Charge to Synod

Right Rev. W. R. Clark, D.D.,

Hamilton, May 30th, 1917.

AFTER referring to Clergy of the Diocese and others who have passed away or suffered bereavement during the past year, the Bishop continued:—

War Memorials.

"The Church has lost, and will lose, many of her best sons. She will rejoice to hold their names in honour and remembrance, that the living may be inspired by their example. Clergy and Laity alike should endeavour to widen the forms that Memorials may fittingly take. Would it not be better to give to a Church or a Parish something that it really needs, than to erect numberless tablets, which in a generation will have lost their chief interest? There are many Churches which are in great need of furniture, ornaments, windows, Communion vessels, etc., which might appropriately be given in memory of the fallen since they would both commemorate the memory of the dead and assist the devotion of the living. If within the Church nothing remains to be done, the Churchyard might offer opportunities for work, providing a memorial both useful and beautiful. There are few of our Churchyards which are not more or less unsightly and which might not be neatly laid out and beautified. God's acre should be beautiful. The enclosure, the walks, and the sodding should all receive attention. A lich gate would be a most suitable memorial. One tablet at the entrance to the Church with the names of members of the Congregation who have fallen in battle might be made to suffice. The Clergy have the opportunity to teach and guide their people in this delicate matter."

M. S. C. C.

The Bishop then proceeded to enumerate the various changes, ordinations, dedications, etc., of the past year and emphasized the importance not only of caring for the men at the Front, but also of maintaining the Missionary work of the Church. "If ever there was a time when the call for Missionary effort should be responded to, it is now. To slacken our efforts at this time in any heathen land would be a sign that Christianity in this conflict is a losing cause.

"Wonderful things are happening under our eyes. Scarcely a country outside of Europe which is not in sympathy with the cause of the Allies, because it is the cause of humanity. Christians, Hindus, Moslems, Buddhists are meeting as they have never met before, and the respect for each other is steadily growing. England is in every way utilizing Christian influences for the comfort and help and well-being of the troops. Some of our best men have gone to the hospitals and trenches to serve and administer to them. Great things will surely follow for God and His Church. The call for Missionaries will at the close of the war, probably be as great and urgent as it is now for soldiers for service of the Empire. The War has shown us the sacrifices which men and women are making in response to the great call. How can we make our appeal on behalf of Christ and His Church felt? How can we use and direct the treasures of devotion now in the hearts of our manhood and womanhood?"

Diocesan Missions.

"I greatly regret that the Diocese defaulted on the Diocesan Missions Apportionment to the extent of $210.20, the amount asked for being $4,300.00, and the amount received being $4,089.80. Our efforts this year must be renewed with fresh enthusiasm. I have been able to raise the minimum income of our Missionary Clergy during the past six years from $700.00 to $900.00 with a free house. Where a Clergyman has two or more Congregations the question of transportation becomes a serious one. I hold the conviction that the Laymen of the Church need only to have their minds aroused on this question in order to have the standard of Clerical stipends obtaining in the Diocese what it ought to be. In every other walk in life the outfit of the worker is made good by the consumer, not by the worker. To the Clergymen, however, the Church calmly says, 'You need a horse and carriage, you must get them as best you can for yourself,' and he goes and does it and runs into debt.

"I feel that I have only to bring this matter to the attention of the well-to-do parishes to obtain the response necessary to meet this difficulty. I assure you, my brethren, there is no more genuine Missionary work being done anywhere than in the rural parts of the Diocese. Some of my Clergy have each more than 20 miles to drive every Sunday, summer and winter, taking three, sometimes four services. Missionary work is not with us a matter of converting the heathen, it is work to prevent our people from becoming heathen. Far removed from the influences of the Church it is very easy for a family to become indifferent. Christian privileges, I assure you, are greatly valued by these scattered families. The War has taught us that Civilization without Christianity breeds a race of pagans and savages. We believe that Christ is the only true foundation on which to build up a nation. It is for us, His followers, to see that His Church is so strengthened that she may be able to solve the tremendous problems that will face her after the War.

"We are learning more and more that the Church of England is not a poverty-stricken Church. She has the means and she is realizing this. While we value the lowliest gifts by any Christian out of his, or her poverty, as equal in God's sight with any gift offered by the rich man out of his riches, I do lay it upon the well-to-do and wealthy members of the Church that they are, after all, only trustees of God, and I appeal to them to rise to a reverential sense of the great responsibility that rests upon them as members of the Church, and to give as never yet they have given to the needs of those who are doing this laborious and self-sacrificing work in the rural parts of our Diocese.

The Mission of Repentance and Hope held in the Diocese during Advent was, the Bishop said, "a great blessing," and "had much to do with the increased offerings for Missions."

Among the matters of importance mentioned by the Bishop to be dealt with by the Council for Social Service was that of:

Lord's Day Observance.

"However, we may classify the sins which have brought on this terrible War, I believe with many others, that the persistent attempt to take away the peace and restfulness of the Lord's Day, and to destroy its religious character, has had much to do with it.

"The Sunday question is not a simple, but a compound question. There is the question concerning the origin and authority of Sunday, and the question of the proper way of keeping the day.

"The Christian Church in the very first century of her history merged the Sabbath day, or seventh day, which had been kept from the beginning as the day of rest, as the memorial of Creation, with Easter Day, the first day of the week, the day of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, the great day of the world's regeneration.

"It was a fitting change, for the two events are really one. The story of the creation of man would have remained unfinished without Easter Day. And so we are asked on the authority of the Apostles and primitive Church, guided, no doubt, by the Holy Spirit, to offer to the one God of Creation and Redemption our Christian Sabbath of worship and rest from toil.

"It is, first of all, a day of public worship, a weekly memorial of Christ's Resurrection on the first Easter, and in the second place it is a day of rest. Our Saviour said, 'The Sabbath was made for man,' that is for the whole man; for his whole complex nature—for his physical health, for his mental efficiency, and for his spiritual uplift.

"Sunday, then, is intended as a day of rest for body and mind. Man's life is not to be all toil, all grind. He is not to be always bending over his desk, or counting up his money. When the French Revolution legislated Sunday out of existence they could not legislate the necessity for the day out of the life of mankind. A day of rest is not a human suggestion of what man wants, but God's word as to what man needs.

"Our Lord taught three kinds of work as lawful on the Sabbath day, and the principles He laid down are applicable to the Christian Sunday. These are works of piety, works of mercy and works of necessity.

"The spread of materialism, with increased opportunities and desire for recreation, for locomotion, and for material pleasure has led to a wide disregard of the religious aspect of the day. There is a large proportion of the people of our country who worship God, as they say, in the woods and fields, in the automobile, and on the golf links, but who rarely enter a Church. History is our authority for claiming that religion, its practices, its ideals, and its institutions, have given us the civilization we are now enjoying. If it is valuable to *all* our people, then our people are bound to maintain it in one way or another. It behoves all who receive its benefits to acknowledge their responsibilities. One of these is the maintenance of a day which has done so much for the best life of the world, and is the only organized good against the mass of organized evil.

"Sunday ought to be the brightest and happiest, not the gloomiest, nor yet the gayest and most worldly day of the week. It is the Lord's Day. It is the Feast of the Resurrection. The command to keep it holy should be observed by the attendance at worship, and chiefly by the attendance at our Lord's own service.

"An important question has arisen whether Sunday labour in the fields during seeding and planting is not a work of necessity in order to ward off famine during the coming winter. Whatever necessity there may be in England for this step, I cannot think that the Rural parts of this Diocese have yet been so bereft of manual labour that such a question should be considered. Unless we are assured by the highest authority in the Government that such a step is an absolute necessity, the Church should oppose it with all her power.

"No nation ever stood secure which deliberately broke the 4th Commandment. The Bible is full of instances of how when Israel forsook the Lord, He permitted war and pestilence to come to them, and when the nation turned and cried unto the Lord He heard their prayers and delivered them from their enemies."

Sunday School Work, the Provincial Council of the Provincial Synod, Assyrian and Armenian Relief, the use of the Revised Prayer Book were dealt with in order and the Bishop