

THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCH IN NOVA SCOTIA.

THE condition of the Church in Nova Scotia seems the most suitable subject for the first number of a periodical, the main object of which is to advance its interests. Believing, as we do most sincerely, that its doctrines are sound, its form of worship scriptural and promotive of true devotion, its government primitive and Apostolic, and, therefore, that it possesses every possible title to its claim of being a pure branch of the universal Church of Christ, we are decidedly of opinion that any want of success with which it meets must proceed either from defects in the carrying out of its principles, or from ignorance of its nature, its claims and its position. We do not look for perfection in any results brought about by human instrumentality, however perfect may be the system of operation, but we are confident that all will be ready to acknowledge that much more might be effected if the efforts of Churchmen were carried on in a more systematic manner; if the intercourse between the Clergy and Laity in the different parts of the Diocese were more intimate, and the sympathy more complete. No doubt the establishment of a Synod will prove of great benefit in this respect, and make each individual more conscious of his duty to concern himself in the welfare of the Diocese in general, as well as of his own Parish in particular. And this feeling, once roused thoroughly, will not stop there, but will lead him to regard with deep interest all branches of the Church of Christ; to mourn, if necessary, over their faults or their failures; to rejoice in their progress and success; and to pray for that blessed consummation, when all that profess the name of Christ shall be one.

But, in order to excite and foster this feeling, an accurate acquaintance with the position of ecclesiastical matters is necessary. To afford this, as far as possible, will be one of our principal objects. To many of our readers our remarks may not contain anything new, but we feel sure that they will look on them with favour, or, at least, with forbearance, for the sake of the good cause which we all have at heart. Let us briefly glance at our present position, reserving for a future occasion the practical inferences to be drawn from it.

The general statistics of the Church, (exclusive of the Archdeaconry of Prince Edward Island, to which we will take another opportunity of referring) are as follows. By the last Census, in 1861, the number of members of the Church of England was 47,744. According to the average rate of increase (nearly one-fifth in ten years,) the number at present would exceed 51,000; it will therefore be perfectly safe as well as convenient to set it down at the round number, 50,000. The number of Clergy in active service is 67. The number of Parishes and ecclesiastical Districts, is 56; the Churches over 140; other places where divine service is held uncertain, probably over 120, eight Parishes giving an average of three and a half.

On comparing the number of Clergy with that of the Members of the Church, we find that, on the average, each Clergyman has the charge of about 750 persons, a very favourable state of things, as compared with many other countries, and even with many parts of England, if it were not for the scattered condition of our population. But it will be easily understood that a Clergyman can more efficiently manage a Parish of 1200 or 1500 persons