

lem all the followers of Jesus; and for ages they had to struggle, a feeble company, against the giant powers of Jew and Gentile. Still, like the expanding cloud which rose at first so diminutive from the sea, they multiplied and grew: the Gospel has triumphed, and is triumphing still. Its "sound has gone out into all lands, and its words unto the ends of the world."

From the signs of the past, my brethren, we have confidence in the promises of the future. We take to our hearts the belief, that the truth of God and its holy influences will spread, until all the blind shall see, and all the careless be awakened, and all the sinful be converted, until all shall know the Gospel's "joyful sound;" until "all the ends of the world shall remember themselves and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Him."

These are our great points of interest,—the subjects of most instructive teaching gleaned from such texts as these. They are full of meaning, full of consolation: they teach us "not to despise the day of small things,"—those little droppings which swell by and by into streams and rivers that make glad the city of God.

How applicable is all this, my brethren, to our own condition here as a Church,—to its faint beginnings, and its after progress.—Here the "little one has become a thousand," the "day of small things" has swelled into an age of momentous import. From a few scattered labourers pursuing their lonely work hither and thither, with miles of waste and forest intervening, we have grown into five distinct Dioceses, each with their full organization, and taking, as here, combined action for the cause of the Redeemer.

We have sprung, as it were, from a condition of infancy to that of full manhood,—with a self-dependence and self-reliance, which indicates a conscious strength and influence.—The synodical action of Dioceses seems a natural result of our self-dependent condition. Severed formally, as we are, from all connexion with the State, we must of necessity adopt some system for combined action as concerns at least the temporal interests of the Church. But the best institutions require time for their practical development; experience alone can test the value of the best human organizations. So for what we have, in this Province, deliberately adopted, we must hope the best, and make to work for the best, by earnestness of action combined with pureness and singleness of purpose.

With the existence of Diocesan Synods, we may assuredly hail as a peculiar benefit the provision for a combined action of the Church in the establishment of a Provincial Synod. The possible evils of separate legislation will be corrected by this great union of counsels and interests. The impulsiveness or the tardiness which single bodies may evince, will be restrained or caused by their occasional union in one great work. The faults of the individual will be amended through the wisdom and experience of the many. The selfishness which a state of isolation engenders, will be thrown off by this sympathetic binding of the whole in one grand object for the spread and prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Such unitedness of thought and action will aid in promoting the unity of the Church, tame down asperities of feeling; and blend into a better harmony diversities of opinion. This action of mind upon mind, this union of affections and labours for one common object, must help to bring about a mutual respect and mutual love. Strangers comparatively before, we become brothers now,—one household, with one great aim,—the salvation of souls.

And we have points, my brethren, of vast importance to deliberate upon; we can give, if we do no more, a start to many enterprises for the

Church's good.—Foremost amongst these, I conceive, is the consideration of the revival of the distinct work of the Order of Deacons. For this the heart of the Church has long been yearning, the want has been intensely felt, and only the difficulties of accomplishment, in obstructions offered through the conventional peculiarities of the times, have prevented the success for which all are hoping. A leading difficulty is in respect to the class of men it might be expedient, and at the same time profitable, to employ in this order; whether we may, in certain cases, safely lower the standard in regard to education and social position, in order to secure that accession to the ministerial ranks for which all are anxious.—This, however, is not the time in which to discuss the subject; I can merely advert to the need,—I may add, the duty,—of endeavouring to effect something.

In the primitive times, the order of Deacons had a distinct and assigned work; in after ages, they were an institution with special duties marked out; and it is only in comparatively modern times that their distinctiveness has faded out from at least one branch of the Church of Christ. May it be the privilege and honour of the present generation to have it effectually and fully restored!

Every other religious body seems to recognize the necessity of such an order of ministers; without the special designation, they are using the machinery, and it is obvious to them that the work of ministering and of teaching cannot be accomplished successfully without it.

Systematic and steady work of a ministerial character, is what we want for the growth and efficiency of the Church. The priestly order,—for practically, we have none below it,—is wholly unequal to the due accomplishment of that work. The duty of this order mainly is, to arrange and superintend, to guide and counsel; to teach, and exhort, and minister in the more public and general way. We require, subordinately to them, a ministering body who can reach the spiritual wants of every class of our people more closely, and intimately, who will help to bring the work and duties of religion as much as possible into the every day life. As it is, the chasm is often times too wide between the pastor and the more humble members of his flock. There may be, as there usually is, strong mutual love and confidence between them; but this becomes too formal, and fails in personal weight and influence, where the ministerings must of necessity be so infrequent. Christians desire more close, and steady, and sympathetic communications, and, these unsupplied, they are prone to seek communion where, with admitted defects and failings, these natural cravings of the soul can be indulged. The Diaconate, rightly supplied, might be found the "missing link" between the pastor and his flock,—the intermediate bond, which is to hold all together in strong and mutual affection, in harmony of action, in united work for God's glory and the saving of souls.

Another point to which, I conceive, our zealous efforts should, as early as possible, be directed, is the formation of parochial or diocesan endowments,—the organization at least of some established fund,—in aid of the support of the ministry. We must faithfully apply ourselves to this duty, if we would rescue the Church and her ministers from the degradation and the disasters of the purely voluntary system of support. This is rarely by itself successful, and the world to that honest sense of independence, which it is so natural in all to cherish, and which is so essential to the every fidelity of the Christian minister, combined with the personal disappointments and sufferings which, under that system, are almost uniformly felt, are, it is to be feared, keeping from our ranks the choicest of our youth,

and driving them to other occupations. At the same time, under its influence, the Church itself must suffer in loss of dignity and social power,—in the loss of that high tone in its ministry, which an educated clergy with full independence of action can alone ensure.

But I can only touch briefly upon points where we all feel deeply; deeply, keenly indeed, when the wish and hope is in so many quarters ardently expressed of training some promising child to the ministry of the Church, but where the carrying out of the pious purpose threatens so dark a future,—the lowering of social position, poverty in its most humiliating form, as its almost certain condition.

But I must not forestall the work of our deliberative assembly by any thing like discussion, and shall content myself with these merely suggestive remarks. Thoughts will crowd upon us in contemplation of the high and solemn work before us; but I must draw to a conclusion with a little further practical application of our text.

Between the faint beginnings and the mighty issues that it suggests, we have room and opportunity for patience, hope and trust. We look forward to those results which God, in His goodness, rarely fails to vouchsafe; yet while hope, in the inner man, is like a perennial fountain, never exhausted, always bubbling forth, still there is as much of doubt and fear as will serve to make us watchful; enough of distrust and uncertainty to keep us "instant in prayer." Though hope is always uppermost, and confidence is never lost in the coming issues of God's good Providence, the very little we ourselves can do,—the vastness of the contrast between our own beginnings and the results which are owing all to God,—must be constantly teaching us our helplessness and dependence, and causing us to cling more closely to our great Protector.

This is the rule in all our spiritual state and strivings. The beginnings of the Christian life are small, the droppings of grace in the infant soul may be long in showing signs of promise, or indications of fruit. A much superior blessing was manifested first by the slight test of tokens: the fertilizing of the earth, and the removal of a famine, was indicated by a speck from the sea not larger than a man's hand. We can be sure that God's work of grace will go on, if we are but true to our own responsibilities and duties. We must not be inert or inactive in either case, though all the blessing is from God,—the blessing on the land, the blessing on our souls,—yet neither will be assured to us without our own cooperation. Let man's industry be stayed, and neither rain nor sunshine will secure the harvest; and so, if there be idleness or negligence in spiritual duties, the work of grace will stop.

Though all is of the Lord, there must be a congenial work with His,—prayer, the use of ordinances, constant penitence, a watchful faith, a holy walk of life. To omit this, is to turn our backs upon the gift,—to go in a direction contrary to what the spirit prompts and teaches. We must beware that we drown not the grace of God in the whirl and vortex of the world's frivolities. We must take care that his Spirit be not stifled amidst the thorns and tares which are a thickening crop about us. There must be no thoughtless, wayward hurrying on the road of life; but watchfulness and caution step by step. The pressure of the multitude to do evil, we must avoid; nor catch at the world's enervating delights as we pass along. The goal must be kept in view,—the prize of our high calling, treasure in heaven, else the gift of grace will drop from us, and the unrestrained way of our heart lead to death eternal.

The choicest lesson of our text is encouragement to strive and pray. None of God's works