

purposes therein contemplated—beg leave in this Report to call the attention of the members of this Society, and of the Church generally, to some striking and important facts of which they have become cognizant in the course of their duties.

I. There appear (from such information as your Committee possess) to be in the Diocese about 138 Parochial Clergymen, having charge of 129 Rectories, Incumbencies or Missions. In these 129 Missions there appear to be 81 Parochial Committees, but on further examination of the return it is found that 23 of these Parochial Committees are in operation within the limits of ten Missions. Thus seeming to prove conclusively that there are 61 Missions, or nearly *one-half* of the whole number within the Diocese wholly destitute of any "Parochial Committee."

II. The number of Souls belonging to our Communion is now estimated at considerably above 200,000. In 1817 the average number of attendants upon the several Services of the Church in this Diocese was somewhat upwards of 32,000. Since then about 23 new Missions have been opened, and many Churches built and endowed. Your Committee have, therefore, no fear of exaggerating when they place the present average of attendance at 40,000. Yet the whole number of Subscribers to the Church Society—as nearly as your Committee can approximate to it—does not greatly exceed, if indeed it reaches the aggregate of 4000 persons out of the 200,000 who belong to us, and the 40,000 who steadily attended our Services.

III. They would also mention the fact that there are in the Diocese upwards of 200 Churches sufficiently complete to admit of Divine Service being regularly celebrated within them. There are also more than an equal number of Stations where the Offices of the Church are performed at stated periods. Yet from these (nearly) 500 places of worship, the whole number of Collections on behalf of the Church Society made during the last year was for the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, 345; for the Bishops Students' Fund 228; for the Jubilee of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 377. Among the Collections thus made are many taken up at Stations, thus proving two facts: first, that at many of the Churches no Collections have been made; and secondly, that it is possible to make Collections at Stations. Looking back beyond the last year and considering what has been done in this particular, during the three years embraced by the Return, your Committee regret to find the whole number of Missions where *all* the Collections appointed by the Society have been regularly made, is 44 out of the 129.

IV. It is (as your Committee believe) generally known, that the Society stands pledged to transfer from the General Purposes Fund to the Fund for the support of the Widows and Orphans, (if its resources will permit,) the sum of £1 5s. 0d., per annum for each Clergyman in the Diocese, on the understanding that he shall not only make the prescribed Collection for that object, but further, that he shall himself contribute a like sum to the General Purposes of the Parent Society. Notwithstanding this circumstance, your Committee regret to find, from the Return submitted to them, that out of the 138 Parochial Clergymen within the Diocese only 71 have paid the sum specified into the hands of the Society. They would also call attention to the important fact in connection with this subject, that of the £1 5s. 0d., thus paid, *one-fourth* is all which, as a general rule, reaches the treasury of the Parent Society—the remaining three-fourths being applied to local objects by the Parochial Committee, to whom it is usually paid.

V. Your Committee would further state as another result of their examination, that out of 81 Parochial Committees at present in existence, only 44 have regularly remitted the one-fourth of their annual contributions to the Parent Society, during the three years last past.

VI. Finally, they would call attention to the striking fact, proved by the return submitted to their investigation, that out of 138 Clergymen holding parochial cure within this Diocese, only *eleven* have in *every particular* complied with the requirements of the Society.

Your Committee are sanguine that all who will duly weigh these facts will agree with them in their opinion, that they have made out a very strong case, calling urgently for the adoption of remedial measures.

In suggesting such measures, they would most carefully guard against the possibility of its being supposed that they for a moment overlook the fact that the Church Society is a purely voluntary association, and has no power of authoritatively requiring the Clergy or Laity to comply with its regulations.

Omitting the obligations to support this Society which may arise from the sanction and exhortations of the ecclesiastical authorities, and, for the present, laying aside the consideration of the spiritual wants of the country which constitute so strong a necessity for general co-operation, your Committee would remind the members of the Church at large, that this Society possesses the right, inherent in every such Institution, of restricting the benefits which it is calculated to confer, to those *alone* who comply with the conditions which it shall deem necessary to enact.

The *justice and equity* of calling this right into exercise can surely admit of no controversy. The *necessity* for doing so must be abundantly apparent to all who will only consider the facts already enumerated.

On this principle, therefore, your Committee are prepared to advise, that no application from any Mission, praying for aid in carrying out any Parochial object, shall be entertained by the Society, unless the mission so applying shall have complied with all the requirements enumerated in the Constitution and By-laws of this Corporation.

They are further prepared to recommend the adoption of the same equitable principle in case of applications for relief from the Widows' and

Orphans' Fund. They would advise that no such application be entertained by this Society, unless the deceased Clerk shall, during his lifetime have faithfully complied with *all* the requirements named by the Society.

These recommendations are of course subject to certain exceptions to be hereinafter specified.

Your Committee have some further suggestions to offer for the consideration of the Society, but they will be more fitly adverted to in the course of some remarks which they would very respectfully bring before the attention of the Board.

It appears to your Committee that in such an Institution as the Church Society, it is a great misfortune to have the Central Government in a weak and uninfluential state, and, since in Missionary, as in other objects, money is one great source of power, the very limited amount of Funds placed at the disposal of the Parent Society impairs, to a great degree, the efficiency of the Institution at large, and almost destroys its really Missionary character.

The present organization converts each District Branch, and indeed each Parochial Committee, into a separate and almost independent Society for raising money, not to be employed in Missionary objects, but to be expended on local wants. One-fourth of all annual subscriptions, which is all that is transmitted to the Parent Society, is not much more than sufficient to meet the necessary and unavoidable expenses of its machinery, and prevents the possibility of its entering with vigor and effect upon any really missionary enterprise.

Taking the income of the last two years at £1,000, it is evident that when out of the *fourth* of this sum (or £1,000) the salary of its officers and the necessary expenses of the Society are taken, and the £1 5s. for each Clergyman in the Diocese has been transferred to the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, there can be but a very trifling sum left to be devoted to strictly Missionary purposes, even when to the balance thus remaining is added the proceeds of the usual collection made on behalf of Travelling Missionaries. Indeed it may be safely stated that the united sums expended within the Diocese, through the medium of the Church Society, for the relief of those who really are in spiritual destitution, does not greatly exceed £750, the contributions of the District Branches towards the support of Travelling Missionaries, not doing more than making up for the necessary expenditure of the Parent Society.

Thus then seems really to be *ALL* that is done for *OTHERS*, even by those 68 Missions within whose limits the 81 Parochial Committees are in operation, the remainder of their contributions being altogether expended upon their *own* wants.

Small, however, as appear the sacrifices which even they make to relieve the wants of those who are in spiritual need, it is matter of deep regret to find that in 61 other Missions, nothing whatever is done (in the way of annual contributions to the Church Society) either for themselves or others.

To extend any of the benefits of the Society to such parishes, appears to your Committee manifestly unjust to those who exert themselves upon its behalf, and hence it is that they feel compelled to recommend their exclusion from any claim to such benefits, until they comply, to the extent of their ability, with its just and reasonable requirements.

Your Committee has already adverted to the fact of 23 Parochial Committees being in operation within 10 Missions,—and 5 of the 23 are embraced within the charge of a single Travelling Missionary. This shows that even in those parishes where the present Parochial Committees exist, their number might be very considerably increased, because in every rural Mission there are usually several churches or important stations entirely independent of each other, in connection with each of which a separate Parochial Committee might be formed. That these separate congregations are not, as a *general* rule, included in one Parochial Committee for the Mission at large, is, (your Committee think) capable of proof from the records of the Society.

If, in addition to the increase which is thus considered practicable, there was, in those parts of the Diocese where no action whatever has been taken on behalf of the Institution, further than making some of the appointed collections, if there a strenuous effort was made by clergy and laity to extend the ramifications of the Society, it is evident that its resources might at once be almost doubled. Your Committee confess themselves unable to see any difficulty in *making this effort* when those who are called upon to make it are not held responsible for the measure of success which may attend it; and they cannot believe that any, whether individuals or Committees who decline to do so, can deem themselves unjustly treated if, in consequence thereof, the Society excludes them from any benefits it may be able to confer.

The mere multiplication of Parochial Committees, however, although an object of the very greatest importance, does not appear to your Committee to be sufficient to meet the evil entailed by the very limited sum, which, by the present Rules of the Corporation, is confided to the Parent Society, for carrying out its general purposes.

The extension of the Parochial Committees, must necessarily increase the number of applications for aid, which your Committee firmly believe it will be impossible to meet, unless a larger proportion than one-fourth of their contributions be appropriated to the Parent Society for such purposes.

At present it is the *wealthy* parts of the Diocese that are assisted by the Church Society, while the poorer Districts are left unaided in their poverty, and this must of necessity be the case as long as three-fourths of all annual subscriptions are allowed to be expended upon local objects in the parishes where such subscriptions are raised.