

## ADDRESS OF THE Rt. Rev. the Lord Bishop of Nfld. Delivered at the Opening of the Twenty - Fifth Biennial Ses- sion of the Diocesan Synod, Wednesday, June 21st, 1922.

My Brethren of the Clergy and Laity:

Though the Kingdom, in the interests of which we are assembled, is not of this world, yet the world is the field of its operations, the people in this world are its subjects, its potential citizens, whose welfare both in regard to their temporal affairs as in the sphere of their spiritual progress, is its first and chief concern. The Kingdom, that is the Church of Jesus Christ, cannot even begin to consider the advancement of its highest interests without taking cognizance of the conditions which obtain in its immediate as well as its more extended environment. The state of human society constitutes at one and the same time a challenge, a rebuke, a hope, a despair, a door of opportunity, a task to be faced, a victory to be won.

The world registers the Church's enterprises, its visions or its lack of vision, its energy or its sloth. Now it has, or seems to have, an open ear ready to catch eagerly whatever word of promise or of help the Church proclaims. Now it seems to question every word that claims authoritative utterance, as from a higher power. And now it makes some pathetic appeal for an answer to questions which it feels itself unable to solve.

This is the position to-day in many parts of our distracted world. Over wide areas there is an epidemic of disorder, of distress, of uncertainty, and men and nations are groping about in the Egyptian darkness which enshrouds them, longing for a light, and saying as they watch the failure of this and that scheme for the amelioration of human ills "Who will show us any good?"

The time has, apparently, not yet arrived when the leading men in great nations and great movements will be ready to admit the fundamental error which has done more than anything besides to breed chaos amongst nations and peoples. They mean the "difference of concept upon the idea of God," and the place He should occupy in human thought and action. In a recent work entitled "Labour, the giant with the feet of clay" written by Mr. Shaw Desmond, the statement is made "that the great war has (already) tried to teach . . . the lesson that nationality and national conceptions play one of the major parts in the division of mankind. Man has yet to learn that there is something even still deeper, more inscrutable in its effects, and that is the outlook of human beings upon the things that lie beyond the material." And the writer adds, "one is not here speaking of theological differences. Nor is one denying that some of the noblest and finest men and women, who have existed have believed themselves quite sincerely to be helping humanity by 'fighting the idea of God in the sense of theological definition, though such men and women, nominal spiritual view of life and living, and have been unconsciously 'on the side of the angels.' But what one is speaking of is the fundamental irreconcilable difference between the materialist proper with his goal of fleshly or purely intellectual satisfactions, and the anti-materialist, between that overwhelming mass . . . which steadily trends to a material conception of existence, and that minority, which regards the body as of little importance by the side of the soul, and only urges the care of the former in order that it may be a more worthy vehicle of the latter."

Speaking in his introduction of the small minority who have discovered that the God they had made for themselves had feet of clay the writer remarks "the men and women who are coming will not make that mistake—a God with feet of clay will not be their God."

Coming from such a source the words I have quoted are at least suggestive. They imply that there are some—a small but an increasing number who see that the only hope for the future of this disordered world is a return to the principles of the Christian Faith, for only in them can be found the true secret of real human progress and betterment.

It is neither a pleasant nor a comforting task, however, to be called upon to match the apparently puny forces of believers in Christ against the largely hostile world. Only an unquenchable faith can view the prospect without alarm and without despair. To have a growing consciousness of the seriousness of the struggle involved: to face the facts as they are presented to us by friend and foe alike: to be under no illusion as to the resistance the Church will meet with is only to be galled by common prudence and the dictates of common sense.

To some of you it may seem to be both unwise and unnecessary to paint this dark background into the picture of the Church's Diocesan life. What purpose can it serve? It may be asked. Perhaps this question can best be answered by asking another

question? "What constitutes one of our greatest dangers as a Diocese? Is it not our isolation? Not merely a geographical isolation—though this has its weakening effect—but our isolation from the life of other parts of our communion, which is in contact with world problems in every quarter of the globe. Though our Bishop looks to the Chair of Augustine and pays allegiance to its occupant, for all practical purposes this Diocese stands alone—it is independent of any province, its peculiar position constitutes its greatest weakness and is the source of its sorest temptations. It must seek ever to save itself from falling by remembering the duty it owes to the whole Anglican Communion throughout the world. If this duty were to be lost sight of some compromising step might be taken in matters of faith and order, some irretrievable error committed that might work disaster far beyond the narrow boundaries of our own Diocese. Hence the fortunes and the problems of the whole Church with which we are linked up by ties of parentage and tradition and deprived life, are our intimate concern. No thought of disassociation with or disregard for the great body in its trials, its hopes and its aspirations can be thought possible. As an outpost of this great spiritual empire it is our duty to keep watch and ward, to build and to defend, to add strength so far as that is given us, to the whole commonwealth of the Kingdom of Christ.

It is of course true that the redemption of society is not necessarily committed to the Anglican Communion only, nor are we so blind to facts as to claim that only through this Apostolic body can men be brought to know the truth that makes them free. But it is equally true to say that it would be sheer disloyalty to the great trust committed to us did we not aim at making common cause with the communion to which we belong in its widespread enterprises in all lands. I am sure that we have no desire to become self-centred, to allow our sympathies to be cramped within Diocesan boundaries, or to seek only for the means by which our own needs may be supplied. If our own home field must claim our first attention—and of necessity this is unavoidable—we shall not regard it as the sole claimant upon our sympathies and our thoughts, and prayers. We shall have in mind our corporate union with the larger body, which I have adopted and have hope that the call to lift our eyes to wider horizons than those which bound our Diocesan life will enable us to view our own problems in the broad light of the Church's responsibility to men of every clime and kindred and tongue.

Here is the justification for the method of approach to the questions to be brought before our Synod, which I have adopted, and have hope that the call to lift our eyes to wider horizons than those which bound our Diocesan life will enable us to view our own problems in the broad light of the Church's responsibility to men of every clime and kindred and tongue.

THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE SYNOD.

In view of what I have already stated, let us proceed to think more particularly of what may be regarded as some of the specific duties of our Synod. The Synod is the governing body of the Church in Newfoundland; and one of its fundamental principles is that it "shall continue as heretofore in spiritual union and communion with the Church of England." The Synod recognizes and accepts the Canon of Holy Scripture, as received by the Church of England, as the rule and standard of Christian Faith, and acknowledges the Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, together with the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of that Church, to be a true and faithful declaration of doctrines contained in Holy Scripture; and maintains the threefold order of the Christian ministry—Bishops, Priests and Deacons—as Scriptural and Apostolic; and it is the object of the Synod, in dependence on Divine aid, to preserve those doctrines and that form of Church order and to transmit them to posterity.

All that follows in subsequent chapters of our Constitution and Rules has one object in view, viz., the carrying out of, or giving effect to the great fundamental principles on which the Synod rests. Every chapter of our Constitution is intended to serve one purpose, viz., to enable the Church of England in this Diocese to bear its witness in communion with the whole Church, to the people committed to its charge. It is

a well-defined purpose, to which limits are set by the very terms in which its principles are set forth. The subjects which rightly come within the Synod's purview are limited to such matters as have as their object the furtherance of the special functions of our Church. The Synod is under no obligation to go outside those functions and to usurp authority which belongs to other bodies. It makes no claim to authority to legislate in purely secular matters which have no necessary bearing upon its work as part of a spiritual society, nor does it wish to impose its authority upon those who acknowledge no allegiance to it. But on the other hand it cannot recognize the right of any other body to dictate to it as to the policy it shall pursue in matters which have to do with its spiritual and moral responsibilities to its people.

In matters which come within its proper sphere the Synod is the supreme authority in the Diocese; and if its field of operations is restricted within well-defined limits, it is so limited in order to enable it to deal more effectively with its own proper duties.

There are doubtless many important questions in which members of the Church of England are very appropriately interested; but for obvious reasons such questions cannot be introduced into our agenda, nor are we as a Synod called to pronounce upon them. We have our own work to do, and it demands all the thought, and all the time we are capable of giving to it in the few days at our disposal.

### THE RECENT CENSUS.

The Diocese should not be regarded chiefly as consisting of so many miles of territory to be covered, but in the light of the number of persons it contains, for whom we as a church are directly responsible. The recent Census forces this point of view into special prominence and must supply cause for serious heart-searching on the part of members of this body.

Though complete returns are not available as yet, the counts of revision in the various districts have enabled the clergy to obtain fairly accurate figures of the population in their respective localities. These figures should prove valuable in enabling the clergy to ascertain how far their own private records of the church people have been kept up-to-date. They will be useful too, in discovering for isolated families who have been lost sight of, and also whether or not there are stretches of 'no man's land,' containing Church families at present unheeded, and in danger of being lost to the Church. As a Church we should examine our heart and conscience, and some of our methods in the light of facts which the Census reveals. In recent years there has been a noticeable tendency towards abandoning old settlements and to make homes in new localities where timber and fuel are obtainable, or perhaps where more fertile land is to be had. A gradual shifting of population has taken place, and this is still going on. Whilst in some districts we have made some attempt to meet those changing conditions in others we have not. The result has, I fear, been that a steady leakage has been in progress: people whom we have not followed up, have been absorbed by other bodies whose methods in this respect have been more practical than ours.

Whatever the causes of defection may be the loss of people from the Church can never be regarded with complacency; it is a real disaster, and if any plan can be devised to minimize such losses in the future it is to be hoped that it will receive the hearty endorsement of every member of the Synod.

I shall not comment at great length upon this subject at present, as I anticipate that legislation will be introduced during this session with a view to more statistical information as to Church members being obtained and made use of.

### QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

The question of the supply and training of men for the sacred ministry has received special emphasis from two directions during the biennial period. In the first place an unusual number of vacancies have arisen, and secondly the campaign on behalf of Queen's College has been steadily maintained, and has met with gratifying success. Notwithstanding the general depression which has prevailed, the success achieved has been brought about mainly by the unflinching efforts of the Principal, Rev. Dr. Fahey, whose enthusiasm has been met by a sympathetic response on the part of the Clergy and their flocks. The Report of the College Council will give detailed information regarding contributions and I need not enlarge upon this point now; but I cannot refrain from an expression of the gratitude I feel for the splendid support given to the movement by many of the clergy whose example has inspired their congregations to subscribe to the fund in the face of very adverse conditions.

As the days pass the extreme importance of keeping our own Theological Institution open becomes more manifest. If Dr. Fahey's carefully considered plans can be brought to maturity the Diocese will possess an Institution freed from the menace of threatened extinction, and at the

same time more efficiently equipped to train men either to enter the ministry as soon as they have completed their course at the College, or to enter one of the English Universities for a period of further study before they are ordained. The Church people of Newfoundland are making no mistake when they invest either a large or a small sum in the Queen's College Funds. The Church of the future will, I believe, justify our action in saving and strengthening a College that has long since proved its value to the Diocese.

### THE SUPPORT THE LIVING AGENT

The difficulty—I might say the impossibility—of filling vacancies in the ranks of the clergy does not stand alone. The provision of a living wage is a present and a pressing problem. It is, I presume, known to you, all that since the close of 1920, when the Diocese ceased to receive aid from the S.P.G., it has received nothing from any outside source towards the payment of the stipends of our Clergy. We voluntarily relinquished such aid as the S.P.G. had been supplying for so many years, and it is not now contemplated that any assistance from without the Diocese is to be hoped for. We have to depend upon ourselves.

In 1920 not only were we courageous enough to say we could live without the S.P.G. grant but we proceeded to level up stipends considerably, or at least we passed such legislation as would supply, so it was hoped, the necessary funds for the year 1918 there had been a large increase in the Home and Foreign Mission Fund, and having regard to the increased cost of living the Executive Committee had felt justified in interpreting the powers given it under the Assessment Act in a liberal manner and had raised the stipends as far as possible. But to ensure a continuance of this policy it was necessary to secure largely increased contributions, and consequently the Assessment per capita was increased. At the same time, and for a like purpose, the qualification of a parish was raised to \$1500.

Perhaps no one foresaw at the time the likelihood of such serious financial depression and dislocation of the usual sources of revenue as has since arisen, but looking back it appears unfortunate that the proposed increase in expenditure should have coincided with this financial depression, for without doubt the effect of our legislation has been to discourage and dishearten rather than to encourage. Notably has this been the case of smaller parishes falling vacant; and in proof of this statement I may say that practically all parishes which have become vacant since have failed to qualify and have been unable to elect Rectors, and only temporary provision, if any, has been made for serving them.

### THE DIOCESAN BUDGET.

I have not thus far made any reference to the Budget Plan introduced at last Synod; but I regard its due operation as of vital importance to our financial stability. Its working has a direct bearing upon the question of stipends. It was to my mind unfortunate that we were unable to launch this system until late in 1921, and in the circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the total income derived from this source fell considerably below our anticipations. The result has been that the Executive Committee found it impossible to maintain the stipends of clergy in charge of Missions at the figure paid in the two preceding years. This is regrettable but it was unavoidable.

The Synod will be wise, I think, in giving fuller consideration than was possible last Synod both to the better working out of the Budget Plan and the question of the qualification of parishes. It is obvious, in regard to the latter, that a continuance of the present unsatisfactory situation ought not to be contemplated. Temporary arrangements are not satisfactory either to clergy or people and to compel all parishes that cannot give a guarantee of \$1500 to revert to the status of missions would, I feel, be a retrograde step. And what is perhaps of more serious consequence, our financial condition is such as to render the taking over of the responsibility of financing a number of new missions at this juncture entirely out of the question.

### GRADED PARISHES.

In speaking of parishes it seems to me that our present rule as to qualifications is anomalous, and operates unfairly. Is it equitable that a par-

ish of (say) 700 or 800 people should be expected to guarantee the same sum as a parish of two or three times that number? Oh, why should large and small parishes pay the same stipend? A modification of our rule giving it more elasticity seems to be desirable. A less rigid arrangement would encourage small localities to attain to a large measure of self-help and render them more independent of assistance from the rest of the Diocese.

### Mobilizing Our Resources.

In order to assist the clergy and their Finance Committees in raising both the Church Dues and Assessments for the Budget last fall I asked several of the clergy to place themselves at my disposal to act as delegates to such parishes and missions as needed assistance. The clergy readily responded and the majority of them were able to carry through the work they were asked to undertake.

From the reports which they made to me subsequently I gather that their visits were cordially received and were productive of much good. Owing, however, to the lateness of the season when the visits were undertaken the effect upon the Budget collections and Church Dues received was not so conspicuous as it might have been had the visits been made at an earlier date. We hope that this year's returns will show that the work undertaken was well worth while. But in my judgment it will be necessary to follow up this effort, for fuller information than many of our congregations have at present is necessary both in regard to the financial needs of the Diocese and how the Budget is designed to meet them.

An idea seems to prevail in some quarters that a congregation is free either to reject or to adopt the Diocesan Budget System as it sees fit. This is not sufficient that a parish or mission should consider only its own needs—how the services of its own local Church and the support of its own clergyman shall be secured. Parishes and missions must be made to realize that they owe an obligation

(Continued on page 5.)



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