

Diocese of Montreal.

LACHUTE.—On the 4th December the ladies aid of St. Simon's Church held a bazaar and realized from the sale of plain and fancy articles the sum of \$55. Aprons for young and old were the staple goods, but pincushions, picture frames, etc., found a ready sale.

On Christmas Day the usual service was held, and the congregation presented the Incumbent, Rev. A. B. Given, with \$35, as a mark of their appreciation of the services he renders both spiritually and socially to the members.

On New Year's Day the congregation of St. Aidan's Church, Wentworth, had a very nice Christmas tree, with a supper in the Orange Hall. There was a large attendance of the members, and many visitors from the adjoining parishes. Rev. Mr. Hutchings, of Arundel, was present and helped very much to make the proceedings lively. He rigged up a telephone and held a conversation with Santa Claus' secretary, previous to the entry of his welcome saintship, who distributed the presents very nicely. The children of the Sunday school, under the management of Miss Morrison, the day school teacher, rendered a very nice programme of music and recitations exceedingly well. There was also a spelling bee in which the girls took part. Miss Boyd receiving the prize. The members of the Church presented Rev. Mr. Given with \$14.75, as a small token of their esteem.

It is gratifying to note that the church that was only a thought three years ago is now a reality that is paid for. The congregation have done well, and now what is needed for completion is that the church be painted inside and out, and a surplice provided.

SYNOD MEETING.

The thirty-sixth annual session of the Synod of the Diocese of Montreal was opened Tuesday a.m., 15th January, with service in Christ Church cathedral, at which the Lord Bishop delivered the following charge:

'A sower went forth to sow his seed, and when he sowed, some fell by the wayside: some fell upon stony places: some fell among thorns: and other fell into good ground. In the exposition of the parable we are told that the seed is the 'Word of the Kingdom.' In another place it is called 'the Word,' and in yet another 'the Word of God.' There is no fault to be found with the seed. The seed in each case is to be considered vital and sound. It is able to spring up (with due opportunity) and bring forth abundantly the good fruit which nourishes to eternal life.

'We (who are met here together to-day, avowedly to promote the work of the church) are the sowers of the Word of God. The perfect and living seed, beloved, is entrusted to our weak human hands. We are required to sow broadcast, as did the sower of the seed in our Lord's parable. Our office is ancient, dignified and responsible, and our duty simple and clear. We are to preach the Word, in season and out of season, by which, I understand, without cessation, no rest allowed in this honorable labor. In our lives, as well as by our words, we are to be continually mindful of our high and holy calling, not only in the public services of the church, but in private visits, and in the home life, we are to be at all times ready to make known the mysteries of the Kingdom of God. I have spoken of our duty as sowers of the Word of God as simple and clear, but I must qualify those words. I speak to men who know that human infirmity often renders that difficult which in itself is simple and perfect.

The ministry of the Word is not accomplished without effort; it supposes knowledge; it supposes experience; it supposes personal devotion, self-sacrifice, and above all faith in God and in the power of the Word. Broadcast sowers as we are, we are not invited to cast the seed to the birds of the air: on the contrary, it is right to use judgment in the selection of the ground. In the nature of things some seed must, in our eyes, be lost, but the good ground is what is to be desired, and when found is to be appreciated and worked. In this duty of sowing I wish to be understood as including all the active duties of the ministry, preaching, teaching, public services and private ministrations, and it is to this last I now call your attention and shall detain you for a short time. There are few duties of the pastorate more difficult to perform satisfactorily than house to house ministrations, especially in this age of what is called advanced thought. A clergyman wishes to be true to himself and true to his sacred calling, but does not desire to intrude uninvited into the personal peculiarities of thought and opinion of his parishioners. It often happens that where he is supposed to be the teacher, he finds it necessary to accept the attitude of the learner, and he does learn patience, if nothing more. On his part (whatever the diversity of religious habit and taste between him and his people) he must be ready at all times to sympathize with their joys and sorrows. He must strive to overcome his own prejudices and ignorances, as well as theirs, in order that he may be to them in all humility and in all exigencies, the minister of Christ. Now (not for a moment forgetting the presence and teaching and power of the Spirit of God) so hard is it to bring oneself into due subordination of mind and spirit, that the best and strongest of us cannot but break from time to time into that human cry, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' The difficulties, indeed, are so many and so varied, that often he finds it hard, for example to lead or join in prayer as he would wish, when engaged in the duty of family visitations. Many a young clergyman (and some old ones also), are greatly perplexed how to act for the best, accustomed, perhaps, himself to go to God in private prayer, as a child to a father, with a few spontaneous, simple, words of prayer and petition—a clergyman in such circumstances dares not trust himself to extemporize. He knows he is before an audience and will be criticised, and, whether that criticism be friendly or unfriendly, he is conscious that his mental frame will not be that of devotion. He becomes afraid of himself, lest he should unconsciously sow broadcast some of his own immature aspirations, and substitute his own weak imaginings for the strong vitality of the Word of God.

'Doubtful of their own sufficiency, some men solve the difficulty (or think they solve it) by having recourse to manuals of devotion, prepared expressly for the pastoral use of priests and deacons, but in most cases these forms are found to be meagre and artificial, and (after trial) are abandoned as unsatisfactory and unprofitable. But the Church of England minister has not to look abroad for the formal help he so often needs. He has under his hand a manual of devotion, which cannot fail him, because it embodies the pure Word of God. Whenever he uses it in prayer, he sows the good seed. In the Church of England Prayer Book he will find suitable forms for all general occasions; and a study of the actual words used will prove the truth of my assertion, that the language has been chosen in strict accordance with that used in the Bible itself, and therefore words most suitable to be addressed to the Most High by His humble and dependent creatures. I can but permit myself one or two illustrations to point these remarks. The office of 'Holy Communion' with its collects and exhortations is a

mine of religious wealth, containing such variety of subjects as to enrich the pastor's thoughts and fill his mouth with words sure to establish most profitable relations between the visitor and the visited. It is, of course, quite necessary that the minister should be entirely familiar with the subjects of his office, that his memory should be well stored with the intention and words of the office, so that the words may come at once to his memory in case of need, and be rightly and intelligently applied. I will only add that used as a mere formality, unassimilated and half understood, these prayers and exhortations, notwithstanding their beauty and spirituality and living power, would be brought into a contempt which I will not contemplate. The special services have special value; each special service fills its place in the education of the soul. And, again, I say, make yourselves closely familiar with them in all their parts and you will never lack words wherewith to teach the young, to greet the happy, encourage the sick, strengthen the dying, or console the mourner. And then you have the psalms in full and selected portions of scripture, and (whilst I would carefully guard myself against the thought in any mind that I would set aside the Bible) I suggest that these may be used to assist you in family visiting. As a rule these selected scriptures are of about the right length, and will afford you the most desirable opportunity for exposition and exhortation. The fact that these scriptures recur in the public services secures that your readings and your remarks will come back to the memory of your people; will be a holy bond of union between you and them, and stir up an affectionate and fresh interest in the public services.

"I now proceed to notice the business of the Synod. The report of the committee appointed to consider the mutual rights and duties of Bishop and rectors in this diocese, which is printed in the last report of the Synod, though full and instructive, cannot be received as conclusive. I thought it necessary, therefore, to confer privately with the rectors of the city churches, that we might arrive at something practical. I pointed out that for want of mutual understanding opportunities were lost, which would, if the occasion were improved, lead to the extension and increased usefulness of the Church. The result of our conference is embodied in a resolution which will be submitted to this Synod, as a basis for full discussion, and I trust that both clergy and laity will give the subject their earnest and deliberate consideration, so that (whether modified or not) the present obstructive circumstances may be removed, and the welfare and religious influences of the Church be confirmed and expanded. The executors of the late Mr. E. E. Shelton have notified the Executive committee that they are prepared to pay over a certain portion of the property appertaining to this estate to the Synod for the use of the Mission fund. At the same time informing them that the said property requires immediate outlay before it can be in a condition to bear revenue. Whatever income may be derived from rents or other sources will be quite exhausted on the property itself, or even may possibly be, for a time, an actual charge on the Executive committee. Unhappily the Mission fund itself has no surplus, on the contrary is largely overdrawn; and your judgment and energy will be required to advise concerning this property, which, if it receive wise treatment, will doubtless be ultimately a very valuable possession, though in the immediate present it may cause some pin-taking and anxiety. The Executive committee have expended much time and careful thought in the endeavor to bring the stipends of the missionary clergy up to the requirement of the canon. They have been in a degree frustrated in their laudable effort, chiefly (I might say entirely) by the lack of honest meeting of their