

been accomplished. But surely what has been done is fully equal to our liberality and to our fidelity; yea, far more than we had any right to expect from any expenditure or labor or sacrifice of ours. Our sowings may have been sparing, so sparing indeed that the Lord of the harvest might justly have withheld the rain. But God hath in mercy given the rich increase and sent the promised blessing down.

And now another year is upon us. Every year brings its own opportunities, its own obligations, demands, and rewards. Every year has its own ploughings and sowings and reapings, and he who soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he who soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. The spiritual law is decisive as the natural, yea, a man upon this ground may have much less fear of poor harvests. God loves the cheerful giver, and will never let pious bounty be wasted or fruitless any more than He will suffer faithful prayer to be unanswered and unavailing. The demands of the Church are the Christian man's opportunity to be enriched with grace and honor God, just as the necessities of the family are the obedient son's chance to honor the father and rejoice in the love of mother and sisters; and just as the perils and exigencies of the state are the loyal subject's chance to prove his devotion to the king and strengthen the commonwealth. The true Christian heart must, therefore, rejoice that God leads forth His Church into larger fields, and lays heavier obligations on His people; for the Great God, our Heavenly Father, acteth not toward us after the manner of men, laying on heavy burdens and not touching them with one of his fingers; but He maketh the yoke easy and the burden light; yea, he beareth us and our burden. If we cast our burden on the Lord he sustaineth us. Yet why should we speak of it as a burden, when it should be the outflowing of gratitude, the proof of love. The obligations that are upon the Church, as a whole, to discharge, but furnish to each member the opportunity to be a participant in a work that he could not otherwise touch, and to secure a glorious reward of which otherwise he could not have the least expectation. God's demands upon us are exceeding great and precious privileges, afforded by His love, that we may be-