

we have, on the whole, merited the confidence of the church at large.

In the future, we must insist upon all articles for insertion being in the hands of the Editor on or before the first day of the month.

It is to be hoped that agents and others will kindly attend to the foregoing notice of the Secretary. If they will do so, it will save a world of trouble, and prevent an incalculable amount of possible confusion.

Articles Contributed.

Condition of our Church in the Dominion.

In the last *Record* is an abstract report of statistics, for 1871, of the Church of Scotland in Ontario and Quebec. This abstract closes with the assertion, "There appears, from the Returns upon which this Report is based, sufficient cause for each and all of us to 'thank God and take courage.'" Now, beyond question, it is a Christian duty, "in everything, to give thanks." But, if the summons so to do is dictated, in the case before us, by the measure of progress indicated by this report as having been made by the church during 1871 in the Provinces referred to, then it is equally unquestionable that, in this respect, we are called upon to be thankful for uncommonly small mercies. And, were a similar report drawn up of the condition of things in the Maritime Provinces, we should be obliged to hold the same language. For what, let us ask, is the most marked feature of the church's history in New Brunswick, P. E. Island and Nova Scotia? It were useless to deny that, during several years, it has been stationariness. And what the most striking characteristic of the church's history in Ontario and Quebec? The report which, as already mentioned, winds up with a flourish of trumpets, contains our warrant for declaring it to be actual retrogression. We mean stationariness, in the one case, and retrogression in the other, as regards the real tests of a church's

prosperity,—number of adherents, and number of ministers. For surely it will not be contended that increase in pecuniary resources, seeming or real, furnishes, of itself, any adequate, or, at all events, satisfactory proof of a church's prosperity. And more than this, neither the report from the Upper Provinces, nor the facts ascertainable about the Maritime, will permit us to affirm.

In Ontario and Quebec, it is acknowledged that the "numbers of vacant charges has increased since 1869, from 15 to 23"; and that "several of these charges have become practically defunct." Moreover, it is admitted that there has been no extension whatever to compensate for their diminution; for the nominal number of charges remains the same (129) as in 1869. Can a state of things more deplorable be imagined? All this, be it remembered, notwithstanding the facts, (1) That every church in the Upper Provinces is offered a partial endowment of \$200 or, \$400, according to circumstances; and (2) That a university—that of Kingston—is in existence, fairly endowed, furnished with admirable buildings, and equipped with an efficient staff of professors, mainly, if not exclusively, to prepare young men for the work of the ministry.

Has the church in the Maritime Provinces any greater reason to speak of for boasting? We have not tables at hand; but we believe it to be the simple truth that, during several years, as to number, alike of congregations and of ministers, we have been almost, if not altogether, at a stand-still. And there is one fact full, we think, of significance, and worthy of consideration, as declarative of our weakness. What are the majority of our ministers, and whence came they? They are men from another country; they are not natives of the land in which they are settled. With the exception of one Presbytery—Halifax, in which all are Colonists—the preponderance is overwhelming, amounting, in Pictou, *e. g.*, to 8 or 9 out of 11. Far be it from us, indeed, to be thought capable of regarding this fact, as, of itself, being a matter for regret, or for any other emotion than the liveliest gratitude. All honor to the Herdmans, Pollocks, Duncans, &c., who came to our aid in the time of our extremity, and who have,