

APPENDIX M.

To the LORD BISHOP OF FREDERICTON and the OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN SYNOD:

The Committee appointed at the last session of the Diocesan Synod to recommend to the Provincial Legislature certain modifications in the Act 50 Victoria, Cap. V., "to provide for the registration of births, deaths, and marriages," report as follows:

That on a careful consideration of the Act they were of opinion that it was not necessary to apply to the Legislature for any amendment of its provisions.

The two points submitted for the consideration of the Committee were: first with respect to the returns to be made to the District Registrar; and secondly, with respect to the registry required by the sixth section of the Act to be kept by Clergymen.

First with respect to the returns to be made by Clergymen: Whatever difficulties may have been felt by any of the Clergy in complying with some of the requirements of the tenth and thirteenth sections of the Act, relating severally to marriages and burials, (Schedules B. and C.) these difficulties have been removed by an Act passed at the last session of the Legislature (52 Vic., Cap. XI.), which repeals the sixth section of the 50 Vic., Cap. V, and substitutes a new section in place of it, which after directing that every Clergyman shall keep a register of marriages, births and deaths, as in the repealed section, declares that every Clergyman shall make returns of births and marriages not less frequently than every three months, according to the forms prescribed "so far as they are able to fill up the same."

It is therefore no longer necessary for a Clergyman to certify absolutely to the correctness of any of the facts stated in such returns, which may not be within his own personal knowledge; but he may qualify the same by stating the correctness of the statements so far as he is able to ascertain the same.

Secondly, with respect to the record or registry to be kept by the Clergy: There is no necessity for any alteration in the form already required by Canon XVII. of the Diocese. The section of the Act which requires every Clergyman to keep a registry, does not prescribe any form of registry, or direct that it shall be the same in every particular as the returns they are required to make to the Division Registrar. Indeed it is often a great help to accuracy that the same facts should be recorded in slightly different forms.

When the Registration Act came into force in January, 1888, the Chairman of your Committee, the Bishop Coadjutor, sought an interview with the Attorney General, and laid before him the forms of register required to be kept by the Clergy by Canon XVII. After careful consideration of the matter, he was good enough to write a letter