

receipts of last year from pew rents, Sabbath collections, missionary contributions, etc.

Among the many advantages of the scheme the following may be enumerated:—

1. The pews are all free—free alike to rich and poor—and the poor are not deterred from attending Church because of their inability to pay pew rent or because of their being compelled to occupy seats generally known to be set apart for those in humble circumstances, able to pay only a very little, if at all for the sittings they occupy.

(2.) The managers and missionary committee can form a much better estimate of the revenue to be relied upon for the year than under the systems generally in use, and instead of borrowing money and waiting till the end of the quarter or half year, they weekly receive funds to meet current expenditure; the salary of the minister etc., can be paid promptly, and missionary contributions can be appropriated and forwarded to the Treasurers of the Church's schemes monthly or quarterly instead of annually as now, and thus save the several mission funds interest on borrowed money, and the several mission committees no small amount of anxiety.

(3.) It saves managers and missionary collectors the trouble, and worry and annoyance of collecting pew rents and missionary contributions from house to house. This itself should commend the system to all our congregations. It will be a happy day to many when in this respect the voice of the collector will be no more heard in our land.

The contributions of our people will be greatly increased. Not only will the rich be likely to contribute more largely, but the poorer members of our churches will be induced to do far more than under other systems they have ever felt able to do. It is far easier for most people to give twenty-five cents a week, than thirteen dollars a year, in a lump sum. It is far too generally the case in all our churches that the few give and not the many. Missionary collectors often think it not worth while to call on the poor, on those whom they think can only give five or ten cents, and thus large amounts are lost to the Church. In one congregation in the United States, where this weekly system is in use, upwards of \$1,000.00 were got in the year 1877 from contributions of twenty-five cents and under weekly, and we are informed that one of the largest and costliest Roman Catholic Institutions in Montreal has been erected by money almost entirely obtained in small weekly offerings from day labourers and servant girls. It teaches the people to contribute systematically and on scriptural principles. The voluntary principle comes into play. No undue pressure is brought to bear on parties giving their pledge to contribute so much weekly. Men are more apt to be conscientious because they are largely free from the influence of others and not so apt to be governed by mere impulse in giving. It associates giving more closely in the minds of contributors with other acts of worship. The moral discipline is good, and it is in accord with the apostolic injunction: "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him."

We will take an early opportunity of again referring to this subject. Meantime we com-

mend to the sessions and office-bearers of our Church generally a careful consideration of the "new departure," recently made by Erskine Church, Montreal.

### EDUCATION.

**T**ARDILY, as usual, we are in possession of the "Annual Report of the Public and High Schools, also of the Normal and Model Schools of the Province of Ontario for the year 1877."

Before dealing with the particulars of the present report, we venture a few general remarks regarding education in this province during the last twenty years.

Now that we have at the head of the department a responsible Minister of the Government, who is at the same time an intelligent and well educated man, we expect improvement. Several improvements have already been made, but we look for more. Our educational system has been much praised and really the progress made by the country in education is remarkable, but we are decidedly of the opinion that this progress was not in any great degree owing to the perfection of the "system." We do not wish to say anything derogatory to the name and fame of the late Superintendent of Education, the Rev. Dr. Ryerson; but, with all due respect, we beg leave to affirm that education in this Province has advanced in spite of his system rather than by means of it. Our intelligent settlers were extremely anxious to provide education for their children, and they readily took hold of any system that came to their hand and worked it to its best capacity. With the system they got they did well; with a superior one they would have done better still. In a legend of the olden time, duly recorded in the "Globe" some years ago, it is stated that the late Chief Superintendent of Schools studied out the educational system of Ontario while sitting on the top of one of the highest mountains of Switzerland. That may or may not be true; but he might just as well have sat on a peak of the Green Mountains, for his system was taken, with very little modification, from that of the United States. The division of townships into sections, the election of three local trustees, the inspection of schools by Local Superintendents, and the restriction of the teacher's engagement to one year—these are some of the most prominent features of Dr. Ryerson's educational system; and these, we rather think, were all to be found in full blast in the United States before he introduced them here. These are all now regarded as hindrances to progress, and we expect to see them all superseded without much delay. One of these institutions is already among the things that were—we mean the Local Superintendent. According to good authority, legislation must be conducted "for the greatest good of the greatest number," and we rather think that the legislation which relieved us from this official was well calculated to serve that purpose. In some cases, being perhaps a minister or an M. D., he was well qualified for his duties and discharged them in a creditable manner, but in most cases it was otherwise. We know of

one local superintendent who was a retired tailor, and who objected to endorsing the certificate of a teacher from a neighbouring county because he could not account for the rotundity of the earth by the shape of a drop of water hanging on the point of a needle; and we know of another whose occupation we cannot conscientiously describe in any other way than by calling him a politician, and who knew only one way of dividing the earth into hemispheres, and thought the equator ran north and south. The change from local superintendents to county inspectors was the greatest stride made in recent educational legislation in this province and it is already yielding good fruit. The other grand features of Dr. Ryerson's system will, we expect, be shortly replaced by better arrangements. Territorial schools and local trustees, will give place to school houses situated where they are needed, and Township Boards composed of educated men; while encouragement will be given to able instructors to continue in the profession by enabling them to contract engagements for a number of years, or even for life, or during good behaviour.

Reverting to the report now before us, we repeat the words with which we commenced this article, "tardily, as usual." Is there to be no improvement in this respect? Why must we wait till some time in the first month of 1879 before we get the educational report for 1877? It was always so; but why should it continue to be so? We always thought it one of the characteristics of the old administration and expected it to pass away under the new, but it seems now to be taking its place as a permanent grievance. There must be some good reason for it, but to us it is unfathomable. The report, though late, is on the whole satisfactory. It indicates much material progress in education throughout the country. In 1877 there was an increase of 4,877 in the number of pupils between the ages of five and sixteen attending the schools, and an increase of 4,701 in the average attendance. The amount apportioned from the legislative grant was \$2,006 more than in the preceding year; the amount from county assessment shewed an increase of \$65,144; and the amount from trustees' school assessment an increase of \$10,552; the total increase of expenditure on education from all sources being \$29,529. We observe also with much pleasure that a larger increase in the amount paid for teachers' salaries took place in 1877 than in any previous year. This, taken in connection with the higher grade of certificates indicated in the table specifying the standing of teachers, goes far towards proving the success of the efforts lately made to improve the professional standing of the teacher and raise his remuneration. There is a decrease in the amount paid for sites and building of school houses, but this is accounted for by the fact that the requirements of the Act in this respect had been to a very large extent complied with in previous years, and that the country was pretty well supplied with school buildings. For the city of Toronto alone, the decrease in this item in 1877 was \$42,153. Our space will not admit of our specifying any further details at present; but from our examination of the report, we are glad to be able to state that the educational interests of the province are being well attended to under the direction of our present able Minister of Education.