

of the chapels,—these and other customary doings were features of appropriate observance which are repeated, with little variety, from year to year.

The whole number of communions in the parish on Christmas day was nearly 750, of whom, so far as could be ascertained, there were nearly 300 in the Cathedral,—St. Matthew's having stood next, where there were 175.

Several pleasing instances of beneficence have, of late, been witnessed in the Diocese. A great effort has been commenced for the erection of new buildings in order to the better accommodation of the Junior Department of Bishop's College—a graft upon that College which is of great importance and of excellent promise. Subscriptions upon the spot—the Principal and other officers of the College setting, themselves a most liberal example—have been followed by efforts put in train in the cities of Quebec and Montreal (the College being common to both Dioceses,) which have opened with encouraging auguries. There are already three or four subscriptions of \$500 each.

The Finlay Asylum at Quebec, of which some account was given in a former number of this paper, is about to be transferred to a new and more advantageous site, upon which suitable buildings are to be erected. A widow lady, whose gift of \$2,000 to this institution was mentioned in the notice referred to just above, has recently given an additional sum of \$100, and \$300 have been given by one of her sons for the same object—\$2,700 from the Hamilton family, for the name is no longer any secret, and there can be no further reserve in giving it newspaper publicity.

The Rev. Mr. Housman, the minister in charge, parochially of the Cathedral congregation, has, in concert with the churchwarden in charge of the poor fund, very successfully established in the suburbs of the city a soup-kitchen in connection with the Finlay Asylum, which, in the present hard season and slackness of work, has afforded much relief to the poor.

Measures are in train for creating certain endowments of the Church in Quebec, but are not yet in that season of their advancement which would warrant any exhibition of details in the Church Journal.

The foregoing sober chronicle does not pretend to present any events of a dazzling or exciting character; but they have been such as are linked with the work of true religion, and the advance of the Church within the sphere to which they relate.—*Church Journal*.

UNITED STATES.

THE AMERICAN BISHOPS ON CHURCH MUSIC.

We have been requested by the Secretary of the House of Bishops to publish in our columns the following important circular:—

To the Editors of the Church Papers.—By request of Bishop Meade, who presided in the House of Bishops, this opinion is furnished, in anticipation of the journal, as it was the request of the Bishops that it be read to the Congregations by the several ministers—

Resolved,—That in the opinion of the House of Bishops, there is very much in the prevailing manner of conducting those parts of our public worship which require the aid of sacred music, to which the serious attention of the Clergy and their congregations should be directed—as, not only not promotive of a devout spirit, but, very injurious thereto; as directly calculated to nurture a lifeless formality, by making the congregation mere passive listeners to the musical sounds confined to the choirs, in the formation of which there is often little reference to fitness of personal character; as virtually depriving the congrega-

tion of their proper privilege of uniting with their voices in the worship of the Church when its words are sung as well as when only read; as impairing the beautiful simplicity of our public worship, and thus rendering it in the parts referred to, unadapted to the greater number of our people, and so taking therefrom one of its chief excellencies, as being *Common Prayer*, accommodated to all conditions of worshipping christian people; as causing moreover a needless delay and interruption of our morning and evening Prayer, by the introduction of music, especially such as is merely instrumental, which unprofitably and needlessly abridges the time allotted to the preaching of the word, and, by fatiguing the hearers, both in body and mind, interferes with their ability rightly to receive the same; and lastly, as creating in all these particulars, an influence which, in our opinion, is decidedly counteractive of the proper work of God's Church, as his appointed instrument of cherishing and promoting His worship "in spirit and in truth."

Resolved,—That in the opinion of the House of Bishops, the evils referred to proceed chiefly from the following causes, namely, first from an oversight of the principle that the object of Church music is not the gratification of a cultivated musical taste, but by the aid of simple and appropriate music, to cultivate devout affections among all classes of worshipping people, and to enable them to commune with one another in the united and animated expression of the same.

Secondly, from the selection by organists and choirs of such tunes and chants, as, on account of their not being sufficiently familiar to the congregation, or from their want of due simplicity, the congregation cannot be expected to unite in singing.

Thirdly, from the use of musical compositions, especially such as are called chants, which require too much time in the performance, and also from the introduction of voluntaries on the organ, before the chants, and between the verses of psalms and hymns, which, having no value, but as exhibitions of instrumental music, are wearying to the congregation.

Lastly, from the extent to which the control of this part of the worship of the Church is virtually taken out of the hands of the Rectors of Parishes, where alone the Church law has placed it, and is exercised by committees of Vestries, and chiefly by organists and choirs.

Resolved,—That in the opinion of the House of Bishops there can be no material improvement of our public worship in the particulars mentioned, except as each parish minister shall faithfully perform the duty assigned him by the law of this Church, which, in the words of the Rubric, is, that with "such assistance as he can obtain from persons skilled in music, he shall give order concerning the tunes to be sung at any time in his church, and especially shall suppress all light and unseemly music, and all indecency and irreverence in the performance."

Resolved,—That it be recommended to all the Pastors of our churches that they endeavour by all suitable measures to promote a general participation of their people, by voice, in those parts of our worship, which are sung, as well as those which are not.

Resolved,—That in the opinion of the House of Bishops, it is particularly incumbent on the Rectors in our larger and older cities, to see that the music in their churches be so conducted as to afford a wholesome example to those in our humbler and younger congregations, who naturally look to such sources for guidance, in matters of external order and expediency.

A true extract from the minutes:

Attest—LEWIS P. W. BALCH,

Secretary of the House of Bishops.

The editors of the Church papers will oblige the Secretary of the House of Bishops by publishing the above as soon as convenient.—*Church Record*.

WHAT A CHURCH PAPER IS.

(Extract from an Editorial of the New York Ch. Journal.)

It is thought that this giving of Church news is a low and comparatively unimportant work? There could not be a greater mistake. We are all One Body, and members one of another. If each little company of believers were to keep itself separate from all the rest of the world, only being careful to maintain the exercises of religion among themselves, and thus devote themselves wholly to the salvation of their own souls, they would be realizing the ideal of some of the good people who despise Church news. They would be worse than even the monks of the middle ages, who, though they did separate themselves from the world, and took no newspapers, yet loved dearly to see some traveller stop at their monastery door; and they made haste to have him in, and give abundant and hospitable cheer, and then all gathering round, they would ask him eagerly of the tidings of the brethren in all the lands and cities and villages where he had been. The instinctive desire for this sort of knowledge is deep-seated in every true christian heart,—inherent, inextinguishable. The Holy Scriptures abound with it every where; and the manifestations of it in the Epistles of the New Testament, when the Church was spreading rapidly from land to land and from people to people, are more numerous and more touching than in all the rest of the Bible put together. If we truly realize our common membership in one Body—that we are brethren, sons of one Common Father in Heaven and of one Mother Church on earth,—we shall never cease to feel a lively interest in every member of the heavenly Family every where. And it is one of the peculiar blessings of this our latter age, that the means of this intelligence,—rapid, abundant, certain, beyond the experience of all former ages,—are lavished upon us so astonishingly, by the multiplying powers of the printing press, the steam-engine, and practical electricity. These are means for renewing and restoring fraternal love and union among members of the Family. Woe be to those who pervert the very means and instruments of union, into fresh engines of division—new and more mischievous provocatives of fraternal strife.

And what a comfort it is, to all labourers in the vineyard, to know how it fares with their brethren, and how they do. If we are in trial or difficulty, it is a well-spring of sympathy to know that they are suffering also with us; or it is a compensation, in our sorrow or our failures, to know that the work of the Lord is prospering in their hands, if not in ours; and that they are gathering in large rich sheaves, even though our stony fields be barren and bare. If we are rejoicing in prosperity and success, it is delightful to know that brethren afar off are watching us, and rejoicing with us; or perhaps, it is still better for us to learn that in one place and another the hands of the brethren hang down through faintness and want, and we at once hasten out of our abundance, to give unto them liberally, as unto brethren beloved, of all things whereof they have need.

All who are members of a large family, the sons and daughters of which have been widely scattered over the world far from the ancestral roof-tree, know how delightful a part of the periodic return to the old homestead it is, to get out the bundles of letters that have been written to father and mother by the other brothers and sisters since the last visit, and read them all over in the order of their dates, so as to follow up the for-