

support, and in view of that keeping in touch with the laity of the Diocese, appeared very specially to fit him for guiding the Diocese at the present time. His departure was a great wrench to myself. I trust that with the Divine blessing he may administer his Diocese so that the work of Christ may be advanced, the Church strengthened, and the affection of clergy and laity drawn heartily around him.

During the past year I have lost a dear personal friend, and the Diocese a kind benefactor, by the death of the Rev. Prebendary Wigram, formerly Honorary Secretary of the Church Missionary Society. His life was one of devoted service to his Master. His abilities, his means, his time, all that he was and had, he gave cheerfully and unreservedly to that Master. His was a noble example of a consecrated life. We had the privilege of sharing in his interest and bounty. He gave me £1,000 for the Chair of Exegetical Theology, and by lending St. John's College £3,000 at 4 per cent., he did the college an invaluable service. He gave many smaller sums to this and the other Dioceses of this Ecclesiastical Province, including £300 on one occasion for the endowment of the Diocese of Saskatchewan.

I cannot speak of striking progress in our Church work in the past year, yet I know that there has probably been a good deal. Our progress has usually been so silent and quiet from month to month as to be almost inappreciable, though when looked at after the lapse of a few years so remarkable. The improvement in the condition of the country noticed last year has continued, though in some localities less marked, and perhaps in some not felt, for the past year was no exception to the experience of former years. Some districts suffered great losses. A most devastating hail storm destroyed the crops for a considerable width across the whole Province. Other districts had a poor return, or suffered more or less from frost. On the whole the crops were much lighter than in 1895, but, owing to better prices, the average result was almost as beneficial. We have shared in the improvement. The advance made last year in the Diocesan or Home Mission Fund has been maintained. The debt has been now entirely removed, and there is a balance of \$700. But this financial improvement has not been without cost. There has been no forward mission work. There is still no resident clergyman in such missions as Beausejour, Deloraine, Posen, Belmont, Pipestone, Fort Francis, Arden, Clandeboye Bay. There is only one missionary in the huge district of Dauphin—a district not excelled in prospect by any part of the Province, and to which a railway is now carrying a large number of intending settlers. Other large missions, as Russell, Woodlands, Bradwardine, remain undivided. There are also other missions not so unwieldy that would yield good results to the Church if a different arrangement could be made and a new mission formed—for example, Ninga out of Boissevain and Killarney. In fact, we have to arrange this summer for the occupation by students of some fourteen missions not regularly served by resident clergymen or lay missionaries. The loss to the Church from these unmanageable missions in the gradual defection of members is very evident. The provision of services cannot but be very limited. The mission is the size of

an English county. Services less frequent than fortnightly are not of much use in building up congregations. It is impossible to have more than four to six fortnightly services, and if, as is usually the case now, there is in the mission a hamlet with 100 to 300 people, requiring at least a weekly service, even that number of services cannot be given. These four or six stations simply serve some nine to twelve families within six miles, but there are many other families distant six to fifteen miles from any place of worship. And while this is the case with us the ministers of other bodies have often from their greater number a more limited field. It would almost appear, on comparing the reports of our clergy with the census, that nearly a third of those who profess to be churchmen are not reached by the services of our clergy. But it is to some extent a question how far this arises from our clergy only reporting those who take advantage of the services, or in some way assist. It is certainly desirable that others, who do not contribute or attend services, but for whom our services are available, should be known. This seems necessary for determining how far the provision of mission work meets the needs of our people.

We enter on the mission work of the new year with a deep sense of responsibility from the insufficiency of means for what we should undertake. As there were special charges last year on our funds, and the net income of the Endowment Fund may improve, we might apparently with our balance venture on placing resident missionaries in three or four of the more pressing missions. And, as in former years, we should make this venture of faith, still our means are uncertain. We can neither appreciably reduce our present grants nor look for an advance in the funds which we raise ourselves, for we have worked self-support with every possible appliance. It is a very grave question then for us whether the outside help which we receive will keep up. The grant of the Colonial and Continental Church Society is large for the limited income of that society, but it is not likely to be reduced, unless the funds of the society fall back.

The grant of the S. P. G. has been reduced by £150 this year, and no reply has been made to any of the memorials. We are, therefore, in the dark as to what the society will do. Its action has been a great disappointment. Only a year previously it took such a view of our needs as, of its own motion, to grant a special sum of £100 yearly for three years. A special meeting of the standing committee was very kindly called to meet me when I was in England. I placed before them our circumstances, our need of the whole grant, and the disastrous consequences of its reduction. At the close of my address the Dean of St. Paul's said that, as he was chairman of the committee that recommended this change, he would explain their reasons for it. He said in substance that the new resolution had been taken for the spiritual advantage of the Canadian Church—that the large aid given for so long a period to the Eastern Dioceses had been prejudicial to them, had checked self-support, and discouraged a missionary spirit, and that it was not intended to repeat this mistake with the Western Dioceses. There may be a degree of truth in the effect of the methods of S. P. G. grants