

and many too, who are no defaulters in this respect, are still ready, especially in the Highland settlements of Nova Scotia and Ontario, to excuse themselves from commemoration of the Lord's death in obedience to his dying behest, forgetful that the qualifications required and the responsibility incurred are no higher in the one case than in the other. What most such think of a city congregation which, one report tells us, has led the Church this last year in a new departure, observing the ordinance of the Supper *eight* times, "quarterly in the morning and quarterly in the evening, with high appreciation by earnest Christians, and blessing to the quickening of not a few." "This do in remembrance of Me—for, *as oft* as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come."

CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY.—The apostolic injunction to "abound in this grace also," seems to be remembered, if not to the full obeyed, by a large proportion of our people. Their attainments in this respect deserve the grateful recognition of the Church. The increase of the tithe-givers to the Lord is noted by more than one of the reports, though many still fail to appreciate their privilege, and recognize their responsibility. Generous giving seems to be on the increase. A number of congregations, chiefly in cities and towns, have added to their ministers' stipends, while a much larger proportion have, even amid growing strength and greatly increased cost of living, forgotten the obligations incurred in the ministers' call, and the cheering tribute to his worth and devotion they might render, to their own benefit as well as his, by a just and generous advance. It were well that both classes should hear now in anticipation, as one day they will hear in reality, the Master's word, "Inasmuch as ye did it—or did it not—unto the least of these my brethren, ye did, or did it not, unto ME."

In giving to Missions and other schemes of the Church there seems to be a steady and gratifying progress, and we are happy here to refer to the fact that the operations of the Women's Foreign Missionary Associations, instead of merely diverting the stream of Missionary contributions, seem to have aided in swelling the volume of these, while they widened and deepened the fount from which it flowed. This encouraging state of things would be yet farther advanced could three things be accomplished, viz: (1) The still freer circulation of information as to what is being done in our mission fields, and other departments of the Church's work, such as might be furthered by the introduction of our "*Record*" into every family in the Church. (2) The clear, constant and urgent inculcation of Scriptural views of the duty and privilege of systematic beneficence. (3) *Lastly* the

more general introduction of approved methods of gathering the gifts of his people into the Lord's treasury.

PRAYER MEETINGS.—We are now called to do what has been described as "feeling the pulse" of the Church's life, viz., inspect its prayer meetings. It is pleasing to learn that such meetings are found in very nearly all of our congregations. In many cases the usual weekly meeting is supplemented by district and cottage prayer meetings, which occasionally take the form of fellowship meetings, conducted by elders with or without the pastor's presence, where there are usually smaller numbers, less formality and sometimes freer interchange of thought, feeling and experience of the Lord's dealings with his people, forming seasons of much refreshment. Would that these were more common than they seem to be, but their existence at all is noted with satisfaction. A good deal of pains seem to be taken in very many congregations to render the weekly prayer meeting interesting and profitable, by the introduction and discussion of the Sabbath-school lesson, Bible-readings, Missionary and other religious intelligence, but notwithstanding this, the attendance seems to be far from what their importance, to the highest good of the congregation, renders so desirable. While now and then we hear of one-half, two-thirds or three-fourths (rarely ever more) of the congregation being present, the proportion more commonly is a third, a fourth or a fifth and sometimes only a tenth or a fifteenth, while the figures in the statistical reports of recent years are still more startling. Last year we were told our people had considerably increased in numbers, counting now about 462,000, while of these only 25,000, or about one-eighteenth attended the prayer meetings of the Church, and *this* was smaller by *ten thousand* or two-fifths than the year preceding. Well may we pray for a more prayerful spirit—the promised Spirit of grace and of supplication! This matter certainly claims the serious consideration of the Church. Another, if possible, still more serious follows, and that is the question of

RELIGION IN THE HOME.—On this important subject we are sorry to say the reports are not as favourable as could be desired. That there are many—very many godly homes among us, full of cheerful piety and tender, loving christian nurture, we rejoice to know, but that there are many where this is replaced by a stifling worldliness, or by the cruel heedlessness of the ostrich, condemned in the days of the ancient prophet, we more than fear. Your Committee feel their responsibility, while gladly recognizing much that is unspeakably valuable in this department, to deal with equal faithfulness with what seems to be a grave and alarming defect in one of the foun-