

For although this country since 1878 has passed through a period of unparalleled commercial depression, it is our privileged task, with gratitude to God, to record the steady growth and prosperity of our Diocesan work, as illustrated by the facts and figures which I have already mentioned, showing an increase in the number of Clergy; the extension of the Church's ministrations into many new fields; the erection of a large number of beautiful and costly churches and parsonages; the annually increasing contributions in aid of Foreign Missions; the growth of many mission fields into self-sustaining parishes; and, best of all, since 1874, we have not only kept our expenditure within the limits of our annual income, but have been able to wipe out the greater portion of that heavy debt which had been incurred during previous years.

To show the progress the Church in this Diocese has made during my administration, I have caused tables to be prepared, giving the details of the voluntary Diocesan income during the last eighteen years (these tables will be found in the Appendix), which show an aggregate increase in voluntary contributions of \$34,547.51, for the period during which, in the providence of God, I have been at the head of this Diocese. While deeply conscious that we could and ought to have done more in this way to extend the Redeemer's Kingdom, I yet cannot consider this steady and liberal support of our Diocesan work, during a protracted period of financial stringency, otherwise than as a sign of active life amongst us, and a great cause of thankfulness to the Head of the Church, Who has so graciously inclined His people thus to show their sympathy with His cause. Nor am I insensible, beloved brethren of the clergy and laity, how much your hearty and zealous co-operation has accomplished in bringing about so cheerful a result.

INVESTED FUNDS.

The total cash capital of the Synod Trust and Diocesan Funds in 1871 was \$522,465.60. The capital has since been largely increased, partly owing, of course, to the sale of lands which had been for many years totally unproductive, and this year I find it has reached the sum of \$665,898.57, being an increase of \$143,432.97.

It is only proper to state that in this amount are included various Trust Funds (as, for instance, the Episcopal, Rectorial, and Endowment Funds), which are by law limited to their specific objects, and therefore are not available for any other purposes. We have, I am thankful to say, the strongest and most incontestible evidence of the judicious manner in which our funds have been administered, as well as of the prosperity of our Diocese, in the fact, that the interest derived from all invested funds, both Trust and Diocesan, in 1871, was only \$27,418.34; whereas, our books, this year, show returns from these sources of \$44,418.13, being an increase in our income from invested capital of over \$17,000!

In connection with this fact, I have great pleasure in bearing my public testimony to the efficiency of our excellent Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. Reed, whose untiring energy, zeal and devoted ability in the discharge of his arduous duties have not a little contributed to secure such a gratifying result.

WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' FUND.

On my accession to the Episcopate, the condition of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund was to me a source of great anxiety, although there were at that time only eight pensioners upon the fund. In the Pastoral, which I then felt it my duty to issue, I made the urgent appeal on its behalf which I have already quoted. I rejoice now to inform the Synod that the capital of this fund has nearly doubled during the last nine years—the increase being \$25,864.89! The importance of this augmented capital will be the more evident when we consider how the claims upon this fund have been increasing from year to year. At the present time twenty widows are receiving assistance from this fund, and it is truly gratifying to learn from the Standing Committee's report of this year, that we have not only paid their several claims in full, according to the provisions of the Canon, but have also been able to add \$1200 to the capital for investment, making a total invested capital of \$55,279.75. I sincerely trust that the object to which this is devoted will still command for it the generous and deserved support of all the members of the Church. I trust, the day is not far distant, when, for the comfort of our Clergy, we may be enabled to make larger provision for the wants of their widows and orphans.

SUSTENTATION FUND.

This fund had its origin at our Synod in 1868, upon the suggestion of F. W. Thomas, Esq., a prominent and influential member of Synod, whilst he resided in this Diocese, and one who always took a deep interest in promoting the welfare of the Church. This suggestion met with the hearty approval and active support of our dear late Bishop, who spoke of the establishment of this fund, as "a work, the value of

which cannot be over-estimated, and the beneficial effect of which upon the Church will be felt for all time to come."

I rejoice to say, that this fund has now reached the amount of \$49,117.98, all of which has been most judiciously invested; and the interest is applied from year to year towards the support of our Missionary Clergy. The value of such a reliable and permanent source for missionary purposes must be evident to all, and most gladly would I see it very largely increased for the benefit of our faithful and self-denying Missionaries.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

This detailed statement of our financial prosperity bears the best testimony to the faithful and judicious manner in which our Diocesan affairs have been managed by the "Standing Committee" of the Diocese, both before and since the Church Society was by Act of our Provincial Legislature "united to and incorporated with" the Synod under its present title of "The Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Huron," a step by means of which all our congregations are now enabled, through their duly elected representatives, to share in the government and management of our Diocesan affairs.

So much, indeed, under God, does our prosperity as a Diocese depend upon the Standing Committee, elected annually by ballot at the meeting of Synod, that I do not hesitate to say, that the Synod merely exercises a due precaution in selecting for so responsible a position only those of its members who are not only qualified by their practical ability to deal with the various important matters which from time to time demand their most careful consideration, but who are also known to be loyal in their attachment to all that concerns the peace and prosperity of our beloved Church in this rapidly growing Diocese.

In the retrospect which we have thus taken of our Diocesan affairs, during my Episcopate from 1871 up to this period, we can gratefully re-echo the words addressed by the Apostle to the brethren he met at Appii Forum: "Thank God, and take courage." And although the difficulties attending our operations have at times been perplexing and very trying, yet having looked upward for that wisdom from above which is promised to the prayer of faith, we have fully realized the precious promises: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" and again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn;" and again, "If God be for us, who can be against us?"

We, therefore, implicitly trust for a continuance of every needed blessing from the Great Head of the Church, the entire glory of which we would still ascribe to Him, with whom alone is all counsel and sound wisdom and understanding and strength.

But while thus thankfully acknowledging the goodness of God in prospering our work in the past, yet I must here express my conviction that all our efforts yet made are inexpressibly feeble, when compared with the object, and with the means possessed by our people.

The members of the Church have to be awakened to a more enlarged view of the blessed privilege of extending the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The prophetic direction to the Church is:—"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes."

There is no time to be lost; our own lives are swiftly passing away. The season of unparalleled advantage which we now enjoy is likewise rapidly passing away. Let, therefore, every true follower of Christ adopt the spirit of the Master's declaration:—"I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day, the night cometh when no man can work."

PRAYER.

Need I say to this Christian assembly that prayer is our great resource and strength in the prosecution of the trust reposed in us. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself taught us to say continually, "Thy Kingdom come." He Himself commands us to pray to the Lord of the harvest to "send forth laborers into the harvest," and the encouragements to prayer are very great, of which we have many illustrations in God's Word, "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." Oh that my voice might reach the most distant Christian people to pour forth their unceasing supplication to Him who heareth and answereth prayers for the outpouring of His Spirit on them and on the Church throughout the world. At this time, while we are assembled to legislate how best to advantage the Kingdom of our Lord, let us resolve that we will fervently and constantly pray for His great blessing. To the end of life let us pray on in faith; with an unwearied perseverance let us pray till the Spirit of God be poured upon us in the plentitude of His richest grace. Thus praying to God in

downright earnest, we shall yet see all that we desire accomplished, and God, even our own God, "shall bless us and prosper the word of our hands, yes, prosper our handy work upon us."

WALTON.—The ceremony of laying the corner stone of St. George's Church took place on Friday, June 11th. It was witnessed by about 600 people, and was laid by Major James Bennet, Orange Grand Master of Western Ontario, who was the guest of the Incumbent, Rev. F. Ryan, during his stay. A procession of Orange and Young Briton Lodges was formed near the Post Office and marched to the site of the church, a beautiful elevation on Mr. Hewett's property, the band playing. The lodges and spectators formed a semi-circle to the south of the foundation. St. John's Church choir, Brussels, with organ, was placed on the platform near the corner stone. The Incumbent, the Grand Master, and Rev. Messrs. Matthew and Henderson took up the positions assigned them for the ceremony, when the Rev. Mr. Ryan announced to the officers and Building Committee their duties. He briefly addressed those assembled, stating the object and importance of the ceremony, and that while the materials of the building were perishable, the purposes for which it was erected were eternal and reached beyond the flood. He then called on the choir to sing the anthem, "Lord of Hosts," after which the Rev. C. R. Matthew offered a fervent and appropriate prayer, which elicited a hearty "Amen" from all. The usual document was read by the Incumbent and was placed by Mr. C. R. Cooper with copies of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN with other papers, and several gold, silver and copper coins of the realm in a tin box in the cavity of the stone.

Rev. Mr. Ryan, in a few appropriate words, presented Grand Master Bennet with a beautiful silver trowel with an inscription. The Grand Master, bowing, replied, after which he laid the stone with the usual ceremonies:—

"REVEREND SIR,—I accept this beautiful silver trowel with the most sincere pleasure, and shall ever regard its brightness as an emblem of Faith, its point of Hope, and its guard of Charity. It will now be used in spreading the mortar upon which this stone is to rest, in the hope that the building about to be raised may be one in which the truth of the Gospel may be ever held sacred; and may it contain large congregations of regular and devout worshippers. May it long resist the encroachments of time, and remain as a monument of the Christian liberality of the good people of Walton."

Striking the stone three times, he continued:—"In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, I lay this corner stone of St. George's Church, Walton, and may the pure doctrines of the Church of England be preached within it, the Sacraments administered according to the will of Christ, and the discipline of the Church fully maintained. Amen."

"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ who is God over all, blessed for evermore; and in whom we have redemption through His Blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Amen."

The Grand Master, then, turning to contractors Lang & Hawkshaw, said,—"Gentlemen, the foundation stone of this church having been laid, I now present you with the plans and specifications, in full confidence that as faithful workmen, you will follow them in such a manner that the building may rise in order, harmony and beauty, so that, when completed, it may establish your reputation as skilful builders, and give entire satisfaction to those who entrusted the work to you for its due fulfilment."

Excellent addresses, for which we have not space, were presented, and suitable replies were given. The company then adjourned to Mr. John Hewett's orchard, where a splendid dinner was served by the ladies of the congregation. The tables were bountifully provided with all the delicacies and substantialities of the season. The extent, variety, and excellence of the preparation being creditable in the extreme to the ladies who provided it. Dinner was partaken of by about 600; admission, 25 cents.

Mr. Hewett is entitled to special notice for the labor he gave, with others of the congregation in preparing his orchard so comfortably for the accommodation of the visitors, and his genuine welcome and kindness to all. After all had partaken to their entire satisfaction, the genial pastor, Rev. Mr. Ryan, repaired to the platform which had been erected for the speakers and choir. He invited them to the platform. After a few selections from the choir, he opened the afternoon's proceedings by a neat and appropriate speech. He then introduced Mr. Henderson, of Blyth, who dwelt chiefly upon the extent and labors of the English Church, both in Canada and the Old World. The resident neighboring ministers were present and made good addresses. They spoke in the most friendly terms and eulogized the zeal and industry of Rev. Mr. Ryan. The Grand Master was the next speaker, and made