

A parish in Ayrshire is represented by the *Record* as giving about £38 to the cause of Christianity during the year. For the last ten years the history of its herculean missionary labours would read like a romance.

Nor are such facts true only of the smaller parishes, or of those whose contributions to the Schemes of the Church are small. It is even more true of those which have given most largely. The collections from the presbytery of Glasgow were this year (per *Record*) £2376, 17s. It is a perfect libel on the presbytery of Glasgow to have it supposed that that is what is done by it for charitable purposes. Yet that is virtually what the Church is representing. I doubt whether there could be a better vindication of the Church against the calumnies which have from time to time been spoken concerning her, than a simple account of what she is doing and giving in the city of Glasgow. I have before me the statistics (in one case complete) of what is done by two of our churches there, and neither of these parishes on the old platform of the Church. They are both munificent contributors to the Schemes—they are the most munificent within the bounds of the Church. But to suppose that these gifts are the chief part of their work would be the grossest injustice to them. One of these congregations collected for the Schemes the sum of £384, 4s. 6d. For its congregational schemes it raised £324, 14s. 10d.; for the endowment of the Church, £3400—in all, with other items,—"independent of seat-rents and church-door collections,"—£4377, 12s. 6d.

The other congregation gives still more largely. For the Schemes of the Church it collected £502, 18s. 10d.; for its own congregational schemes, £420; for the endowment of the church, £4760. And the total amount—in this case including seat-rents and collections—was no less than £7323, 19s. 6d. In fact, these two churches in Glasgow—if to the former we add a sum of £1200 for collections and seat-rents—raised last year £12,900. And the *Record* represents the whole presbytery with its 58 churches, as raising the sum of £2376! Surely we have a right to demand that our official statistics should represent all that the Church is giving, or should represent none of it. At present we are but deceiving ourselves and misleading the public.

In connection with the general prosperity and vigor of the Church, it seems to me highly desirable that an effort should be made to ascertain the numbers who adhere to her. The most diverse statements have been and are still occasionally made upon this subject. In the House of Commons especially, it is not uncommon to hear it said that Churchmen hardly number a third of the population in Scotland; and no one seems to know better or to care to mention it. The

reports of the Registrar General state that from 46 to 48 per cent of the people in Scotland are married by the ministers of the Church.

Thirteen years ago, before she had recovered from the effects of the secession in 1843, and when the numbers attending the various churches were most unfairly taken (it is unnecessary now to explain how), the numbers attending the parish churches were—351,454

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| The Free churches, | - - - | 292,303 |
| The U. P. churches, | - - - | 159,191 |

How the numbers stand now may be judged of from the fact that last year the number of baptisms in Scotland by ministers of the U. P. Church were 9512, or one-eleventh of the births registered for the year 1862; and the marriages performed by them (in the last year of the Registrar-General's detailed report) 2926, or one seventh of those registered for that year. And, at all events a return of the number of communicants in our churches, and of the number of baptisms performed by our ministers, would be of great importance. Those who know best the state of such large centres of population as Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, Aberdeenshire, and Perthshire, will be prepared to find that from 40 to 45 per cent of the population still adhere to the Church of Scotland.

I must not conclude my letter without saying something as to the non-contributing congregations in the Church. A very interesting tabular view of the collections made by all the churches and chapels in the various presbyteries, has been given in the September *Record* by An Elder. I know the trouble it must have cost him, and I think we are indebted to him for it. I had before drawn up a simple statement of the localities of the congregations which collected for none of the Schemes. I am not sure that it would not be well to publish the names of those parishes which have collected for none of the Schemes. The two reasons which are said to deter many of the clergy from making collections are—that the sums raised would not be worth sending, and that they would be ashamed to send sums that are so small. But the first reason overlooks the wonderful power of "many littles;" and surely the shame of sending nothing is greater than the shame of not sending enough. I find that 74 parishes and 55 chapels have contributed to none of the Schemes. The greatest offenders (as last year) are the Synod of Glenelg and the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr. In the former the parish churches, in the latter the chapels, are chiefly at fault. In the former 17 parishes and two chapels, in the latter 4 parishes and 24 chapels, have contributed nothing. Not a single Synod in the Church is free from this blame. The Synod nearest the mark is that of Merse and Teviotdale, where only one parish makes no collection. The subject is painful, and may become per-