

News of the Church.

Remarks on the Statistical Tables.

The tables given in last number of the *Record* exhibit the statistics of our Synod for the year ending 31st December, 1865. Some irregularities may be observed in the mode of filling up the return, in consequence of the period up to which the returns are made having been changed from 1st May to 31st December. Thus, the columns for contributions are in some instances left vacant, when they ought to have been filled with the sums paid over at the Synod of 1865. In one or two instances, where the proper corrections are obvious, it has been made,—as when a minister reported payment of only half a year's stipend, because the other half had been already entered in previous return. Perhaps more might have been done in this direction; but the reader who is curious in such matters may as well do it for himself, by using the previous table as a supplement to this.

The list comprises 101 congregations, constituting, however, only 97 pastoral charges, 7 of which were vacant when the returns were given in. The number of returns forwarded is 93. Of the 8 blanks, 5 have been filled up from last year's table, which partly covers the same period as this year's. There remains three congregations from which no returns have been received for two years, viz.: French River, Cove Head and Whycocomagh—the last a vacant charge. It is to be hoped that next year's returns may be still more full than these now published, as the value of a table of statistics depends very much on its completeness.

When several congregations are embraced in one pastoral charge, the committee would suggest that for the future they may be embraced in one return. In many cases this has been done, but the practice has not been uniform. The purposes of comparison will be but served by comprising the statistics of a pastoral charge in one line in every case. When the returns are made up by the Secretary or Treasurers of the separate sections of a charge, an aggregate return

might be made up from them by the minister. The cases we have specially in view in these remarks are Barney's River and Blue Mountain, Roger's Hill and West Branch, East St. Peter's and Bay Fortune.

Some liberties have been used with the returns of prayer meetings. Where these were not merely multitudinous but multifarious, running thus: 1 weekly, 2 fortnightly, and 3 monthly, a summation was made by counting a weekly meeting as 4, and a fortnightly meeting as 2 monthly meetings. The object of this was to obtain an estimate of the average number of prayer meetings per week—the addition of monthly to weekly meetings giving no intelligible result.

Brightening Prospects for the New Hebrides.

Rev. Dr. Steele, of Sydney, writing under date of 14th July, before Mr. Geddie arrived at Sydney, and while the *Dayspring* was waiting for him there, says:—"The *John Williams* is here at present with a band of missionaries. The two parties make Sydney quite a centre of missionary interest. This is the last christian port, and it is striking that there will be no fewer than ten missionaries about to depart on their evangelistic enterprise. Surely great things are in store for the Isles of the Sea. The Gospel of Mark will go to the islanders of Fate, by the *Dayspring*. May it be the enlightening of their darkness. Rev. J. Copeland lately arrived from New Zealand to join the mission party. There is great improvement manifested in his health and spirits. Six missionaries with their wives, will, God willing, sail in the *Dayspring*. How changed since Mr. Geddie led the forlorn hope eighteen years ago. He is now at the head of two bands, a patriarch in the church of the New Hebrides."

LIGHT DAWNING.—Rev. Mr. Morrison, writing from Fate under date of the 17th May, says:—"Our teachers at Sema are well. Matters are hopeful there, although it is as yet but the day of small things.—Two other teachers can be settled there at once. When speaking to the people about