

# A SUMMARY

OF THE

## DOMINION CENSUS, 1881.

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### GENERAL REMARKS.

IN a work like that of the Census Volume, laid before Parliament at the recent session, it would be a wonder if there were no inaccuracies. Where there is such a multiplicity of figures, relating to an almost endless variety of detail on every subject of interest to the public,—collected often, it may be, by persons who have no adequate appreciation of the necessity for painstaking accuracy,—it need not be surprising that, in the volume referred to, the staff of collators and summarizers has not infrequently failed to present faultless results. The preface says:—

“It may be well to mention, that in numerous cases where custom work is taken in and the raw material furnished by the customer, such as Carding Mills, Grist Mills, Tailors’ Work, Dressmaking, &c., much difficulty was experienced in obtaining the value of raw material worked up. Although many of these establishments are small, the aggregate value of the raw material used and the products would have been considerably augmented, had the information been more readily obtainable. Where sufficient data existed, estimates were made. It should also be stated, that in a few cases owners of large establishments refused to supply the information asked for.”

The Secretary has had some experience of what is complained about in the last sentence of this extract; and he duly appreciates how easy it is to be censorious,—but is disposed to take the volume for 1881, and its congener for 1871, with their many faults, and to endeavor to utilize the good that can be extracted from them. Of course, blame for erroneous or misleading information should lie on other shoulders. Waiving animadversion, therefore, his present purpose is simply to notice what may fairly be considered to be approximates as to the advancement of the Dominion in course of a decade, taking the statements as he finds them. With that end in view, a good deal of care has been bestowed in re-forming the summaries of the different classes of information; and it is hoped that, in the main, the series of Tabular Statements on the following pages, may be found tolerably serviceable.

Some contrasts and additional information are given in the Notes that follow these Tables, which will assist the reader to estimate the progress still being made in some directions. The comparisons between 1881 and 1871 for the whole Dominion are necessarily defective,—confined as they are to statements relating to the older Provinces.