

and the Lord has said "by their fruits ye shall know them."

Look then on this picture and on that. On the one side is an army with 600 regiments, boasting illustrious memories, an invincible general, good officers, soldiers from the first races of earth, and a complete equipment. What a brave army! And it knows it! you can hear talk of its ancestors, of its glorious blue flag, of its present strength, and of the loud call now made upon it to show the mettle of its pastors. On the other side is a picture of what it has done during the past year. To this latter picture I would call attention in three or four articles; not that the canvass is so large, but that the RECORD is small.

CHAPTER I. Concerning the Poor. Those who joined the church at first had all things common. They sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all as every man had need. Neither was there any among them that lacked. Distribution was made by the church unto every man according as he had need. When the disciples of Antioch heard that there was going to be a great dearth throughout all the world, they sent relief—every man according to his (real) ability, unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea. When the church was nearly split into two by one of Paul's innovations, the General Assembly at Jerusalem after much debate agreed to overlook the heresy, but they would not overlook the cause of the poor; deciding only, testifies Paul, that we should remember the poor, the same, he adds, which I also was forward to do. Yes, indeed; no one who reads your letters to the Romans and Corinthians, and the history you have given us by Luke will doubt that. While the poor were thus cared for, the bereaved were made a special charge, widows' were sustained at the expense of the church, and out of the body a certain number were enrolled either to act as deaconesses, or to be made a permanent charge on the funds, and to enjoy certain privileges by reason of their long previous services.

How is it now? Look at the statistics

of the church. I shall not quote cases. Some congregations "have no poor." They have got quite beyond the prophecy of Jesus who said, the poor ye shall always have with you, the poor shall never cease out of the land. Other congregations, with hundreds of members, give us much as would sustain a widow and her three or four orphans. Persons in good circumstances once sat in the pews. Hard times came, or the breadwinner was taken away. For a time, the family struggled to keep up their connection with the church. Perhaps the session helped once or twice to pay the quarter's rent, but the help was not given very freely nor very tenderly; and so, after a little, widows and orphans fell away to swell the number of "the lapsed," and gladly the pew was let to some others to be kept by them as long as they happen to be in good circumstances. Fancy any one now selling his possessions and goods that the church might give to those that lack! He would be considered a lunatic. How many congregations have built little cottages to house their "decayed" members! How many of the rich give a thousand dollars a year for the support of poor widows and orphans! No, for is it not better that a christian should spend the money on a carriage, or otherwise on self, pleading perhaps that it is all done to encourage carriage-building. "Given to hospitality," "be not forgetful to entertain strangers," thus apostles speak. "Entertaining" of course means not a share of your ordinary fare, and a room in your magnificent mansion; but a dinner that fatigues host and guest. The church elects elders and deacons, and it gives them from fifty to five hundred dollars (very seldom so much) to spend on the poor of the flock. As far as the poor are concerned, that's what church-membership means.

CHURCHMAN.

YE ARE MY WITNESSES.

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Where am I in the sight of God? What I am doing? Is my life as it should be where I am living? Now,