

Department, and is supplied to Trustees and Teachers at a very small charge—half the cost—and these merit cards are to be awarded daily, or more generally weekly, to pupils meriting them. One class of cards is for *punctuality*; another for *good conduct*; a third for *diligence*; a fourth for *perfect recitations*. There are generally three or four prizes under each of these heads; and the pupil or pupils who get the largest number of merit cards under each head, will, at the end of the quarter or half year, be entitled to the prize books awarded. Thus an influence is exerted upon every part of a pupil's conduct, and during every day of his school career. If he cannot learn as fast as another pupil, he can be as *punctual*, as *diligent*, and maintain as *good conduct*; and to acquire distinction, and an entertaining and beautiful book, for *punctuality*, *diligence*, *good conduct*, or *perfect recitations*, or exercises, must be a just ground of satisfaction, not only to the pupil, but also to his or her parents and friends. There are two peculiarities of this system of merit cards worthy of special notice. The one is, that it does not rest upon the comparative success of single examinations at the end of the term or half year, or year, but on the daily conduct and diligence of each pupil during the whole period, and that irrespective of what may be done or not done by any other pupil. The ill-feeling by rivalryship at a single examination is avoided, and each pupil is judged and rewarded according to his merits, as exhibited in his every day school life. The second peculiarity is, that the standard of merit is founded on the *Holy Scriptures*, as the mottoes on each card are all taken from the sacred volume, and the illustrations on each card consist of a portrait of a character illustrative of the principal of the motto, and as worthy of imitation. The prize-book system, and especially in connection with that of *merit-cards*, has a most salutary influence upon the school discipline, upon both teachers and pupils, besides diffusing a large amount of entertaining and useful reading.

V. TABLE E.—TEXT-BOOKS, MAPS, APPARATUS USED IN THE SCHOOLS.

1. *General Remarks.*—The question of uniformity of text-books is now so settled by the common consent in this country, that I need not adduce the arguments and authorities of educationists in other countries, as I have done in my last and previous annual reports, to evince the importance of but one series of text-books for our Public Schools, and to show the losses and evils arising from admitting a diversity of text-books in the schools.

I may, however, remark, that as some complaints were made in regard to the National Series of Readers being "behind the times," and as a very strong and general desire has been expressed, to have an improved and strictly Canadian series of text-books for the schools, the Council of Public Instruction took steps last year to accomplish this important object; and I have every reason to believe, that it will be satisfactorily completed, before the close of the current year. I trust we shall be able to commence the year 1868 with a new and uniform series of Canadian Readers, and such a revision and improvement of the whole authorized series of text-books, as will meet the wants of the schools, and satisfy the expectations of the public, in this Province of our New Dominion. But I think one year should be allowed to use up the old and universally adopted series, which have rendered such invaluable service to our schools, before the use of the new series be rendered imperative.

We have thus far succeeded beyond any country or state, with which I am acquainted, in America or Europe, in establishing what the educationists of all countries consider to be of the utmost importance—uniformity of text-books in the Public Schools; and it now remains for us to render them as perfect in matter and method, as good in quality and as moderate in price, as possible.

2. *Readers.*—Of the 4,379 schools reported, only 54 are reported in which the National Readers are not used. The Readers used in 90 schools are not reported; and the *Irish National Readers* are reported as used in 4,235 schools. I trust the new series of Canadian Readers, in course of preparation and publication, will possess all the excellencies of the old series, without their defects, and with such modifications and additions, as the progress of the schools and the state of the country require.

3. *Spelling Books.*—There still lingers in 65 schools the use of *Mavor's Spelling Book*, and in 285 schools the use of the *Canada Spelling Book*—decrease, 82; and the