarding* Schools. In Common School education, therefore, the instructions of the parent and of the Church are to be taken into account in connexion with those of the Common School.

VIII. METHODS OF TEACHING.

There are three distinctive methods of teaching arising out of arrangement of pupils in the schools; the *Mutual* or *individual* method, teaching pupils *one by one*; the *Simultaneous* method, teaching by *classes*; the *Monitorial* method, in which some of the more advanced pupils are employed to teach the less advanced. It is important to know which of these methods is adopted, or how far they are combined, in order to understand the character and efficiency of the schools. With this view I introduced these heads into the printed blank forms of local school reports; but from the various inquiries which have been made of me by Trustees and teachers, and from statements which I have received from some of the District Superintendents, I have reason to believe that the distinctions in respect to the methods of teaching have not in all cases been understood, and, therefore, that the entire accuracy of the reports cannot be relied on. The methods of teaching are reported in only 1415 schools. It would follow from these defective returns, as given in Table and Abstract C, that there are no *classes* in 557 schools; that *simultaneous* or *class* instruction is followed in only 609 schools; and that *monitors* are employed in 249. It will require another year to obtain full and accurate information on this subject.

CHARACTER OF THE SCHOOLS.

It will be seen by referring to the statistical part of this Report, Table, and Abstract D, that the schools are classified as follows:—1. Good or first class schools; 2. Middling or second class schools; 3. Inferior or third class schools; 4. Separate or denominational schools. There having been no standard fixed for the qualification of District Superintendents, for uniformity of judgment by them on the different branches taught and the modes of teaching them, and for the uniform classification of teachers, no very definite idea can be attached to the three-fold classification of the schools. The 41st section of the School Act provides "that the teachers who shall receive certificates of qualification under this Act shall be arranged in three classes, according to their attainments and abilities, in such a manner as shall be prescribed by the Superintendent of Schools, with the concurrence of the Board of Education and the sanction of the Governor General in Council." In the absence of a common standard of attainments on the part of District Superintendents, and of examinations and decisions by them in respect to the qualifications of teachers; this provision of the Act can be but very imperfectly carried into effect. Before submitting

* The Board of Education for the State of Massachusetts have the following remarks on this subject in their Report for 1847:—"It is not known that there is or ever has been a member of the Board of Education who would not be disposed to recommend the daily reading of the Bible, devotional exercises, and the constant inculcation of the precepts of Christian morality in all public schools, and it is due to the Secretary to remember that in his Reports and Addresses, and in whatever form he expresses his opinions, he proves himself the unshrinking advocate of moral instruction upon Christian principles. Beyond what they may thus recommend and advocate, neither the Board or the Secretary can exert any official influence upon the religious condition of the schools."