

The present number of communicants reported is 5793. The number of infants baptized, 339 as against 303 of the previous year, indicates that the growth within our Christian homes has been advancing and that parents have not been neglecting their duty to present their little ones to the Saviour in the ordinance of his own appointment.

Passing on, we notice that the number of the eldership has also increased during the years, there being 196 as against 187 of the previous year. When we consider the importance of this office to the strength and development of our congregations it is gratifying to note that the men who are judged worthy by our people to fill it with acceptance are not becoming fewer. The proportion of elders to congregations in our presbytery is very much larger than it is in the whole church. There has also been an increase in the number of other office-bearers the total for 1889 being 192, or 5 more than in 1888.

We turn now to columns of still greater interest inasmuch as they are in some degree an index of the spiritual life of our congregations, viz., those referring to the prayer-meeting and Sunday School. These are very justly regarded as important agencies for maintaining and promoting the spiritual life of young and old, and statistics with reference to them must ever be of deep interest to us. The figures given in the column headed "No. attending weekly prayer-meeting," are doubtless generally a more or less accurate guess, rather than an estimate based upon actual calculation, hence your committee feel that the variation in the total of this column from year to year does not imply a corresponding fluctuation in the interest manifested in spiritual things by our people. The number reported this year as attending the weekly prayer-meeting is 2350 or a little over 600 less than the year previous. On the other hand the reports indicate an increase in the attendance at Sabbath School, there being 3855 in 1889 and 3845 in 1888. Fewer workers in the Sabbath School, however, are reported. In 1889 there were 536, while last year the number had diminished to 507.

According to the reports, congregations still seem to regard libraries as an important adjunct to Sabbath School work, there having been nearly 1000 vols. added to these during the year. The number of books at present in Sabbath Schools and congregational libraries is reported as 4980.

There seems to be a certain amount of uncertainty in the minds of sessions as to what is implied by the different terms used in the Assembly's blanks to designate missionary

societies. Most congregations have 2 or 3 within their bounds. In all 26 W. F. M. Societies are reported and one missionary association. There has been an increase of two in these societies during the past year, indicating that the interest in Foreign Missions among a very important element in our congregations is not abating. Hope-well reports a Ladies' Mue Society doing good work.

Two churches have been built during the year, and the construction of a third begun.

Turning to the financial part of the reports we find very encouraging statistics. The amounts are as a general thing largely in advance of the previous year. For congregational purposes the totals are as follows, stipend received from all sources \$19,320, an increase of \$2112 over the previous year; stipend paid by congregations alone \$19351, against \$17056 of the previous year; amount expended on churches and mansees \$1356 while in 1888 the amount reported in this column was \$3022; for other congregational purposes \$5685 or somewhat less than in 1888. Total expenditure for congregational purposes \$36742 or \$10098 more than the year before last.

For the schemes of the church, last year there were contributed as follows; College fund \$504 or \$27 less than in 1888; Home Missions \$1774 an increase over the previous year of \$752; Augmentation \$1184, or \$20 more than in 1888; French evangelization \$1120, an increase of \$173 on the previous year; Foreign Missions \$4107, an increase of \$757; Aged and Infirm Minister's Fund, \$82 or \$8 more than in 1888; Widows and Orphan's Fund (which is not, however, a regular scheme of the church) \$32 against \$10 of the previous year; Assembly Expense Fund \$67, an increase of \$8 over the year previous. Total for the schemes of the church \$8870, as against \$7257 contributed in 1888. It will thus be seen that in every case but one (viz., the college fund) the total contributions to the different schemes of the church were, last year, in excess of the previous year, and that in the case of some of the schemes the increase in the contributions was very marked. This is a state of matters which calls for sincere gratitude, as it indicates a genuine interest in the work of the church and the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. The amount contributed for all purposes during the year was \$47635 as against \$36184 of the year 1888.

The following congregations contributed to all the schemes of the church, Prince St., Pictou; James church, New Glasgow; West River and Green Hill; United Church, New Glasgow; Vale Colliery and Sutherland's River; Antigonish; Scotsburn, etc., Knox Church