

Annual Statistical Reports have been received from six Presbyteries—those of Brant and Durham have not come to hand. From those which have been sent in, it appears that there are sixty “congregations,” but fourteen of these, from some cause or other, have not furnished their statistics. With the fifty-two that have reported, there are connected thirty-six “stations”; the “average attendance” is 8260—the “numbers added” 567, and “removed” 368, giving an increase of 199, while there are on the roll of communicants in the Church 4291. In “religious classes” there are 1774, and 644 attend prayer meetings. The total number of baptisms is 541; the number of volumes in libraries 10,041; and the number of Churches 43. Congregational Debt amounts to £2132 0s. 6d., and the total income to £4684 4s. 4d., being an average to each member of almost £1 1s. 10d., and to each hearer of about 11s. 4d. £2585 16s. have been expended upon “stipend,” and £1153 4s. 6d., on “Church Property,” £77 19s. 1½d. have been collected for the Theological Fund—£31 2s. 1d. for Synod and Presbytery Funds—£127 14s. 9½d. for the Synod’s Missions—£91 13s. 11d. for General Missions—£25 9s. 6d. as contributions to the poor, while £426 17s. 8d. fall under the heading of incidental expenses.

Your Committee refrain from instituting any comparison between these returns and those of last year, but they would call attention to the number of instances in which congregations have failed to make collections for the schemes of the Church. In one Presbytery not a single farthing has been raised for the Synod and Presbytery Funds—only two congregations of the same Presbytery have contributed to the Theological Fund: one to the Synod’s Missions, and one to General Missions. In another Presbytery the column under the heading “Theological Fund,” presents a uniform blank, while those of the other schemes have but very few entries. Most of the other Presbyteries have been more faithful; but we believe that all the circumstances should remind the Synod of the propriety of enjoining that greater attention be paid in all the congregations and vacancies of the Church to the annual collections for the different objects specified in the statistical schedules, and of stating anew that those in need of supplement forfeit their right to have it granted, unless they comply. Your Committee cannot help expressing their conviction that the fault here lies at the door of ministers, and that the people would be willing to give of their wealth for these purposes were they asked, or furnished with the opportunity to do so. All our funds require the hearty and universal liberality of our membership. Much of our Zion is, in this respect, as an uncultivated field. Were we to work the resources which are within our own power to the full extent of which they admit, we would not require to be as dependent as we are upon external aid. And the circumstances of the Church are now such, that she can afford to cast more than she has been doing into the treasury of the Lord’s house, and she needs to cast more.

We would embody in this report the suggestion that Presbytery Clerks be instructed to send to the vacancies, intimation of the periods at which collections for the schemes should be made; and farther, that vacancies as well as congregations having a pastor, be required to make returns of their statistics.

Let your Committee close with expressing their thankful acknowledgments for the prosperity with which God has already blessed the Church, and the hope that he will increase her more and more till the little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation. May the Lord hasten it in his time.