

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, DEC. 4, 1852.

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

WE have lately obtained from a friend, the Report of this Venerable Society for 1852, which altho' not as voluminous as those of former years, is full of most interesting matter, touching the Society's operations in the four quarters of the world.

Upwards of thirty pages are occupied with accounts of the Jubilee Celebrations in the Parent Kingdom, and throughout the Colonies. Among these Nova Scotia does not hold a very distinguished place. On page 63, eight lines suffice to tell our story:—

"NOVA SCOTIA.—In compliance with a notice from the Bishop of Nova Scotia, Sunday, May 23d, 1852, was fixed on for the celebration of the Jubilee in this diocese. The Bishop himself preached at Halifax. In a letter dated May 21th, his Lordship writes:—

"Jubilee sermons were preached yesterday throughout the diocese. The sums collected will be small, and are to be applied at the discretion of the *Diocesan Church Society*. Our celebration is late, but it was not possible to select an earlier day under the circumstances."

Nor do we shine much more brilliantly, in reference to the fund for supporting our own Bishop, for all time to come. If he will have nothing more to look to than the ENDOWMENT (?) fund, the candidates for the See may be acquitted of being "*given to filthy lucre*."

"The local fund for the Endowment of the Bishopric* has not yet reached any very considerable amount. The sum of £1,364 Halifax currency, or £1,021 sterling, has been invested at Halifax by the Treasurer.—The returns from the country come in but slowly.—The number of members of the Church of England in Nova Scotia was reckoned in the last census at 36,000, and it has been roughly calculated that the sum of £10,000 per annum is raised in the Diocese for purposes connected with the Church. Yet the income of the *Diocesan Church Society* cannot be accounted at above £800, one fourth of which may be withdrawn by the contributors."

In regard to the labours of the Clergy, we have no reason to be ashamed. A table of Missionary Statistics for the year 1851, is given on p. 78, and is thus introduced:—

"The Society has received the usual returns from every Missionary in the diocese, with only two exceptions. The following abstract will sufficiently attest the great diligence with which the Clergy connected with the Society are, in most instances, fulfilling their duty."

The table shows the amount of travel reported, to be 56,859 miles; Communicants, 2,328; Divine Service performed 4,860 times; Pastoral visits, 10,173; Visits to sick persons, 2,996; Missionary visits to distant places, 1,542. This is certainly within the mark, as we observe several of those items have not been reported where we know the Parishes ought to have credit for them.

The following statement of the progressive extension of the Society's operations may be generally acceptable:—

1701.—Total income 1,537*l.*, including 1,332*l.* donations. The first two Missionaries arrived at Boston June 11th, 1702. From the First Report (1704) it appears, that the Society's attention was then directed to the Iroquois, New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Carolina, the Yammonsea Indians, Newfoundland, Rhode Island, Long Island, Jamaica, Antigua, Meitserrat, Moscow, and Amsterdam. Some assistance was given also to the Danish Mission at Tranquebar.

1751.—Total income, general and special, 3,719*l.*—Missionaries and schoolmasters, maintained wholly or in part, 82. Field of labour:—New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Carolina, Georgia, Bahama, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia.

1801.—Total income, general and special, 6,457*l.*—Missionaries and schoolmasters, 78. Field of labour:—Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, *Cannala* (1784), *New Brunswick* (1783), *Bahama, Guinea* (1752), the *Gold Coast* (1766), *Florida* (1768), *Australia* (1795). The Society also became trustee for Debritzen College, *Hungary*; and for the *Vaudois Pastors in Piedmont*. The first two colonial bishoprics had been founded; and the episcopates given to the United States.

1851.—Total income, general and special, including part of Jubilee and Royal Letter Collections, and balance, 147,476*l.* Number of Missionaries, lay teachers, and students, 1,160. Field of labour:—*Danish North America, West Indies, Guinea, South Africa, India, Ceylon, Borneo, Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Seychelles, Tristan*. These countries are now the seat of 22 Dioceses.

We may have recourse to the Report in future Nos. as we think every member of the Church ought to be interested in the doings of that Society, to which, under God, we and our fathers have been so long and so largely indebted.

MR. GLADSTONE'S BILLS.

SEVERAL letters have lately been published in the City papers, containing statements with respect to Mr. Gladstone's Bills. We think it may be interesting to our readers to have them printed in parallel columns, which we shall do in our next. As the assertions of "Senex" have been contradicted by "Nemo," who has again been charged with quibbling by a "Layman," we add without any comment a brief history of these Bills.

In the Session of 1850, it was proposed in the House of Commons to insert some clauses with reference to the Church, in an Australian Bill then under consideration. This however was not done, and in the next Session, July 19, 1851, Mr. Gladstone, after pointing out some of the disadvantages under which the Church in the Colonies suffers, said,—"This was a case for which he hoped Her Majesty's Government would provide some remedy. Nothing could be easier than for the House to provide such a remedy, because it only required the House to say, that the Colonial members of the Church of England were *lib. free to exercise the powers of a religious community, in the members of other religious denominations*. If Her Majesty's Government did not take the matter in hand, and no more competent person interfered, it was his intention to propose to Parliament next Session, some enabling bill which would give the Colonial Clergy and laity, that freedom which other religious communities enjoyed."

Accordingly in the next Session, on February 20, 1852, he introduced his Bill, stating that its object was "simply to relieve members of the Church in communion with the Church of England in the Colonies, from certain supposed legal disabilities, which prevented them from taking those measures for the local management of their own affairs that other religious bodies in the Colonies were in the habit of exercising. *He did not propose to give them any Legislative power.*" (Mark this.) The Bill was then ordered to be printed, and when it had been before the public above two months, the second reading was moved, April 28, when after some speeches, the debate was adjourned until May 19th, on which day, in consequence of the unexpected opposition of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Bill was withdrawn.

The Colonial Secretary and others, who objected to this first Bill, having expressed a decided opinion that "some legislation was required," Mr. Gladstone introduced the subject again, and on June 23, in Committee of the whole House, the following resolution was passed without a division, that "the Chairman be directed to move the house that leave be given to bring in a Bill to explain and amend the Laws relating to the Church in the Colonies." Accordingly the amended Bill, (as published in our paper of Oct. 9.) was introduced and ordered by the house to be printed, June 25th. The principal alteration in the second Bill is stated by Mr. Gladstone, to be as follows:—

"The main reason for which he had been anxious to have an opportunity of correcting the reprint of the bill was this:—There was nothing to be altered which, in his view, touched the principle of the bill; but he admitted that both the right honourable gentleman the Secretary of State and the learned gentleman the member for Aylesbury (Mr. Bethell), who approached this subject in a spirit of great fairness and candour, had alleged that the bill would place positive legislative power in the hands of the Church in the colonies. Now that was a question turning entirely upon the force and effect of certain words. His (Mr. Gladstone's) object would be to preclude any such effect, and for that reason he had altered the form of the first clause of the bill, which contained the substance and principle of the whole measure, and, instead of saying that it should be lawful for the Bishop, with the clergy and laity, to make such and such regulations, he proposed to enact that no statute, law, usage, or other authority of the United Kingdom should be construed to extend, or should extend, to prevent any such Bishop of any diocese in the colonies from doing the same things which were contemplated by the former clause of the bill. His object was simply that this should be a relieving and a permissive bill, and he therefore very willingly agreed to the alteration to what he had alluded. Though it seemed to him but a trivial change, yet there were others who thought that legislative power was conveyed to the Church by the former words, and who looked upon this as a very important change in the phraseology.—Another change suggested was one making a distinct reservation as to the powers of the colonial legislature."

NOTICE OF ORDINATION.—The Lord Bishop proposes (D. V.) to hold his next Ordination at Halifax, on Sunday, December 19. Persons intending to offer themselves as Candidates for Holy Orders upon that occasion, are desired to notify their intention to His Lordship without delay.

OLD SCENES.

There are few greater pleasures in life than to revisit the haunts of early days, and trace out the many well known spot, with which memory will connect associations of varied and affecting interest. Who has not felt this, when after the lapse of a course of years, and after having mingled largely in the cares and turmoils of active life, his footsteps have been turned to the home of his childhood, and those scenes with which he was familiar when as yet no care had disturbed his breast. Who has not thus felt a thrilling interest in again treading the old ground, gazing on the well known fields, marking the same old trees, searching out the well remembered (if not much loved) school-room, or sitting again in the same old church, so often entered in bygone days. The familiar faces may indeed be found no more, the friends of youth may have passed away—but still, numerous objects remain which awaken the soft feelings of the heart and renew as it were, the years that are past.—And if this be so, in the ordinary way, how much more intensely must such tracings be felt where the pastoral connexion has subsisted between the visitor and the scenes visited.

How delightful to renew the intercourse which belongs to that hallowed relationship—to exchange the greetings of warm affection—to stand once more where for years perhaps, he dispensed the Word and Sacraments of the Lord—to behold before him and around him, the well known faces of old and young, again turned towards him, listening to the old tones, and the still welcome tidings—to step into the oft frequented Sunday School, where years of interesting work had been done—to pass round from house to house, where many a time he had entered before, as partaker of the joys and sorrows of the dwellers within—to find indoors and out, a hearty welcome from men, women, and children—rich and poor, learned and simple—this surely, must be ranked among the sweetest enjoyments which a Minister can have here below—as one "green spot," at all events, in the waste of a dry and barren land—for which he will not fail to be thankful to the Great Mover of all hearts—the God of love.—Such has doubtless been the happy experience of many a clerical brother, who has been separated from, and has afterwards revisited the scenes of his former labors.

And such the writer found it to be, when lately, not after years, but months only, of separation from a beloved flock, he had the pleasure of being once more among them, and of standing up again in the old pulpit to speak, (alas! how inadequately!) on the well known theme of a Saviour's love. May that love be abundantly shed abroad in the hearts of all that Congregation, which on that day thronged the Courts of the Sanctuary. May they ever feel, as we all felt then, and as the Psalmist felt when He said "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord." It was, indeed, pleasing to find all going on well—good singing—good responses—and a full Sunday School, with additional Teachers. May they remember and digest the text given them—"Be not weary in well doing."

A correspondent from P. E. Island, in last week's paper, seems to hint that we do not say enough about Church affairs in that quarter. We can assure him, that we will always be happy to publish any interesting information as to the progress of the Church in that beautiful Island, but as yet we have not been favoured with much support in any way, from our fellow Churchmen there. During a short visit to Charlotte Town in September, we were much gratified by many things which we saw and heard. Certainly one of the most pleasing objects was the Sunday School, numerously attended and well conducted. And in that School we were much struck by two features of the always interesting scene. One was, the sight of a gentleman whose head was well whitened with the frost of years, busily engaged in the good work of a Sunday School Teacher. We found upon enquiry that he was the Postmaster General of the Island. It is too seldom that the aged members of the Church feel it to be their duty, thus to bring the weight of years to bear on the training of the younger portion of the flock. The other gratifying feature was to find the Chief Justice of the Island, sitting also among the Teachers, with many little ones around him, waiting his instructions in the things pertaining to the "kingdom of heaven." It was indeed delightful to behold one in his exalted position thus engaged, not merely for a Sunday either, now and then, but regularly in his place, twice in the day. We mention this for the encouragement of those elsewhere who are similarly employed, and as an incitement to others who still hold back when solicited by their Pastors to come and help them in this important part of their labours.