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QUARTERLY JOURNAL

OF THE

STATISTICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

MAY, 1850.

Sixteenth Annual Report of the Statistical Society of London.
Session 1849-50.

IN rendering an account of their stewardship during the past year, the Council have great pleasure in recording a satisfactory progress of the Society in regard to the increasing number of its Fellows, on the one hand, and the further reduction which has been effected in its fixed expenditure, on the other. Means have thus been supplied for an extra number of the Journal, issued in the past year, and, they trust, for the augmentation of the Library of the Society, in those to come. The elections during the session 1848-9 were 29, while the withdrawals were 23 and the deaths 5, leaving an augmentation of only 1; but in the course of the present session 1849-50, the elections have already been no fewer than 23, while the withdrawals have been only 15, and the deaths 3, leaving an increase of 5, being a total increase of 6 since the date to which the numbers were last reported.

The economy effected in the fixed charges has been in the reduction of the payments to the Assistant Secretary and to the Editor of the Journal (equally at the suggestion of the latter), by one-third of their amount, being a deduction of 50*l.* per annum from the former and 25*l.* per annum from the latter; an arrangement which, with a rigid economy in regard to printing, will, it is hoped, enable the Society to apply additional resources to the improvement of its Library. The first fruits of this economy have been anticipated, however, by the extra amount of valuable papers distributed during the past year to the Fellows, in the Journal, and published in its pages alone.

Among the most important of these papers is the "Statistics of the Commercial Progress of the Colonial Dependencies of Great Britain during the Twenty Years from 1827-46," by J. T. Danson, Esq., occupying a whole extra number of the Journal of enlarged size; and those of the "Moral and Educational Statistics of England and Wales," by Joseph Fletcher, Esq., occupying another enlarged number, and containing numerous illustrations by shaded maps, the cost of engraving which was defrayed by their author. Among the other papers included in the Journal of the past year, the Council would call particular attention to those which have successively occupied the attention of its monthly meetings, on the "Relative Value of Averages

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derived from different numbers of Observations," by Dr. Guy; on the "Influence of the Division of the Soil on the Moral Condition of the People," by John Barton, Esq.; and on the "Mortality of Master Mariners, with the Application of the Results to the Purposes of Life Insurance," by F. G. P. Neison, Esq.

In the present session, the Council have particularly to express their acknowledgments to Dr. Gutzlaff, for "Contributions to the Statistics of China," and not less for the kind manner in which, in two different meetings, he contributed so largely and agreeably from his stores of personal observation to the instruction of the Fellows in regard to the actual condition of that extraordinary empire.

Neither would they omit all notice of the valuable contributions to social and medical topography presented to us by the paper on the "Origin and Spread of Cholera in Plympton St. Mary," by Mr. MacLaren; or that contained in "A History of the Cholera in Manchester in 1849," by John Leigh and Ner Gardiner, Esqrs., a statistical contribution from a quarter to which the Council always look with great interest, as that which contains the first Statistical Society ever formed in Britain, and the only one which yet survives beyond the limits of the Metropolis. It is with great pleasure that they have to announce its renewed activity on a more popular basis, and their hope that it will supply results worthy of express notice in the pages of your Journal. A Memoir worthy of being ranked with the above, and affording some interesting features of comparison with them, is the "Statistics of Cholera in the Madras Presidency," by Dr. Balfour, presented to the Library by the East India Company.

The meetings of the Statistical Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science have necessarily a great interest for the Fellows of this Society; and its last meeting at Birmingham was numerously attended, especially on occasion of a highly-interesting and instructive paper by the Chevalier Bunsen, on the "Relative Numbers and Distribution of the Different Races in Germany, and especially in Prussia, with the Statistics of its Progress in Internal Communication, Education, &c." No fewer than thirteen papers were read in the course of the meeting, including that on the "Agricultural Statistics of Ireland, and of the Comparative Prices of Labour and Food for a lengthened series of years," by G. R. Porter, Esq.; on the "Production of Sugar in British India," and on the "Metropolitan Buildings for the Labouring Classes," by Colonel Sykes; on the "Tenure of Land in the Island of Madeira," by the Dean of Ely; on the "Application of Statistics to the Investigation of the Causes and Progress of Cholera," by Dr. Alison; on the "Progress of Emigration from the United Kingdom," and on the "Prices of Grain in France since 1778," by J. T. Danson, Esq.; and on the "Invaliding of Soldiers in the Native Armies of India, showing their relative health and vigour," by Dr. Cuthbert Finch; a subject which had been taken up from a different side by our coadjutor, Mr. C. Balfour, in his valuable "Observations on the means of maintaining Troops in Health," contained in the volume of the Journal which has just been completed.

The Library is a feature of our Institution which demands a renewed and serious attention. Current expenses, with those of special investigations, and of printing, have heretofore absorbed most of the

ordinary income of the Society, and left our shelves but insufficiently furnished; while the rapid accumulation of statistical evidence, in other countries as well as in our own, demands that we should not only render our Library complete as a depository of it, but likewise store it with all the best works which have endeavoured to advance the social sciences, with a distinct and consistent reference to such data; in fact, with every book of authority in each department of those sciences.

Expenditure in books would differ materially and favourably in some respects from any other form of expenditure, since the proceeds would still exist as capital, which, though unproductive in dividends, would be productive of a much higher annual value to the Fellows of the Society, in the facilities afforded to their labours, and would most probably procure more than the income arising from the dividends on any sum expended, through an increase of annual subscriptions from newly-elected Fellows. In any case, the Council are convinced that in this direction lies a profitable course of renewed exertion, and they earnestly recommend a common effort to advance in it.

A subject which will demand the immediate attention of the Council now to be appointed is the Census of the Population to be taken in 1851. In the year previous to the last Census, in 1841, a committee of this Society was appointed to collect and digest the experience of every civilized country in such labours, and its report (contained in the third volume of your Journal, p. 72) is of a character to form even yet a consistent basis for the suggestion of further improvements. The immediate effect of its production was to cause the Government to withdraw the bill actually before the House of Commons for taking the Census in the old methods, by the agency of the overseers, each acting according to his own best and very imperfect discretion, in the production of a gross result, to the accuracy of which he had to swear, without the skill to ensure it. A bill drawn up on the plan contained in your Committee's report was then substituted, and became law. Under this statute, the materials of the last Census were collected through the agency of the Registrars of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, in schedules somewhat diminished from those proposed in our Committee's report, and transferred for abstraction to a central office. The general scheme of the labour will not admit of any such fundamental change as was suggested ten years ago; but the items to be collected in the schedule, and yet more, the extent and construction of the abstracts to be deduced from them, and published for public use, are subjects of a solicitude which the experience of the last Census has only tended to augment. Already this matter has been the subject of an interesting paper by the Rev. E. W. Edgell, read before the Society in its monthly meeting of the 20th of November, 1848; and a second paper by the same gentleman, containing an important suggestion for the preservation and consolidation of the existing parish register records, is of kindred interest, and formed the subject of an interesting discussion in the ordinary meeting of the 19th of November last.

Censuses by actual enumeration, and not by estimates from police data, are not of such frequent accomplishment in eastern cities as to permit an omission from notice of that made in May 1849, in the little island of Bombay, comprising about twenty square miles, and a

population of no less than 566,119 inhabitants, of whom 354,090 are males, and 212,029 females, being a comparative excess of 142,061 males, or 67 per cent. Of the total number, 6,936 were found to be Brahmins, 289,995 of other castes of Hindoos, 1,902 Jains or Buddhists, 124,155 Mahomedans, 114,698 Parsees, 1,132 Jews, 7,456 native Christians, 1,333 Indo-Britons, 5,417 Indo-Portuguese, 5,088 pure Europeans, 889 Siddees, Negroes, and Africans, and 7,118 of other castes not specified. The Europeans are thus less than 1 in 111 of the whole population.

A very interesting document presented to the Society by Colonel Sykes, gives a complete picture of the present state of statistical information in the north-western provinces of the British empire in the East, and gives incidental evidence of a humane and improving administration on the one hand, and a growing confidence among the people on the other, which are exceedingly gratifying. This is a "Memoir on the Statistics of the North-Western Provinces of the Bengal Presidency, compiled from official documents, under the orders of the Lieutenant-Governor," by A. Shakespear, Esq., B.C.S., Assistant Secretary to the Government, and printed at Calcutta in 1848. The Circular from the Government to the Collectors of the several districts gives the following caution, the terms of which, as of the whole communication, were translated into Oordoo, and extensively circulated, in order that the native, as well as the European officers of the Government, might be fully apprised of the object in view:—

"In conclusion, I am desired to impress upon you, that the object of all the inquiries of the nature here indicated is to direct the Government in the preparation of measures which shall be most for the good and happiness of the people. If the people are themselves unable to understand this, and if the diligent prosecution of the inquiry, either from the dishonesty of the agents employed, or from the ignorant apprehensions of the people, becomes the cause of loss or injury to them, it will be better to desist at present from the inquiry, or to be satisfied with a less degree of accuracy than might be otherwise obtained. It is believed that the alarm once felt at inquiries of this nature has already much decreased, and it may be hoped that it will altogether disappear, as information is extended, and as greater confidence is felt in the good faith of the Government. You will be especially watchful to guard against abuses on the part of agents whom you may employ either to furnish returns themselves or to test their accuracy. Unless the objects of the inquiry are explained to the people, and unless trustworthy agents are selected, and kept under strict control, misunderstandings and discontent will certainly prevail.

"Inquiries of this nature (concludes the Memoir) are still new in this country. The prejudices and apprehensions of the people have hitherto resisted their prosecution. But these prejudices have now given way under the better-understood principles of British administration. It is gratifying to be assured by the almost unanimous testimony of every public officer who has been concerned in the formation of this census, that they met with no opposition and excited no alarm by their inquiries.

"But public officers in India have not yet been trained to systematic inquiries of this sort, and accurate results can never be obtained

till the process is well understood and methodized. The present return will therefore be valuable as an experiment, and as a starting-point, whence future inquiries may take their form.

"In this view, it is of some importance to place now on record the course which the experience gained on this occasion points to as the most likely hereafter to ensure accuracy.

"The return should be compiled, not from averages of the number of persons to a house, but from actual enumeration of the people, which should be made on a certain day, to be previously fixed. The best time to take for the operation would be the close of the year (31st December), for it is the period when the people are most at leisure, and when European officers can best move about to direct the operations, to prevent abuses, and to check the returns.

"The names of villages and the area columns may be previously filled up from the latest and best information available, and with the greatest degree of care of which the process is susceptible.

"It is hoped that there is nothing in the preparations or in the proceedings here mentioned which is calculated to alarm or annoy the natives. In order to familiarize their minds with the subject, a translation of this Memoir into the vernacular dialect will be published and circulated to all the public authorities.

"It will remain for the Government, at some future time, when they have reason to believe that the object of the operation is well understood, to determine the time when a new census shall be taken."

Among the more interesting Donations of the past year may be noticed the first volume of the "Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge," being the first of a series published at the expense and under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution, founded by the will of James Smithson, Esq., an English gentleman, who left his property in trust to the United States of America, to found, at Washington, an Institution which should bear his own name, and have for its objects "the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men." This trust was accepted by the Government of the United States, and an Act of Congress was passed, 10th August, 1846, forming, for its management, a body consisting of the President and the other principal executive officers of the General Government, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Mayor of Washington, and such other persons as they might elect honorary members. The Governing Council is a board of regents consisting of the President, Chief Justice, and Mayor, with three other members appointed by the Senate from its own body, three by the House of Representatives from its number, and six citizens appointed by a joint resolution of both Houses. Besides the formation of a library, a museum, and a gallery of art, to which half of the whole income of 30,950 dollars is appropriated, the Institution contemplates the increase and diffusion of knowledge by means of original research and publications, to which the other half of the income is applied. Statistics and political economy form one of the three great classes of investigation thus contemplated, jointly with mental and moral philosophy, ethnology, and history. It appears also to be a part of the plan of this Society to cultivate as much direct intercourse as possible with the Scientific Societies of England; and it is with pleasure that the Council have hailed this commencement of an intercourse so promising.

Abstract of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURE from the 1st JANUARY to the 31st DECEMBER, 1849.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
To Balance in the hands of the Treasurer	62	7 3	By Rent	180	0 0
" Secretaries	2	1 9	Salaries	192	10 0
" { 1 for 1845 £2 2 0			House Expenses	34	13 9½
Arrears of { 2 1846 4 4 0			Printing	263	14 0
Subscriptions. { 5 1847 10 10 0			Editing and Advertising Journal	91	0 6
" { 8 1848 16 16 0			Parcels, including Delivery of Journal and Postages	11	3 2
271 Subscriptions for 1849	569	0 0	Library	8	1 5
Compositions	42	0 0	Fire Insurance	2	10 0
Sale of Journal	60	3 9	Messrs. Parker, Commission on Sale of Journal	5	17 9
Dividends	27	11 2	Miscellaneous	4	13 1
Balance of Library Committee carried to Petty Cash	1	19 4	Cash Balance	32	16 6
Assets, December 31, 1849:—			Petty Cash Balance	1	15 0½
Cash Balance	£32	16 6	Total	£798	15 3
Petty Cash Balance	1	15 0½			
Price of Fixtures to be returned on expiration of lease 31 12 0					
Stock in the Reduced 3½ per Cent., £569 17s., cost £567	66	3 6½	Liabilities, December 31, 1849:—		
" Consols 3 per Cent., £328 18s. 4d., " £300	867	0 0	Harrison, Printer	£329	4 2
" { 1 for 1841			Vacher, Stationer	11	17 3
" { 3 for 1842			Gardner, Oil	4	7 1½
" { 8 for 1844			Thorne, Bookbinder	2	16 0
" { 15 for 1846			Standidge, Maps	35	0 0
" { 25 for 1847			Total Liabilities	£383	4 5½
" { 41 for 1848					
" { 49 for 1849					
Deduct Amount not likely to be paid	109	4 0			
Total Assets	£1,151	11 6½			

Examined, Audited, and Approved, (except as to £11 12s. 6d. expenses of advertising, for which no vouchers have been produced us.)

(Signed) JOHN FINCH,
R. C. GRIFFITH.
WILLIAM FAIR.

March 2, 1850.