

THE FORTY-SIXTH REPORT OF THE D. C. S. OF NEW BRUNSWICK.

THIS Report for the year ending in June, 1881, has just been received, and presents in its arrangement several features of improvement over past years. The report of the ex-Treasurer, Mr. S. Schofield, deserves especial mention for the very full and clear statements pertaining to the affairs of the Society, enabling every reader to form a correct and intelligent idea of the funds and management of the Society's business. It is a matter of regret that neither the resolutions of the Synod nor the personal request of the Bishop expressed on several occasions has led to statistics being forwarded from all the Parishes in the Diocese. No accurate report can be made on account of the absence of reports from some of the city Parishes and from some in the country. This neglect shows not only apathy on the part of those concerned, but is also a disregard of the express desire of the Bishop and a plain resolution of the Synod.

The statistics given are suggestive, and form a curious study. Some Parishes take a very unexpected position, and members of the B. H. M. might well spend an hour or two in analyzing the lists. The Parishes having over 100 communicants are Trinity, St. Mark, St. Paul, St. Luke, in St. John; Carleton, with Fairville, Fredericton, Chatham, Hampton, Kingston, Moncton, Richmond, St. Andrews, Rothesay, Sussex and Woodstock. Carleton reports the largest number of baptisms again this year—58. The next is Weldford, with 43. The Parishes reporting over 100 children in the Sunday School are the city churches and Fredericton, Carleton, Moncton, Stanley, Sussex, Westfield and St. Andrews. The largest net gains in communicants were Woodstock, 36; Upham, 31; Sussex, 29; Moncton, 21; Richmond, 19.

In the list of Parish contributions for all Church purposes, we meet with some surprising results. We append a list of Parishes raising \$500 or over, with their reported communicants:—

Parish.	Contributions.	Communicants.
Chatham.....	\$1509.96.....	149
The Cathedral.....	1697.70.....	300
Moncton.....	1435.00.....	101
Dorchester, }	1400.00.....	74
Woodstock, }		243
Sackville.....	1300.00.....	50
Weldford.....	1020.00.....	20
Richmond.....	860.00.....	138
Westfield, }	800.00.....	61
Carleton, }		94
Sussex.....	776.00.....	149
Springfield.....	773.00.....	96
St. Martin's.....	750.00.....	53
Stanley.....	720.00.....	40
Pt. DuChene.....	650.00.....	25
Kingston.....	640.00.....	197

The list of confirmations is not complete. 355 are reported as confirmed, but there are several Parishes who neglected to report. On the whole the Report is an encouraging one, and we hope it will be studied by the members of the Church in New Brunswick. There is an omission in it which is probably an oversight. The list of deceased life members does not appear. It is well to keep green the memory of these worthies of the Church, who, since the formation of the Society, have had their names recorded in the lists, and we trust their names will appear next year again.

THE REVISED VERSION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

A Paper read by the REV. D. SMITH at a Rural Deanery Meeting, held at Cow Bay, on St. Luke's Day, 1881.

When I undertook to prepare a paper on the Revised Version of the New Testament for discussion at our present meeting, this Version had just been placed in the hands of the public. Its issue had been awaited with great eagerness by scholars versed in textual criticism and skilled in the Greek language, anxious to see with what fidelity the Revisers had adhered to their "Principle and Rule," to introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version consistently with faithfulness, and by the much larger class of general readers, who had but little idea of the nature of the Revisers' work, and the limits within which it lay, and whose anxiety was proportionate to their lack of knowledge. On its appearance it was received with avidity; and almost before the ordinary reader had begun to compare it with the Version so long in use and so endeared to all, the press, religious and secular, Church and Nonconformist, Roman Catholic and Jewish, teemed with

critiques more or less able and acute, and manifesting more or less knowledge of the different branches of the Revisers' labour, some extravagantly laudatory, others erring in the direction of undue depreciation; but the majority, while differing from each other, perhaps, as to particular alterations of text or of rendering, agreeing in the verdict that, while there seemed to be many needless departures from their own "Principle and Rule" before mentioned, the Revisers had given what, as a whole, was the best representation of the original Scriptures that had ever been placed in the hands of the children of the Church.

Now one cannot but be influenced in some measure by what one reads, and the process of assimilation is so subtle and continuous that it is difficult, if not impossible, to trace back a thought, an opinion, a conviction to its source, and recount the various steps which have led to the formation of a mature judgment. I cannot, therefore, say that I have not been influenced by the criticisms on the Revised Version which I have read. But in the preparation of this paper I have endeavoured to form an independent judgment; and this it will be my labour to express, not with the expectation that I shall have your concurrence in everything that I may say, but with the hope that it will provoke discussion, and so tend to what we all desire, the greater elucidation of the truth.

I. At the beginning of my paper I would briefly touch upon the necessity or desirability of revising the Scriptures. When twenty-five years ago, through the able and eloquent advocacy of Canon Selwyn, the question was brought into prominence, both Convocation and Parliament were unwilling to support the scheme of Revision by means of a Royal Commission. And when in February, 1870, the late Bishop Wilberforce succeeded in carrying through the Convocation of Canterbury a resolution to the effect that a Committee of both Houses should be appointed, to consider and report upon the desirableness of revising the Authorized Version of the New Testament (the resolution was afterwards extended to the Old Testament), the Convocation of the Northern Province of York refused to follow the lead thus set to them; and to many, even of those conversant with the Original Scriptures, the project seemed to involve two dangers—the danger of too free handling of the language and text of the Bible, and the danger of unsettling the minds of many good and pious people, to whom, unacquainted as they were, with the facts pertaining to the reception, collection, and preservation of the various books, admissions that there were inaccuracies in the Authorized Version would seem almost like the surrender of the citadel of the faith, everything pertaining to which they had been taught to deem impregnable. And even yet the sound of such misgivings has not wholly passed away. From time to time we hear them faintly re-echoed.

But to me it seems that, so far from unsettling the minds of good and devout people, the tendency of the present Revision, and the discussions to which it has given rise, will be to remove apprehensions which they may have entertained, and to place their faith in the New Testament on a more rational and intelligent basis. From every quarter they had heard of mistranslations and doubtful passages in the Authorized Version. Unbelievers had taunted them with errors in the text of the Scriptures, which text they had been taught to consider perfect. Christians of other denominations had disputed the correctness of the rendering, as well as the exposition, of passages adduced for controversial purposes. Their own ministers had repeatedly told them from the pulpit that such and such passages were not correctly translated, and had then proceeded to give other renderings, in some cases supported by good authority, in others, perhaps, suggested by imperfect knowledge and faulty scholarship. Scholars had put forth new translations of some, or of all, the Books of the New Testament, in which were many deviations from the Authorized Version, and, perhaps, disagreements with each other. All these things conspired to unsettle men's minds, in their ignorance of the facts of the case, as to the perfection and authenticity of the Scriptures; and apprehensions and anxieties were the greater in inverse proportion to the knowledge which men possessed of the limits within which sound and rational criticism must confine itself. It cannot, therefore, but be a great relief to the readers generally of the New Testament to be told, on what is really very great authority (whether the Revised Version be adopted

by Convocation or not), what the utmost changes required by sound criticism really are; and to find that, after all have been made, they still possess the New Testament in substantially the same form that their forefathers did—that while there is here the omission of a familiar passage often used as a convenient and telling proof of some doctrine (which, however, does not rest upon such passage, but is fully proved elsewhere), and there the alteration of an important passage, by such alteration made the more clear or the more obscure, as the case may be, and numerous lesser alterations concerning the necessity and desirability of which there will be many differences of opinion, yet none of the facts and doctrines of the Gospel are affected by such omissions and changes. And the truer knowledge towards which the present Revision will be the means of directing many, concerning the origin, reception, preservation, and transmission of the Sacred Writings, cannot but tend to place their faith on a sounder and less assailable base than it has before occupied.

And of even greater weight is the duty and obligation to the interests of truth. The Church is the "Witness and Keeper of Holy Writ," and as such is bound not only to instruct her children in the Scriptures, but also to provide that they shall be presented to them as nearly as possible as they left the hands of the Apostles and Evangelists. If, therefore, it be proved, almost to demonstration, that some portions of what she is offering as Scripture are not really so, and that she is giving her sanction to renderings and translations which her own ministers, without scruple or hesitation, condemn and alter, if not amend, should any inconvenience, any imaginary dangers prevail to draw her away from endeavouring to ascertain what alterations are required in the interests of truth, and when these are ascertained to make them. To me it is perfectly clear that duty, as well as expediency, called for revision.

It has been objected, indeed, that the materials and scholarship necessary for the work were wanting, and admissions that textual criticism was still in its infancy have been adduced in support of the objection, and thus made to bear a significance which they were not intended to bear. But textual criticism and Greek scholarship have, at all events, made enormous advance since the days of King James I.; and the fact that future generations may possess greater qualifications is surely no reason why the present should not contribute, so far as it is able, to place before the children of the Church a more accurate Version than we have used. If new manuscripts of weight are found, or other authorities, which show that the present Revised Version needs revision, well, by all means, let it be revised.

(To be continued.)

Correspondence.

MR. LANG AGAIN.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—The action of Rev. Gavin Lang, in conducting Service and preaching with surplice, etc., in Archdeacon Read's Church, at Rustico, has been made the subject of considerable discussion and comment in late numbers of the GUARDIAN. I was in Rustico the Sunday Mr. Lang preached, though not present at the Service, and as he displayed a most liberal broad-minded, Christian spirit, not only on that occasion, but also in the Services regularly held by him at the Seaside hotel, I have felt much interest in the matter, and, therefore, ask space in your columns to express a doubt as to the absolute wisdom of a Canon which forbids, under all circumstances earnest Christian men, such as Mr. Lang, to officiate in our Churches. The Canon may be very well in England, where, practically speaking, every member of the Church lives within easy walking distance from some town, village, or hamlet, where the Services are held as regularly as Sunday comes round, but in this Dominion the case is quite different. Here, we frequently have Parishes vacant for months, even years at a time, and their Churches closed, owing to the difficulty of procuring clergymen to keep their doors open. I have known such cases, and I remember seeing one Church with the windows boarded up, because there was no "lawful bishop, priest, or deacon" to minister to the spiritual wants of its congregation. The Parishes also, in a new country, necessarily embrace a large area, and frequently, two, three, or even more, Churches have to depend solely upon the exertions of our clergyman, and it is a physical impossibility for him to hold a Service every Sunday in each. The consequence is, that in some, the doors are opened every alternate Sunday only, others remain closed for three weeks at a time; and there are instances, I believe, of congregations being forced to content themselves with having the Services of their Church once a month, and this,

too, in Parishes that are not vacant. What is the natural, the inevitable result? Is it not that people become unsettled in their religious beliefs, gradually fall away from the faith of their fathers, and insensibly become absorbed into the ranks of any other body of Christians, which is able to afford them more frequent opportunities for attending public worship, or, what is worse, become altogether indifferent to religion. If what I have written is true, and every one who knows this Dominion, especially these Maritime Provinces, must admit that it is true, is that a wise Canon, which, under such circumstances, forbids us to avail ourselves of the labours of earnest men, who are sufficiently liberal-spirited to lay aside, for the occasion, the customs of their own Churches, and to adopt the forms and ceremonies of the Church of England, in order that the congregations of our vacant Parishes or Churches may be enabled more frequently to enjoy the Services of that Church, and hear the word of God from pulpits which would otherwise be unoccupied? Is it wise, nay, is it right, or in accord with the true spirit of Christianity that we should keep our Church doors closed Sunday after Sunday; that we should suffer hundreds and thousands of our people to continue, week after week, without an opportunity of hearing the "good tidings" which we are ever anxious to send to the far-away homes of the heathen; that we should allow men and women to wander away, seeking from others that spiritual teaching which we have not the means to give them; that we should permit so many of our fellow-Churchmen to lapse into carelessness and indifference to religion, rather than that we should strike from the statutes of our Church a law which will not allow us to accept help from men who are willing to drop for the time the usages of their own Churches, and to adopt the Services of ours, that they may minister to the religious wants of those who are in spiritual need? To me, I confess, it appears infinitely better that the people should hear the Service of our Church read even within the sacred building by one who does not belong to its fold, than that the Parishioners should never hear those Services at all.

In what I have written, let it be clearly understood that I refer merely to the ordinary Services, and not to the Sacraments of the Church.

Yours, &c.,

A. B. WARBURTON.

Charlottetown, P. E. I., 25th Oct., 1881.

RHODE ISLAND AND THE CHURCH CONGRESS.

(To the Editors of the Church Guardian.)

SIRS,—Cotton Mather, in his *Magnalia*, describes the state of Rhode Island colony, in 1695, as "a collours of Antinomians, Familists, Analapists, Antisabbatarians, Arminians, Socinians, Quakers, Ranters, and everything but Roman Catholics and true Christians; *bonna (sic) terra, mala gens.*" How would that worthy Puritan have opened his eyes had he seen how the Church has grown there within two hundred years; for whereas in that colony, together with Narraganset, Humpfrey, in the early quarter of the eighteenth century only reports 30 communicants, Church statistics for 1879-80 give 6,388. In this State, in its principal city Providence, is the seventh Church Congress to be held. The subjects destined to engage attention are of an eminently diversified character; indeed, rarely has so varied a programme been placed before the organization. Many of the subjects examined in Congress must necessarily evoke conflicting opinions; we may cite, without fear of contradiction, such topics as "The Revision of the King James' Version of the New Testament, and 'The Relation of Parishes to the Dioceses, and of Dioceses to the General Convention in the matter of Jurisdiction and Representation.'" It may, therefore, be a matter of gratification to know that this body is invested with no authority to enforce its decisions, else the result might be disastrous to the peace of the Church. There was a time, as can be seen by our quotation from Mather, when it would have been hopeless to anticipate such an assembly, aye, even earlier in the nineteenth century it might have been considered mythical to have endeavoured to gather such a meeting together. But events have shown the importance of these annual reunions. The period, short though it may be considered by some, during which this Congress has existed, gives evidence of its necessity, and may be accepted as a proof of the quickened spiritual activity of the Church. Year by year her vitality increases; as year by year she 'enlarges the place of her tent, lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes.' Corner-stones of new Church edifices, consecrations of older testify to her activities. In the far West Dakota is asking to be admitted as a Diocese; in the extreme South Florida is making vast strides; wherever, indeed, the Church's sanctifying influence is felt, there she makes the desert rejoice and 'blossom as the rose.' In the Diocese of Easton has been begun an important work, nothing less than at each Convocation a special service is devoted to the colored race, a proceeding which cannot fail to succeed, when, as in that little corner of the large see of Maryland, it has such a grand, lovely and hard-working Bishop at each of its sessions. May every other Diocese follow in the grand movement.

B. T. H. MAYCOCK.

Millersville, Queen Anne Co., Md., Oct. 10th, 1881.