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TORONTO, FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 1879.

CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS.

THIS is the season of the year when the annual statistics of the congregations of the Church should be made out. We understand that a blank form has been sent to every Session, whose duty it is to see that the form is correctly filled up and forwarded to the clerk of the Presbytery within whose bounds it is. The statistical and financial returns are printed yearly in the appendix to the minutes of Assembly and contain the historical record of the Church. Hitherto they have not by any means been as correct or complete as is desirable and we venture to suggest the following points in regard to them:—

First. They should be *accurately* filled up. A comparison between the congregational returns of last year and the published receipts of the Treasurers of the several schemes shows how greatly attention is needed to this point. The discrepancies are in many instances very marked.

Second. Every congregation should report. Each year heretofore large numbers of congregations have failed to do so. Since the union some congregations have *never* sent returns. There is no possible satisfactory excuse for this neglect especially in settled charges, and Presbyteries should see to it that the Sessions of such congregations are dealt with in regard to this matter. One is apt to suspect something wrong when a congregation fails to report.

Third. Every mission station should report. It is true that these are supposed to report to the Home Mission Committee and it is of great importance that the former as well as the latter be filled up.

Fourth. The schedules should be filled up and forwarded to clerks of Presbyteries *at the date specified upon them*, and Presbytery clerks should attend to the forwarding of their returns promptly to the Convener of the Assembly's Committee on Statistics so that there may be ample time for the committee preparing their report to the Assembly.

We remind all congregations, and mission stations that have not yet reported that returns should be *at once* forwarded. We trust that the committee's report to the ensuing Assembly will be more complete and accurate than that of any preceding year.

A NOBLE EXAMPLE.

IN a recent issue we discussed the state of the Church funds and dwelt upon the fact that many congregations failed to contribute anything to some of the schemes while others contributed the merest pittance. We expressed our very decided conviction that the ministers and sessions of these congregations were to blame for such a state of matters. Their want of hearty loyalty to the Church and their indifference to her missionary enterprises is undoubtedly one, if not the main cause of the deficits we hear of from time to time. In marked contrast with such ministers is another and a much larger class—men whose loyalty is unquestioned and to whose earnest and untiring efforts on behalf of the several schemes, the success of the Church is, under God, largely owing. It is with more than ordinary pleasure and satisfaction that we direct attention to a recent illustration of the spirit shown by some of these. When the Assembly's Home Mission Committee met in Toronto ten days ago, it was found impossible to meet the salaries of supplemented ministers and missionaries for the past half year without involving the committee almost hopelessly in debt. It was felt necessary to reduce the grants by at least fifty per cent. Knowing how sorely this would press upon the supplemented ministers and missionaries whose incomes are now so scant that they could ill afford to lose one half the grant they depended on receiving, the committee resolved to reduce the grants by only twenty-five per cent and to appeal to the ministers of the Church in self-supporting charges to make good the other twenty-five per cent. A subscription list was opened at the meeting and the twenty-one or twenty-two ministerial members of the committee present subscribed upwards of \$500 and pledged themselves to canvass all the ministers in their respective Presbyteries. The work is now being vigorously pushed and, as will be seen in another column, the ministers of one Presbytery—that of Montreal—have already contributed \$300. That the effort will be successful there is no reason to doubt.

We direct attention to this matter not merely by way of commending the spirit exemplified by these ministers of the Church but especially for the purpose of stimulating the liberality of the laymen in all our congregations. If the 400 ministers in the western section of the Church resolve to raise the \$4,000 to relieve the Home Mission Fund of part of its indebtedness and prevent the reduction of the grants to missionaries etc. by twenty-five per cent, how much will the thousands of laymen contribute to wipe out the entire indebtedness, and that without interfering with their ordinary contributions to any department of the Church's work? We venture to make two suggestions in this connexion. *First:* The ministers purpose contributing \$4,000. Will not the *elders* contribute at least a similar amount before the end of April? The Church year closes then. There is no time for organizing. Let an elder in every congregation at once call on his brother elders for a special contribution and forward the amount before the 30th inst. to the Rev.

Dr. Reid, Toronto. *Second:* Will not the *membership* of the Church show their appreciation of the generous spirit of the ministers in this matter and forward special contributions before the month closes so as to enable all the four great schemes of the Church to end the year free from debt. We are aware that some have a preference for one scheme more than other. Let each contribute to whatever fund he pleases. Not only the Home Mission Fund but the colleges and the French Evangelization funds are in debt. It is of the utmost importance that these debts should be wiped off, and we fondly hope that the praiseworthy example set by the ministers will result in large contributions being sent without delay by individual members of the Church to the several schemes. Let no one wait until he is personally solicited. Rev. Dr. Reid, Toronto, is Treasurer for the Home and Foreign Mission Funds and Knox and Queen's Colleges, and Rev. R. H. Warden, Montreal, for French Evangelization and Montreal college. We trust that these gentlemen will before the end of April receive many donations from the membership of the Church for the schemes they represent, so that when the Assembly meets, the various Boards and Committees will be able to report that all the schemes are free from debt.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION.

NOT the least pleasing feature of the closing exercises of Knox College was the social of the Alumni and students held in the dining hall on the evening of Wednesday. The large room was crowded to the door by as enthusiastic a company as well could be gathered together. Professor MacLaren proved himself, as chairman, the right man in the right place. The professors seemed to be brimful of happiness at the sight of the large number of ministers and students before them. After the collation, to which all present did ample justice, a series of brief, humorous and entertaining addresses was given by professors, ministers and students. These were not only earnest but mirth-provoking; and it was felt to be most fitting as a termination to a day of such gratifying results that innocent laughter should make even the walls ring again.

The *Alma Mater* feeling showed itself to perfection. They talk of the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum*, or the boiling-over enthusiasm of Scotchmen when they have one of their classic meetings for singing national songs or reciting ancient ballads. But this is nothing to the feeling of exuberance which is manifested by a lot of professionals when they get together to talk over college days. This is a healthy enthusiasm and none but the initiated can fully appreciate it. It is especially refreshing to see a number of staid theologians assembled around the social board. They have come from their charges, and have laid aside all care, and now, as of yore, they enter for a brief moment into the life of college days. They shake hands with the young men who are the students of the hour, and are so much like what they were themselves when they were attending lectures. They think of companions who have