

*Crops are short of average in some sub-districts.*

This piece of criticism can hardly be excelled in point of silliness and puerility. Certainly there are localities where some or several crops were short, and in few instances very short of a common average. Therefore, the work of the critics was an easy one to pick up a certain number of sub-districts out of a total number of 2,137, in which few, some or several of the crops are returned as smaller or far short of the average, and to represent it as an error in every case. They do not take for granted that a shortness of crops, sometimes amounting to almost a failure, does virtually take place. They appear not to understand that an average is an artificial figure made up of means drawn from actual numbers, a portion of which must be below and a portion above, and for some elements much below or much above the said average. For them, on the contrary, an average is a kind of bed of Procrustes, to which precise length everything must be cut, if too long, or stretched if too short. Among the cases picked there may have been some errors of enumeration, but the total amount of them, if errors there be, forms an insignificant portion of the general result.

In regard to the wheat crop, 47 sub-districts are mentioned, in 43 of which a small crop is returned, in 3 of which the shortness amounts almost to a failure, and for one of which an apparent extravagantly large figure is printed in the volume. As regards the 46, nobody can tell really whether there are or are not positive errors, and to what they amount, if any. One is an error of printing; but I am inclined to think that there are few real errors in the lot, but, I repeat, when immersed in the grand totals, they become imperceptible.

As far as the one error in excess is concerned, it is worth quoting, to show the futility of the animadverting remarks to which such an important work as the Census of the country is subjected, at the hands of some people. It refers to sub-district K, the village of Lucknow, in district 175, North Huron, in which *twelve acres* of land sown in wheat, be it well understood, *twelve acres* are made to have produced 243 bushels of wheat. An error of printing has occurred making it *one* acre; error, however, which is corrected in the *errata* at the beginning of the volume. Such an error would at once appear to be of such trifling general consequence that no critic, having the slightest respect for his reputation, would think of mentioning it. Besides, it is so evidently not an error of system, procedure, direction, enumeration or compilation, being simply one of posting or printing, and of such an infinitesimal import, that its mention in a criticism is ridiculous: when given as was done, separate from the context and surroundings, it becomes indicative of malice aforethought.

The potato crop is made the subject of a like criticism in relation to 20 sub-districts; there may be, in the lot, few, very few errors, but for most of them I have no doubt that the figures of the Census are the expression of actual facts; the potato crop in several localities, owing to the Colorado beetle and other causes, having been reduced to one-half and one-third of a common average.

The same remarks apply to the cases of the 35 sub-districts selected as being erroneously enumerated, because the hay crop in these locali-