

The Canadian Ecclesiastical Gazette;

OR

MONTHLY CHURCH REGISTER FOR THE DIOCESES OF QUEBEC, TORONTO, AND MONTREAL.

VOLUME III.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1856.

No. 4.

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

ADDRESS OF THE LAY COMMITTEE TO THE CHURCHWARDENS OF THE DIFFERENT RURAL MISSIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC, TO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE CONGREGATIONS WHOM THEY REPRESENT.

Resolution adopted by the Central Board of the Church Society 10th January 1856.

That the Lay Committee be requested to address a Circular Letter to the Churchwardens and Congregations of the Rural Parishes and Stations, urging upon them the duty of carrying out their part of the condition connected with the gratuity to the Clergy, attaching to such Circular a list of those Parishes which have complied with the condition."

In compliance with the resolution adopted by the Central Board of the Church Society, the Lay Committee, whose particular duty it is to attend to the financial affairs of the Corporation and to the proper support of the Clergy, now proceed to bring under your notice and that of the Congregation which you represent, the duty and necessity of more regular and continued efforts to increase the very scanty incomes of the Rural Clergy than have hitherto been generally made. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, the channel through which for so many years the Christian liberality of Churchmen in England has reached us, has some time ago signified its intention not only not to extend, but gradually to diminish until entirely withdrawn, the aid hitherto afforded in providing for the support of our Missionaries, in order to extend assistance to newer and poorer Colonies, and the prospect of increasing funds for the use of the Church through the gradual augmentation of the value of Clergy Reserves has been suddenly terminated by the secularisation of that property, leaving for her only a sum sadly inadequate to her present and still more to her future wants. The members of the Church in this Diocese must therefore prepare themselves for an amount of exertion for the support of the Clergy to which they have hitherto been unaccustomed, and it may reasonably be hoped that instead of repining at the prospects, those who love her will rather be thankful that the time has been delayed, till from the gradual advance of the

country, its inhabitants may be expected cheerfully to acquiesce in the decision which will, within a few years, transfer to others more necessitous that assistance which they have so long enjoyed.

The Central Board of the Society having become convinced that the gradually increasing price of most of the necessaries of life, while it tended to enrich the farmer, unfortunately only added to the already existing privations of the Clergy, by diminishing their means of support in an exactly corresponding degree, resolved in 1854, to pay to each Clergyman in the Rural Districts whose income did not exceed £125 currency the sum of £12 10s. In 1855, after mature consideration, the Board resolved that, in order to excite a self-supporting spirit in the members of the Church, a grant of £10 each should be made to the Clergy so soon as their Congregations had contributed £10, either in money or its equivalent in produce &c., for their use, in addition to any regular payment to which they may have by previous arrangement been entitled. In this manner a much needed addition of £20 per annum would be made to the stipends of the Clergy; and although the Central Board were by no means disposed to consider this an adequate provision, it was looked upon as a commencement, which would be within the means of the poorest mission in the Diocese. From the late period in 1855 at which this measure was decided on, its success has not yet been fairly tested, although a considerable number of Parishes have promptly responded to the call. The period for the completion of the payment on the part of the Congregations has been extended to the 1st May next, and the principal object of this appeal is earnestly to press upon you and the Congregation you represent the duty of providing the small amount required. In some settlements, in consequence of a vacancy in the mission, or of the appointment of the Clergyman towards the end of the year 1855, it will not be necessary to collect the sum required till towards the end of the present year, if the means at the disposal of the Society enable it to make a similar grant for 1856; but it is to be hoped that no settlement will, by abstaining from doing its proper share, prevent its Clergy-

man from receiving the sum which the Society is prepared to pay him for 1855, so soon as his flock have performed their part of the work. The members of the Church Society who reside in this City of Quebec have an especial right to urge upon their Brethren in the country the duty of liberality and self sacrifice, because, while much the greater portion of the income of the Society is raised among them, it is provided by a rule of the Society, adopted at their own instance, that not a farthing of that income can be expended for any purpose within the limits of the city.

The Lay Committee, who are necessarily residents of Quebec, most earnestly and affectionately urge upon you and the Congregation you represent the duty and necessity of providing by subscriptions and regular payments for this special purpose; and for its regular yearly increase if possible. It is as improper as it must be unpleasant for the Clergy to be compelled, as they sometime are, to take any part in the collection of the monies they are to receive. It is as much to the advantage of the laity as their own, that they should be enabled to devote the whole of their time to the sacred duties of their office, and that they should as much as possible be exempted from all anxiety about, or connexion with, pecuniary affairs.

So desirable a state of things might easily be secured by affectionate Congregations, well represented by zealous and efficient Churchwardens. Who can be more interested in the comfortable support and ease of mind of the Clergy with reference to education and prospects of their families, than the laity among whom they minister? If each member of the Church would only carefully examine into the amount which he contributes towards her, however small that may be, he would in the great majority of cases feel humbled at the result. How small a sum paid annually by each family would suffice to provide in each Parish or Mission for a comfortable addition to the limited income of the Clergyman, for the erection of a substantial and decent parsonage, where none now exists; for the building of a Schoolhouse and the support of a competent schoolmaster, without whose previous labours the future instructions of the Clergyman are so much lessened in value and effect. For these