

PARISH SCHOOL SYSTEM OF CANADA.

As we anticipate, during the present Legislative Sessions of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the enactment of laws for the better encouragement of education in these respective provinces; and as the forthcoming enactments will probably embody some of the principles of the Upper Canadian system, we propose briefly to review that system. In order that those of our readers who are not acquainted with its nature and workings may be the better prepared for the introduction of a law, either in part or in whole, which is working so well in Canada West.

Upper Canada, like many other countries, has from time to time introduced measures with a view to the improvement of its educational condition, all of which have proved fruitless, until the law recently introduced into Western Canada, which is a compound of various systems. This system has for its foundation, *Normal and Model Schools*. These schools were established at a cost of £25,000,—the land connected therewith comprises seven and a-half acres. Of the grounds, two acres are devoted to a botanical garden, three to experiments in agriculture, and the remainder to the buildings and gymnasium. Hence the whole course of study is practically illustrated by lectures. Each semi-annual session of the Normal School lasts five months.—Male students entering are required to be eighteen years of age, and females sixteen, and have to produce certificates of good moral character, and also to certify their intention to devote themselves to the profession of teaching.—Pupils are admitted to the Normal School free of tuition charges, and have to remain over two sessions; and those who obtain a first class certificate receive five shillings per week; they are required to attend once a week on the religious services of the denomination to which they respectively belong. Both male and female are admitted into the Model Schools at a very moderate charge.—The numbers who annually attend these two kindred institutions generally exceed five hundred. The Grammar Schools of Upper Canada, nearly 70 in number, are the connecting link between the district schools and higher institutions of education. Each teacher is required to be a graduate of some university. In

each grammar school, classics, mathematics, and the physical sciences are required to be taught. These schools are of a high order, and are productive of much good—they are, in fact, the higher colleges of the people.

The next in order, and the most important, are the common schools—important because they form the direct educational centres of the people at large. The system of Canada West, which has been much extolled for its efficient and successful working, is principally attributed to Dr Ryerson, and may be said to embrace a combination of all that is excellent in the various educational systems extant. The machinery is similar to that of the New York system; the manner of supporting the schools is derived from that of Massachusetts—supported by a property tax—and is free to all without distinction; the textbooks in use are those published by the National Board of Education in Ireland; and the Normal system is adapted from that of Germany. The country is divided into school sections of suitable extent, and each section is under the management of three trustees, who hold office for three years, one of whom is elected by the householders of each section. Their duties are to ascertain what amount of funds are necessary for the services of teachers, the furnishing of schools, etc.; and to report the state of the schools to the superintendent. The assessment principle is managed by the trustees, by first calling a public meeting of the inhabitants. The law prescribes the duties of teachers, while it grants them full protection. The teacher, before entering upon his duties, is required to have a legal certificate of qualification, and to be of good moral character. A public quarterly examination is also to be held in each school, when parents as well as public officers may attend, and see the progress made. Each County has a council, who appoint superintendents; the superintendents thus appointed are required to visit each school, at least twice a year, and deliver a public lecture on education in each school, once a year; divides the school monies among the several schools within his jurisdiction; gives schools to qualified teachers on the order of trustees; aids in the examination of teachers; de-