

Facts from the Census.

 "BLUE BOOK" recently issued gives facts relative to the religious denominations in this country of which we, Presbyterians, should take careful notice. The figures to which we refer suggest the question whether we are, as a Church, holding our ground as compared with other Churches, and in relation to the entire population of the country. Are we doing the work to which God has called us, and for which He has planted us in this country? There is no doubt that, numerically, the Presbyterians are a powerful body. It is clear also that they are possessed of the elements which should, with God's blessing, make a Church strong, prosperous, and benevolently aggressive.

In 1851 there were in Upper Canada (Ontario), 204,148 Presbyterians; in Lower Canada (Quebec), 33,470; in Nova Scotia, 72,924. We have no returns relating to New Brunswick or P. E. Island. The proportion of Presbyterians to 1000 of the population was in Ontario 214; in Quebec 37; in Nova Scotia 263. In Ontario the Church of England and the Methodists were more numerous than the Presbyterians; in Quebec, the Roman Catholics and the Church of England; in Nova Scotia the Presbyterians were slightly in advance of any other denomination.

Let us now come down ten years to the Census of 1861. In Ontario the Presbyterians increased to 303,374 and to 217 in every 1000 of the population. In Quebec the numbers stood 43,735, and 39 in every 1000,—a very slight increase. New Brunswick now comes in for the first time, furnishing a total of 36,362, and 145 in every 1000. Nova Scotia in 1861 stood 88,755, being 268 per 1000. Taking the four Provinces together we had in 1861 a population of 472,496, being 153 per 1000 of the whole population. We were thus in 1861 slightly in advance of every other denomination

except the Roman Catholic. In that year the R. C.'s number 444 in every 1000; the Church of England 150; the Methodists 142; the Baptists 64.

Coming to 1871 we find Presbyterians numbering in Ontario 356,449; in Quebec 46,165; in New Brunswick 38,852; in Nova Scotia 103,539,—making in the four Provinces 545,005. This is, say, a fair advance on the population. But look at the proportion per 1000, as compared with 1861. The Baptists in 1871 rise to 68 per 1000; the Roman Catholics decrease to 428 per 1000; the Church of England shows a slight relative decrease (from 150 in 1861 to 142 in 1871); the Methodists increased to 162, while the Presbyterians increased only to 156. It is true that if we include P. E. Island the Presbyterians are the largest in point of numbers of the Evangelical denominations in the Dominion. Still, as the foregoing figures show, there is at least one denomination whose rate of growth is more rapid than ours. It becomes us to be watchful lest we neglect fields of work assigned to us by the Head of the Church, and lest we should fail to adapt our measures to the exigencies of time and place.

Numbers it is true do not necessarily constitute strength. A Church may be numerically weak and yet be doing work of the greatest possible value. On the other hand a Church may be at once large and lazy, and dead. God has given us numbers: let us make good use of the trust he has committed to us. Hundreds of thousands look to our Church for the means of grace. Our Home Mission field is widening in every one of the Provinces: it is indeed co-extensive with the Dominion, and the ancient and interesting colony of Newfoundland.

Opportunities.

 THE fields for mission work at home and abroad,—all the world over,—are so numerous that the evangelizing hosts of mini-