

The Committee has been very active, and on the whole successful, in the work of visitation; and they conclude their report for the year 1857, by saying:—

“The deputations were, on the whole, delighted with the spirit which the congregations manifested, and felt their interest in the Churches deepened and warmed.

“The Committee regret that they have not been able to overtake the work committed to them to the extent they desired, but they anew commend the object to the earnest support of the Synod, and of the Church at large. They believe that no better means can be adopted for promoting the objects of this Committee than those now in operation, viz., keeping the matter constantly before the attention of the Church, and dealing with congregations individually on the subject; only this must be done with unremitting regularity, and will require the services of one whose time will be entirely devoted to this and other home objects, under the superintendence of a Home Committee.”

(To be continued.)

OUR STATISTICS.

NO. II.

Statistical reports, in order to be of any value, ought to embrace all the details that are of general and permanent importance, connected with the state of each congregation. Some matters which are interesting within the precincts of a certain locality, have no interest for those who reside beyond the confines of that locality;—others that are interesting this year, may, from a change of circumstances, possess little or no interest next year;—and others again, once recorded, may not require to be taken up afresh—such, for example, as the date at which a congregation has been organized or a minister has been settled, unless death or resignation, followed by a new settlement, has occurred—*littera scripta manet*. In consequence of these considerations, it is necessary to be very careful in the preparation of questions which are to be submitted for answers, so that they may embrace the most important items; and it may also be prudent to alter some of them from time to time. This course has been followed by our Synod, in the attempt that has been made and the system that has been adopted, to procure full and accurate reports of the numbers and efforts—of the condition and prospects,—of the various congregations over which it claims and exercises jurisdiction.

Statistical reports should also be carefully prepared and faithfully returned. This circumstance has no slight connexion with their value. If a fence has been broken down at any one part, the purpose for which it was erected is, in a great measure, nullified. If a link in a chain has been snapped, the relation of parts at that point has been destroyed. And if a single congregation fails to give in its statistics, the object of the Church in asking for them has been,