

jections which have been, and are, urged against the system, by those who have not tried the experiment. It is true that, in these answers, there is a blending of light and shadow; but, upon the whole, the highest anticipations which your Committee have ever entertained, have so far been more than realized. Besides the instances already specified, only two sessions have furnished reports which can be regarded as at all unfavourable, and both of them have been without a fixed pastor, while one of them has been subjected to a series of most depressing trials. Neither of them, however, seems disposed to abandon the system. Other two also report no advance on the previous year; but neither of them proposed to return to pew rent or subscriptions. The great mass of the reports from the thirty-four congregations from which the Committee have heard, where the system is in operation, are highly favourable, some of them almost jubilant. Quite a number of the brethren tell us that, so far, the results are most gratifying, being considerably in advance of previous years. The pastor of a congregation which has been working the system for five years, tells us that "the results have been gratifying from the first. Last year \$100 were raised more than the year preceding." Another says, "There has been an advance of \$120 on the past year." A brother whose congregation adopted it early in the current year, writes, "The average, so far, would give at least \$400 over the previous year." Another affirms, "We raised more money with less trouble than in any previous year." Another assures us that, "while the system of Sabbath Collection is not perfect with us, it is far better than the old, and he ventures the assertion that if we could only get clear of the Ananias and Sapphiras, the scheme would be everything that we could desire." One of our country congregations, whose situation and circumstances would be regarded as most unfavourable to the operation of the system, is reported to have been very successful during the year; to have raised more for stipend, to have raised it more punctually, and to have about doubled the amount of its collections for all purposes. The pastor of another, which has not yet become self-sustaining, tells us that "it is working most satisfactorily. I think more of the system every week, as I regard it as an admirable help in leading our people to greater felt interest in all Church affairs." Another with reference to the year 1872, during the whole of which the system was in operation reports, "Entire success. \$700 were paid for stipend, being \$100 over stipulated amount. As an entirely spontaneous movement they agreed to raise it this year to \$800. Another writes,

"Our Sabbath Collections have increased this year at the rate of thirty per cent. Last year the salary paid was \$800, and that was about all that the congregation could afford. This year they are giving \$1000, and paying \$130 besides for house rent and next year, in addition to this, we expect to raise our contributions for the schemes of the Church in the same way." The Treasurer of one of our congregations to whom the circular of your committee had been handed by the Session, that he might return answers to the questions, says, "From December, 1871, to November, 1872, our Church had no settled pastor, yet the average weekly collection was about \$55. Since the settlement of a pastor the average has been up to \$80 per Sabbath, and we are aiming at from \$90 to \$100. So far as we have gone the scheme has been successful, and no one thinks of going back to the old system of pew rents any more than travelling in the stage coach when railways can be had. In March of this year we began regularly to collect monthly for the Church, and so far we have averaged over \$100 per month."

From the congregation in which the weekly offering has been longest in operation the Committee learn that besides fully sustaining their former liberality for purely congregational purposes, their special collections for the past year have been nearly \$800, being an advance of about \$350 on the previous year.

SIGNIFICANCE OF REPLIES.

The Committee believe the encouraging character of these statements will be regarded as an ample vindication of the length at which they have detailed them. They wish in their report to avail themselves of the operation of that important law of the human mind, according to which particular truths and sharply defined statements take hold and keep hold with a firm grasp while general truths and indefinite statements produce but little impression. Indeed it has always been their aim to press the cause which they have had at heart by the logic of facts, as well as the logic of argument, and they feel certain that no one can examine the returns in their hands without being persuaded that they are in possession of the amplest material for the construction of an unanswerable argument in favour of the course which the Synod has seen fit to adopt in reference to this matter. Nor is it necessary for them to appeal merely to documents which are in the exclusive possession of the committee. Our recently published statistics proclaim the significant fact, that none of our congregations which report themselves as entirely dependent upon the weekly offering are in arrears to their pastors, while quite a num-