

What was done by congregations in 1856, the last year for which a Statistical Report has been published, in payment of stipend to ministers? Do they appear to have implemented their engagements and given as God has prospered them?

The congregation of West Gwillimbury returned a membership of 37, and raised as stipend £45 5s. We presume that most impartial judges will reckon this very creditable. For our part we have no disposition to find fault with it, and particularly on ascertaining that the total income was £71 14s. 2½d. Were all our congregations to raise nearly £2 a member for religious purposes, as West Gwillimbury has done, there would be greater evidence of the power of the voluntary principle than there is. But Essa, with a membership of 60, raised only £39 12s. 6d. as stipend, and the total income was only £54 2s. 3d. Now these congregations are in the same neighbourhood; they constitute a joint pastorate, and yet there is a marked difference between the amount raised by each. Must there not be a want of religious life among the people of Essa? Do they value the Gospel? Do they care to have a minister over them? Would they deny themselves a single luxury for the sake of his proper maintenance?

No return was made by the First congregation of Toronto for the year we have selected. The Second congregation gives a membership of 114, and the expenditure on stipend was £100. This congregation is under a heavy debt, and the total income far exceeds any thing to be found among other congregations, namely, £1839 0s. 6d,* or more than £16 to each member. Verily the spirit of liberality must be abroad, but it has not been directed to the pastor, who receives only the minimum stipend that the Church allows. We know that he has an income from other quarters, but is the congregation contributing to his maintenance as God has enabled them? This is the question for them to consider.

The congregations of Richmondhill, Thornhill, and King are under one pastor, but each has given a separate return. The first, with a membership of 90, raised £66 for stipend, and £144 2s. 8d. in all; the second, with a membership of 20, raised in all £21, and as stipend £15 15s.; and the third, with a membership of 64, raised in all £59 0s. 6d., and as stipend £38 12s. 6d. That is, a total membership of 174 contributed to the support of the pastor £120 7s. 6d. While this is not so bad as some it is certainly by no means creditable.

The First congregation of Chinguacousy has a membership of 70; the sum raised as stipend is £79 1s. 3d.; and the Second congregation, with a membership of 31, raised £38 10s. The total income of the former was £95 10s. 8d., and of the latter £45 12s. 7d. It is quite possible that these amounts are small compared with the circumstances of the people, but looking at them on the face of the Report they appear well.

Toronto Township and Brampton unite their report so that there is

* This sum includes contributions for Church building, and was not all raised within the congregation.