

judge ; others say that their contributions will bear a favourable comparison with other churches. Some refer us to their statistical report. Very few pastors appear to instruct their people in the nature and duty of systematic benevolence most confine themselves to the inculcation of liberality, when some special collection is mentioned or taken.

Sixth question : " Do the elders take their part in visiting the congregation ? How are their meetings with the people conducted, and with what results ?" Elders do not seem to take their part in visiting in the congregations. In some instances they neither attend to it as a stated duty, nor accompany the pastor in his annual or semi-annual visitation. In other instances their visits are confined to those who are in affliction ; while in very few they consider it a part of the service to which they they were consecrated when they are ordained office-bearers in the Church, and took the oversight of souls. Some of those who are faithful in the matter, sing, read the Scriptures and pray in the households they visit ; others tender the word of exhortation. As might be expected, the visits of such elders are prized, and themselves respected. Your Committee humbly think, judging from the reports before them, that Ruling Elders are sadly deficient in this duty ; and that were they more attentive to it, they would magnify their office, secure the esteem of the people, exert a greater influence over them, and be much more serviceable to the Church of Christ. One answer which we quote may be regarded as an example, from which to learn the purport of all : " Two or three elders visit the members of the congregation near them when sick. Generally they leave this duty to the minister. Some of the few who visit read the Scriptures and pray with the people. One result is, the people are led to a high regard of those who do so with them."

To the seventh question, " what are the most prominent hindrances to the power of vital godliness in your bounds ?" one who is characterized for penetration and shrewdness replies, " Absorbing occupation with the world ; conformity to the social life of unconverted men, on the part of families and the Church ; frivolity, conceit, want of reverence, of moral earnestness, of intellectual culture, on the part of the young ; too lax family discipline ; failure on the part of parents, and even of the more prominent members of the Church to exhibit a suitable example of interest in the religious movements of the congregation ; drunkenness, gambling, licentiousness." Another says, " It is difficult to answer this question. I may refer to the calls of the world ; undue attention to things seen and temporal, to the neglect of things unseen and eternal, combined with worldliness of spirit, and spiritual deadness, as forming a powerful opposition to the progress of true godliness." Another refers to the connexion which the locality in which he labours has with the shipping trade. But the hindrances most frequently mentioned are Sabbath desecration, love of the world, intemperance, and the want of consistency in the walk of those who profess to belong to the body of Christ.

Eighth question ; " Is family worship generally practised, and do parents attend to the religious training of their children ?" Family worship appears to be the rule in households in which the parents are members of the Church, but by a very great many it is neglected, and this neglect is the rule, as might be anticipated, among those who have not publicly declared their faith in a crucified Saviour. We quote the following answer because of the minuteness of the information it communicates, and the illustrations it affords of the conscientious manner in which the writer gives himself to the work of his master : " In the course of my last pastoral visitation, by putting the question, ' Do you observe family worship ?' to the heads of families visited, I am enabled to give this answer : Of eleven families visited, in which either husband or wife are members of the Church, five answered ' No,' four ' Yes,' and two ' Occasionally.' Of forty-four families, in which both husband and wife are members of the Church, thirty answered ' Yes,' eleven ' No,' and three ' Occasionally.'