

The subject of General Statistics has occupied that attention during the year which its importance demands, having in view to mature a system for obtaining a registration of births, marriages and deaths, and also for collecting agricultural and other returns.

Upon a reference by a Committee of both Houses of Parliament, to the Minister of Agriculture, of a petition numerously signed by influential persons, setting forth the unsatisfactory state of the Archives of the Dominion, Parliament was asked at its last Session for a vote of \$4,000 for defraying expenses for their care. This preliminary work has been commenced ; and a statement of the progress made appears in the Appendix to this Report.

#### VII.—PATENTS.

The Patent Act passed during the last Session came into force on the first of September. The Rules and Regulations for carrying its provisions into effect having been previously carefully prepared, were distributed on the 1st of August, in order to give inventors, both in and out of Canada, time to have their papers made in accordance with them.

This Act opens to all inventors, whether foreigners or residents of Canada, the privilege of taking out patents in Canada, on condition that the articles patented shall be manufactured in Canada.

The opening of the Canadian Patent Office to foreigners has already led to many applications for patents by them ; and it is believed that the result will prove to be highly advantageous to the public, and particularly to the manufacturing interests of the Dominion.

From the first of September to the thirty-first of December, 1872, the number of applications for patents had more than doubled as compared with the corresponding periods of 1870 and 1871. About half of these applications have proceeded from citizens of the United States, and as the liberal provisions of the new Act become more widely known, we may look for still greater increase in the number of applications for patents from foreigners.

One of the amendments of the new Act permits the patent to be issued for periods of five, ten or fifteen years, at the option of the inventor. About 7 per cent. of the patents issued are for 10 years ; about 10 per cent. for 15 years ; and 83 per cent. for five years.

The regular work of the office during the year has been attended to with as much despatch as possible ; and it is believed to the satisfaction of the public. It may, however, become a question, in view of the rapidly increasing business of the office, whether the present mode of issuing patents may not be simplified, and whether it may not become advisable to follow the example of the Patent Office at Washington in the particular of causing to be printed complete specifications and illustrations of every patent instead of having them written and drawn in duplicate, as at present. The effect of such change would ultimately be a saving of labour in the office, as well as to inventors and