

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

BY JOSEPHINE SMITH WOOD.

In marvellous light, 'mid a seraph train,
St. Raphael his banner unfurled,
And sang to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plain

Good tidings of joy to the world.
For that message sweet we listen again,
And for the angels' song of peace to men.

From a far-off land His angels of grace
Floated down through the midnight air,
Past those beautiful worlds in realms of space
To this earth and a stable bare;
And a glory streamed from that land afar,—
'Twas the radiant light of the Morning Star.

They sang, as they swept through the starlit sky,

"Great joy and good tidings we bring,
The Saviour is come, unto you is born,
In David's fair city, a King!"
And the heavenly courts with rapture rang,
And of peace and good-will the angels sang.

Then a strange, bright star, blazed forth in the night,

But its beams fell soft on the place
Where a new-born Babe, in the heavenly light,
Looked with love in a virgin's face,
And a glory shone from that manger bed,
'Twas the light of love 'round the Christ Child's head.

The sweet mother worshipped the King of Kings,

In her Babe on that couch of straw;
And the angels stood by with folded wings,
While low, knelt the shepherds in awe;
And a radiance, fairer than noonday, spread
And filled with its glory the low, rude shed.

The news is still sweet as in olden time,
It brings us a blessing each year,
And the glad bell rings with a joyous chime
For the Birth of the Christ-Child dear,
And a light still beams from the Morning Star,
To lighten our way to that land afar.

December, 1891.

News from the Home Field.

Diocese of Nova Scotia.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

CLERICAL ASSOCIATION.—The twenty-third quarterly meeting of the above Association was held at the Rectory, Milton, on Wednesday, 6th Dec. The meeting was preceded by a service held in Milton church the previous evening, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Forbes, H. Harpor, T. Lloyd and T. B. Reagh. At the morning session, Rev. W. Hamlyn reported that, in accordance with a resolution passed at a previous, a letter signed by the President (Rev. J. Simpson) and himself, had been forwarded to the S. P. G. London, Eng., urging the claims of the Prince Edward Island country parishes, and deprecating the withdrawal or reduction for the present of the annual grant made by the Society. On motion of Rev. T. B. Reagh, it was resolved that in future the December meeting of the Association should be held if possible, in a town parish, on account of the possible inclemency of the weather at that season of the year. Rev. W. Hamlyn invited the Association to meet at St. Paul's rectory in February next. The portion of Scripture discussed was St. John xiii 19 to end. The discomfort of travelling on so stormy a day was amply compensated for by the kind hospitality extended towards their guests by

Mr. and Mrs. Reagh, who did all in their power to secure the comfort of the visiting clergy, their kindness being fully appreciated by all present.

Diocese of Quebec.

SHERBROOKE.

The anniversary of the *St. Francis District Association* of the Church Society of the Diocese of Quebec was held at St. Peter's Church in this city on Tuesday and Wednesday, 5th and 6th Dec. It was an occasion of great interest.

The Bishop of the Diocese, Dr. Dunn, whose presence is always inspiring, and 24 clergy were in attendance throughout. On Wednesday many of the laity of the Church from the city itself and the country parts were also present.

The Anniversary Service on Tuesday evening was very impressive and edifying. The service was heartily rendered, the large body of clergy forming a very effective choir. The attendance though not so large as in former years, was good, and the sermon preached by Rev. W. T. Forythe, of Stanstead, was admirable. The preacher's text was "In due time we shall reap if we faint not." He traced the progress of the Church in the district from small beginnings in the past to our present condition and strength and vitality. And he drew from this retrospect lessons of encouragement and hope for the future. He reminded his hearers that all true progress is wont to be slow, a growth in fact; and that it will not do to yield to the spirit of impatience which looks for immediate results. He then dwelt upon certain difficulties which face those who go forth sowing in their Master's name. And finally he described the Christian's and especially the clergyman's duty—as that of up-lifting Christ in and through the sacramental ordinances of His Church—not the Church alone, for a Christless Church is a vain thing to save a soul, nor yet Christ without the Church, but both, for Christ's method of saving souls is through union with the Church, which is His Body. To present Christ and the Church as they should be presented, clergy and laity alike should strive so to live that their example will draw others to their belief and practice.

After the celebration of Holy Communion on Wednesday morning the Deanery Board, composed of clergy and laity, began its meetings, which lasted—with the usual intermission for luncheon—till six o'clock in the evening. The discussions which took place at this Board were extremely practical and useful, bearing as they did upon such topics as "Lay Help," "Church Extension," "Church Education," and "Church Music," etc. Several papers of great interest and value were read by prominent lay workers. The benefit of such conferences as these, in which clergy and laity meet together for mutual counsel upon topics connected with the progress and efficiency of the Church, cannot be overrated.

In the evening the annual missionary meeting took place in St. Peter's Church Hall. The hall was crowded. Stirring hymns sung with heart and zeal gave life and interest to the occasion. The following facts and figures are gleaned from the report of the Association which was read by the secretary immediately after the opening formalities:

There are evidences of growth and increasing vitality in the Church through the district. Two or three new churches have been built in the course of the year. Church property in various forms has increased. More attention had been paid than in former years to education and music. Lay help is developing. There is a demand for the establishment of at least three or four new missions with resident clergymen.

The approximate sum raised for the year is \$27,293.29, being \$1,484.01 more than last year.

There were two addresses. The first speaker, Rev. E. A. W. King, of Waterville, in a brief but telling address made a strong plea for God's ancient people, the Jews, the people of the promise, through whom we received the Truth, of whom came not only the first Apostles and Christians, but even our Blessed Lord Himself. We cannot divest ourselves of responsibility with regard to them.

The speaker of the evening was the Lord Bishop of Quebec, Dr. Dunn, who in his own bright, genial, graphic style, told with many an illustrative anecdote and incident the wonderful story of his work in South Acton, now a part of London. For nearly an hour the Bishop held the closest attention of his audience, impressing upon them, not merely the greatness of the work that has been done under God through his instrumentality upon a rough, careless and irreligious people, but of the greatness of the Church's agencies through which such a work could be accomplished.

It was a most successful and uplifting meeting, and a fitting close to an anniversary of unusual interest.

The offerings were given as usual to the Missionary Diocese of Algoma.—*Sherbrooke Gazette*.

BARFORD.

The Bishop's recent visit to this Mission was helpful to the Incumbent in many ways, and was hailed with delight by all. His Lordship arrived at Norton Mills at 12.45 p.m., Friday; visited about twelve families during the afternoon, and preached to a good congregation in St. Paul's church, Stanhope, at 7.30 p.m. Friday night was spent at Dixville, and the greater part of Saturday was taken up in visiting. Saturday evening found his Lordship at Mr. Perry's, Perryboro', where several members of the congregation assembled to meet their chief Pastor. Sunday's work began with a celebration of the Holy Communion and a sermon in the Church of the Advent at 7.30 a.m. There were upwards of forty present, about thirty of whom communicated. The service seemed to carry one back to Apostolic times, when the primitive Christians used to assemble early in the morning on the first day of the week for "the breaking of the bread." A drive of ten miles and Dixville, the headquarters of the Mission, was reached just in time for the 11 o'clock service in St. Cuthbert's church. At this service one adult was baptized, six were confirmed, and there was a good attendance at the Holy Table. The Bishop's plain, earnest and practical address to the candidates before and after Confirmation clearly set forth the Scriptural authority for the rite, as well as the fact that from Apostolic times Baptism, Confirmation and the Holy Communion have not only been in use in the Christian Church, but have been reckoned among the essentials. The church was packed and the addresses were listened to with rapt attention. At 4 p.m. three candidates were confirmed at St. Paul's church, Stanhope; and to describe the addresses and congregation would simply be to repeat what has just been mentioned. His Lordship returned to Dixville for the evening service, and preached a most plain and forcible sermon on the Holy Communion. Thus was brought to a close a day long to be remembered in the history of the Mission, and it is to be hoped that the good seed sown will bring forth much fruit to the honour and glory of God. On Monday morning, after having visited the village school, the good Bishop took the train for Danville.

His Lordship expressed himself as being highly pleased with everything in the Mission, except that he thought the Parsonage ought to have a furnace, which want he hoped would be supplied before another winter.