

taken and the help and encouragement given, and we report the more cheerfully because we think there is evidence of progress in the management of the financial affairs of our Congregations. Previous efforts of your committee have been bearing fruit. We believe that the hearty acceptance of true principles and better methods is increasing. But the necessity for an active committee on Systematic Benevolence has not passed away. Old habits are hard to alter. Many congregations still cling to methods that have never proved satisfactory, and the measure of liberality is yet far below the needs of the work of the church, and the claims of Him for whom the work is done. But we need not be impatient nor discouraged. Principles and methods supported by the word of God will finally be adopted.

Your committee notice in the first place the methods adopted for raising

THE PASTOR'S SALARY.

So far as reported thirty one congregations support their ministers by weekly offerings at Church. Of these seven receive the contributions without envelopes. Twenty more collect stipend in envelopes at the services for worship on Sabbath, monthly, or quarterly, some of those may be weekly but it is not so stated. Most of them however we judge are quarterly. In some cases these collections have to be supplemented by collectors calling on delinquents at the end of the quarter or the year. Thirty one raise the ministers salary by subscription and collectors. Some congregations still have Pew Rents.

We think it evident that the Collector System for Ministerial support is going out of date, and that congregations are relying more upon the people *bringing* their contributions.

From the evidence afforded by the answers received, we judge that *weekly* contributing gives more satisfaction than any other method. The *weekly offering* is attended with greater success.

The use of *envelopes* however is almost unanimously recommended. It is also felt that it may be necessary to provide by organization for the regular personal dealing with those who neglect their duty. Delinquents must be promptly and wisely looked after, instructed and influenced, until of themselves they freely and regularly *bring* their offerings.

SCHEMES OF THE CHURCH.

It is more difficult to classify reports about these. Great variety of method is followed. There is not so much system here. Some congregations combine two or three methods. Some collect monthly, others quarterly, some semiannually, and others only once a year. Some collect at church, and others by collectors, and some combine the two. Some take collections only at Communion Seasons, and some at Prayer Meetings as well as at Sabbath Services. Some collect by open free will offering and others in envelopes.

The opinion is very generally expressed that it is best to raise money for the schemes by collectors.

The study of the Statistical Tables in this connection is interesting and instructive, though not always attended with complete satisfaction. Many congregations might be profited by comparing themselves with others as they appear in the annual statistical returns, and the exercise would be none the less profitable if it only humbled.

One thing that attracts our attention is the number of blanks in the columns of contributions to the schemes of the church. Taking as our guide the statement of our Treasurer of amounts received from 180 Congregations from May 1885 to May 1886, we find in the six columns devoted to Home Missions, Augmentation, Foreign Missions, College and Aged and Infirm Ministers, 250 blanks and if the Dayspring be added there are 52 more, making 302.

Continuing our investigations we find 99 congregations which do not contribute to all these six schemes above mentioned, only 81 have no blanks in these six columns. Thirty one have each one blank, 25 have two. Forty three contribute to not more than three. Ten to only one, and eight to not one.

The average contributions of Presbyteries strikes us as out of proportion, though we may err here in our judgment. Taking the last Assembly minutes as our guide, we are informed that the average is from 64 cents to \$10.06 per family, or leaving this as exceptional, then it is from 64 cents to \$2.96 the one nearly five times the other. Why should Wallace be 77 cents and Pictou \$2.34? Why Sydney 64 cents and Truro \$2.13.

Comparing Congregations we find similar disposition. In this the average per family ranges from 14 cents to nearly