

number of them paid considerably more than they promised, a fact which may safely be regarded as a certain indication that their finances are in a flourishing condition.

#### CAUSE OF FAILURE.

In anticipation of some discouragements and partial failures, your committee endeavoured to ascertain from Sessions the principal cause or causes operating injuriously where success had not crowned the introduction of the system. Some trace their discouragement to the want of settled pastors; others to the want of faith in the New Testament directions for Christian giving, or to the want of training in the grace of Christian beneficence; others refer to the indifference or opposition of leading men in their congregations, while others attribute it to the want of effort on the part managers and Presbyteries. One brother traces any difficulties which have been experienced in his congregation to the want of thoroughly explaining the system to the people by private conversation with each, and he repeats that "since our annual meeting, the congregation were waited upon and the system explained to each. Since that time the results have been highly satisfactory." It will be apparent that all these difficulties are such as can easily be met, and in a short time very much diminished, if not altogether removed. Faith in the system will likely increase in proportion to the fidelity with which the truth is pressed upon the attention of our people, and the distinguishing excellencies of our methods become more apparent. The grace of Christian Beneficence, like every other Christian grace, needs to be exercised in order to its development, and such exercise requires time as well as teaching. The opposition of influential men is almost sure to disappear under the light of facts which demonstrate its unreasonableness and impropriety. Our office-bearers will no doubt become more earnest in their efforts to promote the cause in proportion as they see and feel its beneficial results.

The Synod will be sorry to learn that the reports which have been received by the Committee do not indicate any great activity on the part of Presbyteries in their efforts to carry out the recommendation addressed to them last year. They readily believe that much has been done which has not been noticed, but only a very few of the reports refer at all to the action which Presbyteries have taken in promoting the extension of Systematic Giving. In view of the admitted duty of all Presbyteries to carry out the recommendations of Synod, and more especially of their powerful influence in stimulating those under their oversight in their efforts for good, the

Committee cannot but regret the fact to which they have adverted.

#### HOPEFUL SIGNS.

On the other hand the Synod will be gratified to know that quite a number of Sessions and Boards of Managers have entered most enthusiastically into the movement and many of the ministers have directed the attention of their people pointedly to the subject. It is mainly to their exertions that the chief part of the success which has crowned the efforts of the Synod is due, and judging from what has already been accomplished it does not seem unreasonable to anticipate that if the great mass of our ministers, elders, and managers could be persuaded of the Scriptural character and superior excellencies of the system of Weekly Storing and Offering, it would not be long till the Committee would be able to report not merely that one third of our congregations had adopted your recommendations, but that the whole body of the people were from Sabbath to Sabbath obeying the inspired precept, "Come into the courts of the Lord and bring an offering with you."

#### OUR NEED.

The necessity for a more general diffusion of the principles and practice of Systematic Beneficence throughout our Church is apparent to every thoughtful person. The average salary of our pastors as reported to Synod last year is only \$600. Nineteen of our ministers received less than \$500, and seven less than \$400. Our Supplementary Committee has always been embarrassed. Our annual contributions for Educational purposes have, for a number of years been less than the expenditure. Our Foreign Mission Treasury last year was reported empty. Our Acadia Mission was in debt. The claims of the Church upon her members are steadily rising. No doubt they will continue to rise. In order that we may honourably meet them, there must therefore be a corresponding development in the grace of liberality. What is needed is the universal recognition and realization of the relationship in which we stand to the Lord of all on the one hand, and to our Substance on the other. While Christians regard themselves as the proprietors of their gold and silver, while they look upon their possessions merely as the trophies of their own industry, enterprise and skill, while they feel free to use God's money so extensively in the gratification of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, the Treasury of the Lord will never be filled. But let them generally get a firm hold of the truth that all their property, as well as they themselves, belong to God, that He has intrusted it to their administration as