

complete form than they did at the same period last year. Then the returns were so incomplete that a summary by Presbyteries could not be presented; now that very necessary and very desirable result has been attained. There are still *eleven* congregations which are marked blank, but the respected Convener of the Synod's Committee on that subject has struck an average for them, and therefore the whole is now before the Church in a tolerably complete state. We are justified in regarding the fuller returns this year as a work of progress. There is no reason why these returns could not be printed in March quite as well as in June. We cannot help thinking that all is not right with the congregation or the pastor, or both, where the tables are not filled up promptly and returned at the right time. There is either a lack of efficiency somewhere or else there is a lack of business capacity. Either of these defects is a state of matters to be deplored. There is need for organization and business tact as well as spiritual life.

There is over the whole Church a very gratifying increase in almost every item as compared with the previous year. In some items indeed, the growth seems astonishing, but there is this qualification which our readers are to keep before their minds. That is that the increase is owing to growth made within the year. We will here note a few of the items that are set down. The population reported as under the care of the congregations of the Church is now 76,151, last year it was 67,055, an increase of over 9,000. The increase in the number of families is in round numbers 1,700, there being now 14,500. The communicants, that is members in full standing, which is the phraseology sometimes used, was set down at 17,703, being over 2,000 more than reported last year. The accessions to membership during the year were 1,676, but there is a large number of removals, namely, 937, which brings the net increase to 740. This may seem inconsistent with the 2,000 mentioned above, but the explanation is that there are congregations and stations reporting this year that did not last. An increase of 54 Sabbath Schools and of more than 1,100 pupils is reported. All the Presbytery do not report an increase of membership. In Truro, for example, the removals exceed the accessions by 53, in Lunenburg and Yarmouth there is also a decrease of 5, while in Tatamagouche there is but an increase of 3. In justice to the Presbytery of Truro, however, it should be said that a new congregation has been formed by removals from two others, the membership of which is 92. Therefore there is a real increase in that Presbytery after all.

There has been paid for all purposes

during the year 1871 the sum of \$134,000 nearly, as against \$116,550 in 1870. The increase of nearly \$18,000 in one year is very creditable. The average rate per family is not so much greater, however, as one would expect. In last report it was \$9.10, in this one it is \$9.24, an increase of only 14 cents. There is a considerable disparity in the average rate between the several Presbyteries. Halifax mounts as high as \$18.07, while Victoria and Richmond descends as low as \$3.35. The rate in the Presbytery of St. John is \$13.08, which, considering all circumstances, is very respectable. Lunenburg and Yarmouth is the only other Presbytery besides Halifax that exceeds St. John.

About one half of the gross sum mentioned above was paid to the pastors, namely, \$67,560. This sum represents some 116 stipends, hence the average would be about \$582. This is a very low average. What was given as supplement would barely raise the average to \$600. It may safely be set down that no pastor, even in the country, can continue to live as pastors are expected to live, one less than \$600, and we question very much if any man can support and educate a family on such a sum as that, as things go at present. A very large number have less than that, not a few much less than that. For the first time \$1,400 is reported as paid to one pastor in the Church. Three got \$1,200 each. Six got \$1,000 and upwards. Nine received from \$800 to \$1,000. Some thirty-one or thereabouts got \$600 and upwards, while forty others range between that and \$400. We have said that \$600 is the least a man can live upon, and the Synod declared that some years ago when the rate of living was much less than at present that \$600 and a manse ought to be the minimum. In the face of this the startling fact comes out that only 50 of our pastors, less than one half, get salaries that amount to \$600 and upwards. Some forty others, as we have said, have less than that and yet are salaried at sums of \$400 and upwards. There still remain at least 22 pastors that are paid sums less than \$400. The Presbytery of Pictou occupies a place of enviable distinction in the matter of pastoral support. At present there are 19 pastors in that Presbytery, and of these 17, all but two, get \$600 and upwards. The Presbytery occupies the oldest and most compact region of Presbyterianism in the Provinces, but that is not all that is to be said. The way in which the court transacts its business is not to be overlooked when accounting for the prosperity that prevails there.

There is tempting material for comment in the state of things which the whole Church presents in this connexion. We want to refer to one phase of the subject