

The Record.

TORONTO, AUGUST, 1858.

THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH SINCE 1844.

We lately looked over the various Synod Rolls since 1844 with very mixed feelings. On the one hand we noted, with many hallowed recollections, the names which from year to year have disappeared, the names of fathers, who had borne the burden and heat of the day, and whose labours, quiet and inostentatious as they generally were, had a most intimate and important connexion with the growth and progress of the cause of Presbyterianism in this land. Short as the time is since our Church was organized, how few comparatively are there now, whose names are to be found in that short roll of twenty-three, which was made up at Kingston on the 11th day of July, 1844. Of the 131 Ministers whose names are now on the roll of the Synod, only 16 were Ministers of this Church, when the disruption took place in 1844; the remaining 115 have been added in the course of the intervening period. May those who are left have grace to be increasingly faithful and diligent, doing the work given them to do, and continuing steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

On the other hand, we noted with deep and heartfelt gratitude the gradual and constant increase of labourers. There has been no year during which there has not been some increase. The annual increase has varied from fifteen down to one. With the exception of one year, the annual increase has never been less than five. The average increase has been about eight. We recognize the good hand of the great Head of the Church, who hath opened doors for us on every side, and hath crowned us with many tokens of his favour. It is true we do not look on increase of numbers as always an indication of growing strength. A Church may sometimes, in regard to its staff of ministers, grow too fast. Pastoral charges may be immaturely filled up. Hands may be laid suddenly on untried men. The walls of the temple may be built with untempered mortar. There may be thus sometimes an appearance of growth and progress, when there is really an increase of weakness rather than of strength. There may be a forced, unnatural expansion, the result not of health, but of disease. We do not think that this can be affirmed of our Church, for our increase has only kept pace, if it has even done that, with the requirements of the country, and the multiplying openings throughout the land. It is quite possible, that in some cases we have gone on too rapidly, in organizing congregations, or rather in settling Pastors, when missionary labour would have been more appropriate. This we think is apparent from the frequent resignations which we regret to observe. But with very few exceptions the congregations which are from year to year

added to the roll of the Synod, are healthy, vigorous, self-sustaining congregations, which may truly be regarded as an accession to the moral and spiritual strength of the Church.

But we would not be satisfied with merely outward growth and prosperity. An increase of spiritual life and power is needed. We need more of the spirit of prayer among our people. We need a revival of God's own work. It is this after all which can really make a Church strong, and vigorous, and prosperous. It is when the ministering servants of God are clothed with righteousness and salvation, that His people shout aloud for joy. Let us ever bear this in mind, and never cease to plead that God would vouchsafe to us His gracious presence, and pour out abundantly of His Spirit both on ministers and people, that the wilderness and the solitary place may be glad, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose.

ARE MINISTERS ADEQUATELY SUPPORTED?

Some time ago it was declared by the Church that the sum of six hundred and fifty dollars, or one hundred and fifty pounds, ought to be the minimum stipend paid to a minister. Most certainly the standard was not raised too high, when this amount was named. There was no danger of pampering ministers, and spoiling them by excessive liberality, or tempting them to too luxurious and expensive a style of living. For even in the most quiet and retired parts of the country, where there may be little temptation to expensive habits of living, the sum mentioned would be little enough, indeed too little, for the support of a family and the education of children. But we are pained to observe in casting our eyes over the statistical returns of last year, that in a number of instances there has been a great short coming in the matter of the stipend. In not a few instances the amount is considerably below even one hundred pounds. We are quite aware that in several instances the small amount may be accounted for. Indeed in some cases the minister has not been settled until a considerable part of the year had passed. But after making all necessary and reasonable allowances, it is undeniable, that, in cases not a few, there is a great short-coming. In one instance the stipend is not much more than sixty pounds. We admit that the circumstances of the past year have been peculiar. But we apprehend that there are very few cases indeed, where the non-payment of stipend has been the result of actual inability on the part of the people. It may not be the result of heartless unwillingness, it may be partly owing to defective congregational organization, or the slackness of the office-bearers, whose duty it is to look after this matter. But still in most cases there must be culpable negligence, where the Minister has been left to struggle with inadequate support. We are of opinion that Presbyteries should exercise a more close oversight over the manner in which congregations discharge their duties. This might prevent the evil to which we refer. Most

frequently it has become inveterate, perhaps incurable, before the attention of the Presbytery is called to it. A habitual oversight, judiciously exercised, might check the beginning of the evil, and prevent such a growth of the disease, as might afterwards require the application of strong and unpleasant remedies. But what we would wish impress on our readers is, that whether they are office-bearers or not,—whether they have any direct duty to perform in regard to this matter or not, they should look upon themselves as all really responsible, and as all able to do something to remove or prevent the evil referred to. Every one has some influence. Every one can at least discharge his own obligation, and if this is faithfully and punctually done, no one can tell what effect will be produced on others. We are very much creatures of sympathy, and if we are conscientious, and faithful, and punctual in discharging our own obligations to our Pastor, the same spirit may be communicated to others. We say then to each church member:—"Are you doing your duty to your Minister?" "Is any short-coming justly chargeable on you?"

We quote the following extracts from an article in a late number of "*The Presbyterian*," and commend them to the careful perusal of our readers.

"My dear reader, is your minister paid? You have a minister. You value your soul too highly to let its concerns be neglected, and you know well the importance of gospel institutions in their relation to both the temporal and eternal interests of men. For your own sake, for the sake of your family, and for the sake of the public good, you would not for any thing be without a minister. You would dread the increase of immorality, had you no sanctuary in your midst, and were your Sabbaths silent or set at naught by those around you. Hence you have a minister. Is he paid?"

"Is your minister paid? Is his salary adequate to his support? and is it punctually paid? This is what I mean by the question. Do you promise your minister a sufficient salary? and do you pay it? Is he paid?"

"Is your minister paid? He should be. The Bible enjoins it as a duty. The Master hath said, 'The workman is worthy of his meat; the labourer is worthy of his hire.' And, said Paul, 'Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.' And he asks, 'Who goeth a warfare at any time on his own charges? If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?' Both the law and the gospel teach the duty of giving a proper support to the ministers of the Lord. The law said, take heed to thyself that thou forsake not the Levite as long as thou livest upon the earth; Deut. xii. 19, and xiv. 27; and it made abundant provision for those who served in holy things. The gospel has not made the same explicit provision for its ministers, but it teaches and enjoins the duty. You profess to be governed by the gospel. Have you conformed to it in this respect? Is your duty done? Is your minister paid?"

"Is he paid? He should be. You have bound yourself to do it. You bound yourself when you subscribed for his support. That was a promise to pay; is it paid? What says