

been made, both at home and here, in not giving a sufficient degree of attention and labour to the evangelizing of the masses congregated in towns and cities;—I should like as regards our own diocese to avoid this error as far as possible."

"And yet," said Crampton, "the needs of the remoter settlements are great and urgent, and call for much commiseration and sympathy and effort to supply them."

"Undoubtedly they do," replied the Bishop; "but if we are not in a position to supply the necessities of the whole population, we must do the next best thing, and that is to carry on such ministrations as we can give in those places where they may reach and benefit the greatest number."

"But," asked Crampton, "would your lordship advocate the withdrawal of clergymen from the country in order to place them in towns?"

"I am not sure but that in some cases I should be disposed to adopt even such a step as the one you mention. If, for example, I found a clergyman labouring among a rural population of a few hundreds, while as many thousands in a town were without anything like adequate spiritual supervision, I think it would be a matter for very grave and solemn consideration whether he ought not to be withdrawn from the sphere of less importance and placed in one which was of so much greater moment. It is a heart-breaking thought that any of those for whom Our Lord died should be neglected; but if we cannot supply the wants of all, it is better that three hundred should be neglected than three thousand."

"There seems no possibility of controverting that position," observed Crampton; "and yet much as I desire to see the numbers of the clergy multiplied in Clackington, for example, I should be much distressed if to increase the privileges we at present enjoy, some rural neighborhood was to be deprived of religious ministrations altogether."

"The case of Clackington, judging from your description and that of Mr. Slowton, is certainly not as yet of such urgency as to justify such a step. Indeed, I trust that there may never be any need for *withdrawing* any of the clergy from their present spheres; but my idea is that for the future it is at once the duty and interest of the Church to endeavor to secure as

much influence as possible in the towns. It seems to me, as we are almost entirely dependent for the extension of the Church upon our own efforts, that is the only way by which to increase the number of our clergy. You tell me, for example, that you think that you are in good hopes of being able to support another clergyman in Clackington, if I can find one who would be content with small means to begin with."

"I am sanguine upon the point," said Crampton eagerly; "and I am sure that in a year or two he would have a very comfortable income."

"Can you point to any of the rural parishes in your neighborhood that could bear subdivision as well?" asked the Bishop, smiling. "Mr. Straddle, who, I think, comes from your part of the diocese, was telling me lately how very hard, large and laborious his mission was, and when I suggested its subdivision, he showed me that at present he can hardly make both ends meet, and that the inevitable result of subdivision would be, that instead of one clergyman being half starved two would be starved altogether."

"I am indeed afraid that Mr. Straddle's statement is only too correct," answered Crampton. "The Parish of Plessemwell urgently requires to be divided, but there seems no hope of such a thing in consequence of want of means to support a second clergyman."

"Exactly," said the Bishop, "therefore the wants of the good people of Plessemwell must perforce be neglected, but that is no reason why I should decline to supply those of the people of Clackington, although their case may be really less urgent than the former. If we cannot do all we desire we must do all we are able, and try to do it too, in such a way as to be most available and effective."

"Unquestionably we ought," said Crampton; "and I assure your Lordship that I heartily agree with the views you have stated, not only from self-interest but from conviction of their soundness. I was only a little startled by the idea of leaving the country parishes destitute in order to supply the towns."

"We were then supposing an extreme case," said the Bishop; "but properly to evangelize the towns seems to me the proper mode of supplying the wants of the country."

"I can hardly follow your Lordship from