

envelopes and without. Three report that they tried the weekly offering but gave it up. Most of the other congregations follow the old-fashioned plan of subscription paper and collectors going round quarterly. A considerable number collect quarterly and some monthly, by envelope. A few collect some annually and some even only once a year.

In answer to the second question, we find that 1 pays the minister weekly, 12 monthly, 63 quarterly, 11 half-yearly, and yearly.

The replies to the third question—"How far does your present system secure regular and punctual payment of stipend?" show that, as a rule, those who adopt the system of weekly offering, pay regularly and punctually. Of these, 25 report to this effect:—4 report that since the adoption of that system the payments have been better than ever before.

Of those who collect by other plans, 12 report entirely satisfactory, 5 fairly well, 11 not quite, the others are not very satisfactory.

The poorest way yet seems to be the yearly, and we are not surprised when one answers, "Poorly, indeed! But glad to get it even then!"

Many fall into arrears each quarter, squaring up at the close of the year.

Consulting the Assembly's Minutes we find that at the end of 1886 there were congregations in arrears as follows:—In the Presbytery of

Sydney,	3 cong. with	\$2843
Victoria & Richmond,	3 " "	439
Halifax,	4 " "	503
Pictou,	3 " "	469
P.E. Island,	1 " "	223
St. John,	5 " "	1105
Miramichi,	1 " "	76
Lunenburg & Shelburne	1 " "	152
Truro,	1 " "	17
Wallace	0	0
	22	\$5392

This does not compare well with the year before, where there were 21 congregations in arrears to the extent of \$5628. But we are glad to be able to say that since the close of last year some congregations have wiped out their arrears, and we believe that the statistics of this year will show a better condition of affairs than those of last year.

Nearly one-third of the whole arrears is

found in one congregation. To our pastor is due \$1668.00 of arrears. On consulting the Statistics we find that these have been accumulating for at least twenty-four years. In 1864 the amount was \$720.00, and so far as we can learn, it has been increasing ever since. In 1884 it was \$1430.00. In 1885 it was \$1529.00. In 1886 it was \$1668.00. Surely the attention of the Presbytery should be directed to this matter and energetic and effective measures promptly used to wipe out this blot from our Statistics.

#### THE SCHEMES OF THE CHURCH.

From answers to the fourth question in our circular, we learn that a great variety of plans is pursued in raising funds for the schemes of the Church, so many that we do not attempt to classify them in this report. Some congregations take collections monthly, others bi-monthly, some quarterly, and some semi-annually. Some make only one collection in the year for the Schemes of the Church. Some gather the contributions by collections at the church, others by collectors. Some combine both. Some use envelopes, others do not. Some depend upon collections taken at Communion seasons. Some congregations are divided into districts, and organized societies in each gather the money at regular intervals. One has a grand missionary day once a year, on a week day, and all the people bring their offerings.

We are inclined to think that an annual collection for all the Schemes of the Church in one lump sum is scarcely giving full opportunity to contribute to these causes. Though we acknowledge that there are congregations which adopt this plan that seem to be quite liberal in their contributions, yet we think those do better where an opportunity is given for contributing to each Scheme separately, the collections being distributed over the whole year, or whose collections are frequent and the Session allocates the sums to the several Schemes.

Still we do not undertake to say here which plan is best for any particular congregation. We would not advise a congregation to adopt a method either for Pastor's salary or for the Schemes of the Church, however highly recommended, or excellent in theory, unless they have faith in it as the best for them. But we do undertake to say that some well defined