

DIOCESE OF NEW WESTMINSTER

Some of the Notes of the Annual Synod.

The Bishop's Address.

At the annual session of the Anglican Synod of British Columbia, which was held lately in Christ Church, Vancouver, it was resolved on the proposal of the Venerable Archdeacon of Columbia that the synod of the diocese of New Westminster in assembly convened, hearing with unfeigned sorrow the news of the loss which the whole Anglican communion has sustained in the death of the Most Rev. Edward Lord Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of All England, hereby expresses the deep sense of the value of the service of him rendered here on earth to the whole church Catholic, and prays that the Holy Spirit may entirely direct and rule the hearts of those to whom are entrusted the high responsibility of the choice of his successor: Further resolved, That a copy of this resolution be sent under the seal of the synod to the Right Rev. Frederick, Lord Bishop of London, Dean of the Chapter of the Archbishopric of Canterbury.

Among the discussions were some on the Canons relating to Finance, the Bishopric Endowment Fund, Clergy Widows and Orphans and Superannuation Fund. The executive committee elected were: clerical secretary, Rev. H. G. Fiennes Clinton; lay secretary and treasurer, W. J. Walker; clerical members, Revs. W. B. Allen, E. P. Flewelling, L. N. Tucker, H. Underhill; lay members, A. W. Wyld, W. Myers, Grav, N. C. Schou and A. W. Black. His Lordship the Bishop nominated the following committee for S. P. G. attorneys and bishopric fund: W. M. Gray, N. C. Schou, W. J. Armstrong, H. J. Cambie, A. W. Black, W. F. Salsbury, W. Taylor and R. E. Leonard. Representing the General Synod of Canada to be held at Montreal, 1897: Revs. H. G. Fiennes-Clinton, and L. Norman Tucker; Messrs. W. J. Armstrong and W. Myers Gray. The court of discipline was chosen as follows: Archdeacon of Columbia, Rev. L. N. Tucker, Rev. E. P. Flewelling and Messrs. H. A. Bulwer, Capt. Thain and W. Armstrong.

Appended is part of the address of His Lordship Bishop Dart delivered thereat.

Brethren of the Clergy and Laity:

Since the last session of the Diocesan Synod, held in November, 1895, the Revs. J. S. A. Bastin and F. A. Ford have been ordained to the priesthood the latter having been previously ordained deacon by me; and the Rev. H. B. Turner has been ordained to the diaconate.

I have confirmed candidates in the churches of New Westminster, Vancouver, Chilliwack, Hatzic, Lulu Island, Mission, St. Mary's Mission, South Vancouver, Surrey, Lytton, Yale, Kamloops, Ashcroft, Lillooet, Nicola Valley, Enderby, Armstrong Vernon, and Rev-

elstoke. I have consecrated the church and burial ground at Surrey and the church at Armstrong, which was removed from Lansdowne.

Revelstoke was previously served from Ashcroft has now its own resident clergyman. The same is the case with Enderby, which was formerly attached to Vernon. Rossland and Trall, which I visited in August, are under the charge of the Rev. H. Irwin. The Rev. H. Edwardes, acting under medical advice, has been obliged, unhappily to relinquish his intention of returning to the diocese; his place at Lytton is filled by Mr. Turner. The Rev. H. E. Bowers, resigned St. Paul's Vancouver, in February last to become diocesan missionary of Spokane and at Easter, Rev. H. J. Underhill was appointed his successor, St. Michael's, Vancouver, has been erected into a separate parish, of which the Rev. James Irwin, formerly curate-in-charge, has now become the first rector. Nineteen licensed clergymen were working in the diocese when I arrived in August, 1895; there are now 24. I mention these facts merely by the way of chronicling events. Our lay readers in the diocese are of great assistance in keeping the churches open when a vacancy occurs and when the priest is engaged in other parts of the district. It is to be wished that other educated laymen, in outlying places, such as Barkerville and Quesnelle, where it is impossible at present to send resident clergymen, would volunteer for the work. We deplore the loss by death of one of our readers Mr. W. C. A. Pilling, whom I had recently licensed for Mission City.

The venerable S.P.C.K. has made grants during the past year for the building of churches at Kaslo, Rossland, Agassiz, Richmond, Trall and Mission City. In Kaslo, Revelstoke and Agassiz churches are completed so far as to be used for divine service. Our warmest thanks are due to the Venerable society for the encouraging and stimulating assistance it thus renders. It has also made a grant of £25 for two years towards the maintenance of the hospital at Lytton, the first half yearly instalment of which I have just received. I trust that we shall soon be able to establish an S. P. C. K. Depository in New Westminster or Vancouver, or to take some arrangement by which S. P. C. K. publications may be readily obtained. There is a demand for them, not large perhaps, but widespread and constant throughout the diocese.

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Before I close I would call attention in a few words to a most important and solemn subject, the marriage law of the church. Circumstances have come under my notice which make me feel this to be an imperative duty. I am thankful to say that the marriage law is clearly embodied for us in the first three sections of Canon ix. But it is well-known that lax ideas respecting marriage are abroad, and it is well-known that in some of the United States, God's Holy ordinance of matrimony has been degraded, through the facilities offered for divorce, into a temporary legalized con-

ubinage, dissoluble almost at the will of either party. Members of our own communion are not the only Christian people who feel that this is an abominable state of things. But lax ideas are apt to spread terribly fast and unless we plainly and earnestly declare God's law, or people will too readily conform to a lower standard. We should teach oftener than we commonly to do sanctity and permanence of the marriage tie, and the imperative appointed end of marriage. We should point out that laxity with regard to the marriage bond has invariably accompanied the decay and decadence of nations. Millman, in his Latin Christianity, points to a striking illustration of this truth. He says, "In the later Republic the frequency of divorce was at once, the sign, the cause, the consequence of the rapid degradation of morals. There can be no doubt that this dissolution of those bonds which unite the family was the corroding plague of Roman society." It is not without significance that our Lord described the corrupt Jewish nation of his day, then hastening to destruction, as "an evil and adulterous generation." The subject has long been before my mind. I have carefully examined every plea that has been urged on behalf of laxity and my rooted conviction is that our wisdom and our safety lie in adhering strictly to the teaching of the marriage service in our Prayer Book. We have there the law put in action for us, clear, definite, authoritative, Scriptural. No divorced person could go through the form of marriage in our church, without being self-evidenced by the words he would utter. If it be said that this law sometimes presses hardly, we may answer that there is no necessity and righteous law of which the incidence is not at times felt to be severe. If it be said that "the people will not stand it" we may answer that this is a doubtful assumption. Even allowing it to be true it does not affect our duty. In that case we may reflect that church of diminished numbers yet of pure life is more loyal to Christ and doing more good in the nation than a church which "lowers her moral standard to meet the moral standard of the world." The greatest of living Englishmen—statesman, philosopher, theologian—has lately told us that fifty years ago he had read everything he could find upon the subject and that nothing since had shaken the conclusion he had then arrived at, on the absolute perpetuity of the marriage tie, save when it was broken by death. We, my brethren of the clergy, have so to declare the counsel of God that we be not guilty of leaving our people in ignorance of His holy laws, and you, my brethren of the laity, have to assist us with your prayers, remind us, when any need arises of our duty, and uphold our hands when we are striving to do it. May God direct all our proceedings to the welfare of his church.

We shall always be glad to notice any special features of interest in all such benevolent societies, which include so many churchmen.