

LATIN PRONUNCIATION.

Your Committee, appointed to consider the subject of Latin Pronunciation, beg leave to report as follows :—

As the reports of the High School Inspectors sufficiently prove, there is at present in Ontario no uniform system of Latin Pronunciation.

Owing largely to this defect, the oral reading of Latin is little attended to in many schools, while in others it is completely excluded.

It is hardly necessary to point out what an important instrument for teaching is thus neglected. If taught through the ear as well as through the eye, pupils learn much more quickly, and get a far more secure hold upon a language.

Not the least serious effect of the present disregard of oral teaching is the ignorance of quantity that prevails very generally, with the consequent inability to appreciate Latin metres.

In the hope of partially rectifying present evils, your Committee have decided upon a scheme of Latin Pronunciation which it is hoped will be adopted by the Association and classical teachers throughout the Province.

The scheme follows that known as the Roman method, and is based upon a report made in 1887 to the Cambridge Philological Society by a committee consisting of John Peile, J. F. Postgate and J. S. Reid. This report opens with the following announcement :—"Your committee have come to the conclusion that the classical pronunciation of Latin has been sufficiently ascertained for the purpose of drawing up a scheme which may reasonably be regarded as permanent."

Before being adopted the report was fully discussed at two meetings of the Philological Society, and was "put forth by the Society as an approximate statement of the pronunciation of Latin by the educated classes in the Augustan period."

Besides giving what is presumably the correct pronunciation of Latin, the scheme involves three main advantages :—(a), it is brief and simple ; (b), it presents a practically phonetic alphabet ; (c), it makes very clear the distinction in quantity between long and short vowels.

The Roman method is already used in some parts of Canada, and is commonly followed in the best schools and colleges in the United States.