

parent prosperity the offspring of a heated and bigoted imagination? The chief difficulty that meets us in this investigation, proceeds from the trouble of procuring reliable Statistics, as regards correctness and completeness. And even when this obstacle is surmounted, the delicate and skilful handling, which columns of figures demand, to make them utter no uncertain sound, often leads them to proclaim truths the very opposite of their real tendencies, when they happen to be marshalled by unskilful or prejudiced investigators.

Another evil in dealing with Statistics flows from the errors that will, no matter what care and pains you take, arise from the inadvertent mistakes of the printer. The Arithmetical productions of the Educational Department of Ontario afford notable illustrations of this evil, as well as occupation to acute teachers, in detecting the numerous errors that exist in them, notwithstanding their careful revision. Those, who have had experience on this point, could give many apt illustrations.

A third element that creates difficulty is based on the unsystematic and unbusiness-like character of many of our ministers. On them devolve to a large extent the correctness and completeness of the Congregational Returns. Any one who has had experience in examining such, is well aware how much depends on ministerial oversight and painstaking, and can at a glance ascertain what are the business habits and mental characteristics of each minister. With so many counteracting circumstances, the wonder is, not that so many errors creep into all Statistical productions, but that they are on the whole so correct, that general dependence may be placed upon them.

Making every allowance for the errors incident to every science in which figures form a constituent element, we need not be at all anxious about submitting our church to the test of a Statistical investigation.

One proof of a Church's progress is the standing ministry. Is it increasing or diminishing in numbers? Or is there only a sufficiency to fill up the gaps made by death and the various vacancies incident to ecclesiastical life and labours. In this respect, God has been signally owning us. Within two years our actual increase has been *thirty*, irrespective of deaths and resignations. There is the greater cause for gratitude to Him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, when we remember that most other churches are complaining of the want of labourers, and finding it difficult even to meet the wear and tear incident to the ministerial profession. While settled pastoral charges have been thus largely augmented, the vacancies, arising from a growing field of labour are still numerous, and readily absorb every efficient labourer for Christ, who feels called to the work of the ministry. Some idea of our progress may be gathered from the fact, that a new Presbytery was at last Synod formed out of that of Toronto. And, though by this arrangement, nearly an entire county, comprising twelve settled charges, was taken from the latter Presbytery, yet its members are more numerous than they were before the division took place.

At the union, the Presbytery consisted of 25 pastors and 5 professors, &c. After the formation of the new Presbytery, it comprises 23 pastors and 9 professors, missionaries, &c.

We find, however, that the discussion of several other points, such as the stipend, arrears, &c., will occupy so much space, that they must necessarily be postponed till next number of the *Record*.

This article we regard as merely preliminary, the details being reserved for a future occasion.