

At length the day of confirmation is at hand. The season of preparation is closing. Of instructions and admonitions, and encouragements, and persuasions, there is an end. There is an end, too, for the most part, of suspense. They, who are so anxiously and lovingly called, have made their decision. The names of the prepared are given in, and the bishop arrives. He finds the pastor always kind, and hearty in his welcome: sometimes full of joy and thankfulness for the rich blessing that has crowned his ministry, sometimes weary with labour, and not a little saddened by disappointment. More than one pastor I have seen temporarily broken down in health, by these labours and anxieties. Arriving as the bishop does, at such a moment, when the pastor is fresh from these special efforts, full of interest about the members of his flock, nothing is more natural than that they should commune together concerning what has been passing in the parish, and concerning the duties, the trials, and the instrumentalities of the pastoral office. No subjects can be more welcome to the bishop, or more sure to awaken all his sympathy. Those conferences lay open to him day after day the secrets of those labours and trials of the pastoral office, of which the world knows nothing, or only a very little which lies upon the surface. And hence it is, that, as I have said, when we report the general results of confirmations, we do very little toward suggesting to the laity a correct idea of what their clergy have been doing. In promotion as the laity look more closely into these things, so as to estimate them aright, the clergy will gain sympathy and support, and the church will gain life and strength. Therefore it is that I make these remarks, magnifying, but not unduly I trust, the office of my brethren.

#### SUMMARY OF EPISCOPAL ACTS.

I proceed to complete the summary of episcopal acts, leaving the full statement of particulars to be given as usual in the printed address. During the past year twenty-two candidates for Holy orders of this diocese have been admitted to the Diaconate. Two candidates of the Diocese of Virginia, and two of Western New York have also been ordained by me, at the request of the bishops of those dioceses respectively. Ten Deacons of this diocese have been advanced to the Priesthood; and one accon of Western New York has been admitted by me to the Order of Priesthood, at the request of the Bishop of that Diocese, who, greatly to my regret, was prevented by a serious injury, from attending the annual ordination in Trinity Chapel. Eight churches and chapels have been consecrated. Five corner-stones have been laid by me, besides others laid by Presbyters appointed for the purpose. One rector has been instituted. Twenty-six clergymen have been transferred by letters dimissory to other dioceses, and two have been displaced from the sacred ministry at their own request, making the loss to the diocese twenty-eight, while twenty-eight clergymen have been received into the diocese on letters dimissory, and twenty-two have been added by ordination, making a gain to the diocese of fifty. Deducting the losses by removals, depositions, and deaths, there remains a difference of fourteen added to the number of the clergy in this diocese during the past year. In looking back over the severe labours of the year, the journeys into all the remote parts of the diocese, amounting in travel to some 7,000 miles, I cannot adequately express my deep sense of the kindness I have every where received. Every provision has been made, in the most considerate manner, for conveying me over these routes which are aside from the great thoroughfares; and nothing has been wanting to promote my comfort and facilitate my labours, which warm hearts

and friendly hands could supply. In every part of the diocese there are valued friends, there are interesting circles, the impression of whose worth and kindness can never fade from my heart.

#### ANNUAL VISITATIONS HEREAFTER.

During the past year several parishes have been visited, owing to peculiar circumstances, the second time for the administration of confirmation. The few remaining parishes desiring confirmation will be visited soon after the Convention. Every parish and mission station in the diocese might have been visited with less labour and less travel than have been expended during the year, and I may add with less hurry in some instances, had the visitations been systematically arranged with regard to time and place. As I have made up my mind, that so long as things continue as they are, and so long as God shall give me the health and strength, I will hereafter visit the remote parts of the diocese, the north, the west, and the east, every year. I must ask the clergy to have the kindness to concur with me in such an orderly arrangement of my visitations as will enable me to accomplish the most for the diocese with the least expenditure of time and travel. For mere personal convenience, except as my work is facilitated, I care little. My life belongs to the diocese. I have wished that my offering of service might be without reserve or qualification, and my only anxiety is that whatever powers I may possess may be so employed as to be most useful to the work which God has given me to do.

In the course of the approaching winter I shall probably arrange a scheme of visitations covering the whole diocese. It may not, in the first instance, fix the precise day for the visitation in each parish; but it will indicate the month, and perhaps the part of the month, in which different sections of the Diocese will be visited. The experience of past years has made me somewhat extensively acquainted with the preferences of the clergy in regard to the times of visitations in their respective parishes, and I shall endeavour to do all that is compatible with the nature of a general system, to meet their wishes.

No doubt the labour of making an annual visitation in such a Diocese as this, in addition to other duties, must be very great. It may be doubted whether so frequent visitations are necessary. Prior to the Episcopate of Bishop Wainwright they had been much less frequent. In the larger towns the predecessor of Bishop Wainworth had been in the habit of assembling the candidates of several churches in one, visiting each Parish only once in three years, but in the meantime affording to the Rectors an opportunity of having candidates confirmed every year, if they desired it. But it cannot be denied that the practice in this Diocese has been, within a few years, rapidly verging toward annual visitations. My own course has, perhaps, favoured such a tendency. And something may have been due to the practice of smaller Dioceses, which, being numerous, have helped to establish a general measure for the Church at large in this country.

#### DIVISION OF THE DIOCESE

This general tendency toward more frequent visitations I have never been inclined, and am not now inclined, to discourage. For a few years longer I may hope to bear the pressure which annual visitations, duly arranged, would impose upon me. But the time must soon arrive when I shall need assistance, or when the visitations in certain portions of the Diocese must be a little less frequent, or when the Diocese must be divided. These considerations have often turned my thoughts towards the question of dividing the Diocese. I confess I can never

contemplate the measure without a feeling of extreme solicitude in regard to the interests of the Church in Northern New York. All that I said in 1859 of the insufficiency of means in that section to provide for existing and prospective needs, is true and more than true now. Unhappily there is less pecuniary ability in the Church in Northern New York at this moment than there was five years ago. Good has been done. The Church has in some respects advanced. But ever since the reverses of 1857 there has been in certain portions of the North a gradual, but visible, decline of pecuniary ability. Even in prosperous times the North requires for the support of its existing missions very much more than it contributes, although the efforts of the clergy in that section to obtain special contributions for those purposes have been peculiarly strenuous and persevering. As I remarked in 1859, "We have whole counties with only a Missionary Station in each, and not a single self-supporting Parish?" "Several of the counties, now referred to, have rather diminished in population within the last thirty years than increased." "The people are to a large extent fixed in their religious character and position." And, as I said then, "to take a section of country, in which a large majority of the points at which services are held are Mission Stations, many of them likely to continue so for an indefinite period, requiring much aid to maintain them, and in which a large majority of such parishes as are self-supporting are barely so, having little to spare for the assistance of others, with only six or eight parishes of any considerable strength; I say to take such a section of country, not likely to increase much for some time to come, in wealth, or in population, and cut it off from the main body, from which it derives a very large portion of its support, for the sake of making it a separate Diocese,—certain to be a very needy and feeble one,—that is a measure, which, in my judgment, would be a poor boon to the section of country in question, and little creditable to the Church at large." In efforts to advance the interests of the Church in Northern New York there has been no lack of enterprise and energy within the last few years. In those efforts I have myself for a long time taken an active part. I know every inch of the ground; and I know that the result of those efforts has been, not to make the Church in that section more independent, but to multiply the number of its feeble stations, and to increase its claims upon the sympathy and support of the other portions of the Diocese. No doubt the area of Northern New York is large, but I suppose many persons will concur in the sentiment of a clergyman of that section, who, speaking for some of his brethren, said in opposition to division, "we hold that a Diocese consists of souls, and not of square miles." No part of the Diocese has nobler souls than that, but he meant to say, that it is useless to allege the extent of the field, when so large a portion of it is unoccupied, and incapable of being occupied, and when the means it possesses are so inadequate to the work now being done in it.

To be Continued.

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