

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

DIOCESAN BOARD.

The Diocesan Board has now for four full years been actively engaged in the discharge of the duties assigned to it, so that a reasonable and safe opinion may be formed as to the working of the By-law under which it is constituted, and by which its operations are directed. In accordance with that clause in the By-law, which requires the Board at the expiration of every three years to confer and arrange with the local authorities of each Congregation as to the amount to be contributed by them towards the ministrations afforded to them, a new agreement has during the past year been entered into between the Board and the several Congregations throughout the Diocese. No Congregation has been admitted to be too poor to contribute something in return for the Missionary's labours. All have been required to contribute as nearly as circumstances will admit, in proportion to their means and numbers.

The financial and numerical weakness of the Congregations aided by the Board may be understood from the fact that the highest assessment paid by any one Congregation is \$250 per annum, while as small a sum as \$12 per annum is all that the poorest Congregation can contribute. The Tabular Statement printed among the accounts will show exactly what each Congregation undertakes to pay, and how far its engagement has been kept. It has not been left to the local authorities of each Congregation to judge what amount they are able to contribute in return for the ministrations which they enjoy. Nearly every Congregation has been visited by a Representative of the Board, whose duty has been to ascertain as nearly as possible what the people are capable of doing, and after conferring with the Clergyman, Wardens and Heads of Families, to report to the Board. Upon this report and a comparison with the other Congregations in the Diocese, the Board decides upon the amount of assessment for each Congregation.

In order to place this assessment before the people in its true light, the Church Wardens are in each case required to sign a form of agreement which declares the services to be provided by the Board, and the amount to be paid quarterly in return by the Congregation. In the case of only one Congregation, has there been such a failure in keeping to the terms of this agreement during the past year, as to call for any action from the Board. The Congregation has been notified, that unless its written promise to the Board is redeemed by the 31st of December, the ministrations afforded to it will be discontinued from that date. In one other case every effort to induce the Congregation to enter into an agreement to contribute, in proportion to its strength and the number of services afforded to it, has failed, and the people have been notified that unless the assessment decided upon by the Board is paid before the 31st of December,