

Church Observer

A JOURNAL ADVOCATING THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND IRELAND IN THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

"ONE FAITH,—ONE LORD,—ONE BAPTISM."

VOL. III.—No. 24.

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 1870.

2s. 6d. an.—Single copies, 5c.

Ecclesiastical News.

CANADIAN.

DIocese of Montreal.

ANNUAL MEETING OF SYNOD.

The sixth annual meeting of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal commenced yesterday morning. The clergy and lay delegates assembled at 10 o'clock in Christ Church Cathedral, where divine service was held. Morning prayer was said by the Rev. Canons Bancroft and Bond, the lessons being read by the Rev. Canon Anderson. The most Rev. the Metropolitan read the ante-communion service, and a sermon was preached by the Rev. R. Lonsdell, R.D., from I John ii. 20. The holy communion was afterwards administered by the Lord Bishop, the Ven. Archdeacon Leach and the Rev. Canon Anderson assisting.

The Synod met for business at two o'clock, in the Cathedral rooms—his Lordship the Metropolitan presiding.

After prayers, the roll of clerical members was called by the Rev. Canon Balch, clerical secretary, and that of the lay delegates by Mr. M. H. Sanborn, lay secretary.

The Bishop appointed the Rev. R. Norman and Dr. Smallwood scrutineers of the lists of clergy and lay delegates.

Rev. Canon Bond suggested that the delegates could not take their seats until their assessments were paid in.

Mr. Hutton replied that they were not required to pay their assessments until the appointment of a treasurer.

Some conversation ensued on the desirability of a change in the basis of assessment.

His Lordship the Metropolitan then addressed the Synod as follows:—

My BRETHREN OF THE CLERGY AND LAITY.—In presiding for the first time over this your Annual Synod, I must ask you to bear with me, if I begin with a few remarks personal to myself.

Having been summoned by the unanimous vote of the Clerical and Lay Representatives of the Church in this Diocese, when solemnly assembled in Synod, I felt that I had no alternative but to leave my quiet retreat in England, where I had watched over a simple and affectionate people for one and twenty years, to obey at once your call, and to come among you as your elected Bishop.

I felt that under such circumstances your call was the echo, as it were, of a higher summons from above; and I regarded the expression of your wishes as indicative of the will of God. I came out therefore to fill my allotted post, not without sundry misgivings, but at the same time with a strongly impressed conviction, and I may also say with an assured confidence, that He, who seemed so plainly to have marked out my path, and who Himself knew all my deficiencies, would give me the needed strength, the requisite wisdom, and the grace to fit me for my new and unexpected work.

During the ten months that I have exercised my episcopal office among you, I may truly say that I have never once regretted the step which I have taken. The kind and generous reception which I met with on my first arrival from the inhabitants of this city and diocese; the cordial and affectionate desire shewn by the clergy to carry out my wishes; and the very hearty co-operation of the Laity, who have evinced a zeal for the Church's welfare, as well as a respect for my office, which at once endears them to me—these would of themselves be sufficient to call forth my thankfulness, and make me content with my present lot. But I have yet further cause for gratitude from the marked way in which God has, in answer to my prayers, been graciously pleased to endue me with bodily strength, such as I have not experienced for years past, and to afford me other help to fit me for the emergencies of my new position. To Him I desire thus publicly to give the praise.

I cannot help taking this early opportunity of acknowledging the debt I owe to my justly revered and beloved predecessor, for the great work he achieved, with your assistance, in laying the foundation, and building up to its present height, the Church in this Diocese, with all its Synodical and other organization. It is indeed a glorious structure, which will ever bear the impress of his wisdom, his intelligence, and his Christian character. He has been the "wise Master Builder," and it remains for his successors to rear the spiritual edifice, according to the model which he has designed with such consummate care and skill. There are many features in our Canadian Church system, especially as regards its synodical character, which have called forth the unqualified admiration of our Brethren in the Mother Country. And now all that we want is from time to time the infusion of fresh and fresh life into it, that life of which the Holy Spirit is alone the author and giver.

And now there are certain points of general interest, in connexion with our Church and Diocese, which I desire to touch upon.

1. First, as regards our Country Missions.

* These should perhaps rather be called "Church Stations," since many of them have lately assumed a less missionary, and a more permanent character.

The number of these amounts at the present time to fifty-nine, having many of them from two to four churches or congregations attached to them. Of these I regret to say only eight are self-supporting, and the remaining 51 are more or less dependent on the church at large for their maintenance. It is essential that these should be properly and vigorously sustained; that the ministerial teaching in each church should be efficient, the public services adequate, and our admirable church system heartily carried out.

But our attention must not be confined to existing missions. Whilst we use every exertion to preserve these in a flourishing condition, we must also be constantly on the alert to occupy fresh fields of labour, as they present themselves. And I am persuaded that if our church has real life and vigour in her, her bounds will be extending themselves year by year; and though an increased demand will thereby be made upon her resources, we shall hail with joy every fresh necessity as it arises to multiply our missions, and increase our staff of labourers.

There are at this time two or three new missions, which might with advantage be entered upon, in each of which a faithful missionary would find his labours abundantly rewarded, and each of which, if not undertaken by ourselves, will eventually be lost to the Church. There is also great need for two "travelling missionaries," to visit the lumber districts during the winter months, and to carry to those hardy and enterprising men the message of the Gospel, and the ministrations of the Church.

May I not also suggest such an increase in our resources, as will enable us to carry out these works of love, and that devoted men will be found to fill these posts of self-denial, which the Church calls them?

In proposing the removal of our members to these distant parts, we must be careful to establish a new mission simply because there is but little prospect of its being in any measure self-supporting would be a fatal error. To despise a voice from our brethren because they chance to be poor would be contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, and be unwise as well as unchristian. The fact of the Church's ministrations being demanded should be a sufficient reason for supplying that demand, if practicable, at any sacrifice to ourselves. There is much truth in the remark which I have somewhere seen, that "a Church which is content to lose its poor is losing its true riches."

And this leads me to speak of the manner in which our missions are at present sustained. The Church's work in this Diocese is to a certain extent fettered for lack of funds. Now, if it is to be carried on in a really earnest and hearty spirit, as I trust it will be, these five things are needed:

First, Our Church members in the various parishes must make a more strenuous effort to supply their proportion of the stipends of the clergy who labour among them. I know that many of them can ill afford to do this, but I am very sure that they will see the paramount necessity of giving to the very utmost of their means for an object in which they themselves are so deeply interested.

Secondly, the richer Laity of the Church, in this city and elsewhere, must be prepared for an increased demand upon their contributions to the General Church Fund of the Diocese. Or I would suggest (what would be for more beneficial) that they be willing, as some have already done, to name a fixed annual sum as their regular subscription to the Fund. Their past liberality, whenever appealed to makes me feel the most entire confidence that it will not be withheld, if only it be clearly shewn to them that their Church needs it.

Thirdly, in addition to the requirement of the Synod that an annual Sermon be preached in every Church, it will be necessary that a *bond fide* collection be made from house to house, in every parish or mission throughout the Diocese, in augmentation of this General Fund.

Fourthly, it will be necessary that an enquiry be made into the state of the various Endowments which exist in certain parishes, and the manner in which each property is invested; also that a correct record be kept by the Registrar of all such Endowments.

Fifthly, and above all, a better organization is required for the distribution of our Mission Funds. I am rejoiced to say that a Committee of Laymen has been sitting, for the purpose of remodelling our system of grants on the one hand, and our requirements for the people on the other. Whatever changes this Committee may recommend in their report, and the Synod may sanction, will I trust be carried out with the hearty concurrence of both Clergy and Laity.

It is the more necessary that the Mission Fund should be forthwith placed on a sound footing, since the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel is gradually withdrawing its

hitherto liberal grant for the Church in the Colony.

I feel that there is yet another point which dare not omit. I believe that no church will thoroughly prosper, unless she enlarge her heart towards those nations which enjoy not the same spiritual blessing as herself. While trying, then, to meet our own pressing needs, we must not—O let us not close our hearts towards those of our fellow-men who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. Let us make an effort, according to our means, to extend help to others, and then we may look for God's blessing on ourselves. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth."

During the past year the special collection throughout the diocese have been carried out with much zeal, and with some success. The annual meeting, in the Mechanics' Hall was, perhaps, the largest that has been held for many years. And we were glad to number among the pleaders for our work, an eminent Bishop of the American Church. By his eloquence, the cause of our mission was greatly advanced; and, also, an opportunity was given for the interchange of those cordial and brotherly feelings, which will, I trust, ever exist between the Churches, each carefully adopting itself to the special requirements of its position, but both one, indissolubly one, in all essential matters of faith and practice.

"Facies non omnibus una. Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum."

Whilst speaking on the subject of our financial resources, it will not, I trust, be thought out of place if I allude to a method, very much resorted to at the present time, in order to raise money for religious objects—I mean that of *Bazaars*. I am quite aware of the multifarious and pressing nature of those efforts, which from time to time claim the attention of our men and others. I am aware, too, of the difficulty of obtaining the amount of any given sum, which is so desirable, and which is so often obtained by some of our real Christian benevolence, as if it were in these days hardly to be attained, by substituting instead a spurious and a system of liberality, on which God's blessing can scarcely be expected, or ever asked for. I should be very thankful to see a higher standard of almsgiving, and a healthier tone of charity prevailing among the members of our Church.

2. But I now pass on to speak (2ndly) of the condition and prospects of our clergy.

I have on another public occasion borne my willing testimony to the general character of those who minister in holy things among us. I doubt if there is any Bishop who can boast of a more laborious, self-denying, earnest clergy than those who are working under my episcopal superintendence.

I cannot but speak with much thankfulness of the general harmony of views which exists among us, and of the soundness, faithfulness, and moderation, which for the most part mark the preaching from our pulpits. There will ever be some few, whose opinions reach the extreme line of what the church permits; but I am not aware of any within my Diocese who are so decidedly overstepping that line as to call for my interference. Still there are some, whom I would gladly see conforming more heartily to the general feeling and spirit of the church in which they serve. And I am extremely anxious that by a little modification of practice, and by the exercise of a conciliatory spirit, there may be brought about a more entire conformity throughout the Diocese, especially in the ordinary mode of conducting our Services. I hope that those who feel with me in this matter will be willing to make a sacrifice of their own cherished opinions, where at least no sacred principle is involved, in order to attain this desirable end; and that they will boldly lead the way in making such concessions.

It is the policy of our great enemy to separate us from one another as widely as he can: it should be our policy—our holy and Christian policy—to close our ranks, and wage our warfare side by side. Our strength lies in united action. And if God is pleased to draw us nearer together by the attraction of a loving spirit, this will make us strong against our common foe, and strong in the discharge of our spiritual mission. May it ever be so with us! For then, and not otherwise, will our Church answer to that description given in the inspired song; she will be "beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners."

As regards our Christian Brethren who belong to other communions, we should avoid anything like an attitude of antagonism towards them, or the use of hard words and unkind expressions, whilst we hold our own with an honest and firm hand. We should inculcate in our teaching sound and definite Church principles, and at the same time set forth clearly, distinctly, and prominently the great and life-giving doctrines of the cross. Our best weapon is I believe an earnest declaration of what we know to be God's truth, a simple uplifting of Christ before

people, and a desire to embody this teaching in our daily lives.

On the appointment of a clergyman to any Parish or Mission, I propose in future to induct him into his charge myself, in presence of the whole congregation; or to commission some one of my clergy to act as my representative in so doing. The entrance of a man into a new sphere of labour, and his induction by the congregation, I feel to be of so important a nature, that the opening Service in which he takes part ought to be marked by a public ceremony befitting the occasion. I have prepared a Form of Service for this purpose, which is chiefly borrowed from one in use in the sister Church of America.

As regards just now of the duty and expediency of maintaining our missions with vigour. But we must not forget that the church has also a duty to perform towards the labourers in these missions. The incomes of our clergy strike me as being lamentably small; not merely in comparison with the stipends allotted to them in other dioceses, but also in comparison with those enjoyed by men who are engaged in more and less important callings. Many of our most active clergymen are at present receiving barely \$600 dollars a year. It is, however, to see it acknowledged in the authorized rules and constitutions of the Diocese in this diocese, that "the minimum salary of the clergy shall be \$800 per annum." I should be still more glad if that intention were carried out, though at present it seems scarcely possible, owing to the deficient state of our funds. I would express a hope that the attention of the Laity will be directed to this question; and the more so, as I feel assured that no request will emanate from the members themselves.

And I am sure you will agree that the supply of clergymen is at present somewhat below the demand is attributable to this inadequacy of the remuneration we have to offer them. It is true, men do not men of the right stamp. And I am sure you will agree that we were to lower the qualifications and admit candidates of an inferior order. My desire is to raise, if possible, the standard of ministerial efficiency, rather than to diminish it, assured that in these days we want a well educated as well as an earnest and faithful body of clergy.

The number of spiritual laborers within the diocese at this time amounts to ninety-seven. Of these seventy-nine are in holy orders, and the remaining eight are catechists, or lay readers, licensed by the Bishop.

3. The training of our candidates for holy orders is not altogether on a satisfactory footing. The fact of our Theological College being at a distance, places us at a disadvantage. And I should be thankful if I could gather my candidates for the sacred ministry around me here at Montreal, where I could watch their characters and conduct, and superintend their preparation for the ministry. I feel unwilling however without more mature consideration to interfere with the present arrangement as regards the College at Lennoxville. But if it should eventually be found desirable to move the Theological Department nearer home, I doubt not that I should obtain from the churchmen of the Diocese the needed help to enable me to carry out the project. My present conviction is that, if we had in this city a Theological Institution, with a building worthy of its character, it would prove an immense blessing to the Diocese.

4. I feel anxious to take this opportunity of calling attention to what I consider a very lax and objectionable practice in administering the sacrament of *Baptism*, and in celebrating the Rite of *Marriage*, in private houses. There are reasons why it should have permitted in this country, and principally from the part of many parishes having been hitherto unprovided with Churches. These reasons however for the most part no longer exist. I must request my clergy to discontinue a practice so entirely without precedent in our Church; except in peculiar cases, and then not without the special permission of the Diocesan. As regards *Baptism* however, the illness of the recipient is of course a sufficient ground for the use of the private service provided in our prayer book.

5. The subject of *Liturgical changes* has of late occupied some attention. I have on many occasions, both in the convocation of Canterbury and elsewhere, advocated a certain modification of our rubrical directions, to suit the wants of the present generation. I would gladly see liberty given for the use of the morning Prayer, the Litanies and the office for the Holy Communion, as separate services, according to the original intention; or, when used in their combined form, divested of certain repetitions which now mar their beauty.

We greatly need also a *Third Form of Service*, to be used in the evening in those churches where prayers have already been read in the morning and afternoon. This seems to be especially called for in our city congregations. And further, we perhaps want a *curtailed form of prayer* for occasional or special use.