

year, they would not have built it. In Marshville the same urgent need of a church is felt. The wretched school-house is crowded to excess, and it is a great pity that we cannot immediately put up a suitable edifice. The people are poor and very scattered but very zealous, and I think would contribute according to their abilities. A grant to each place to be paid when the work is done or in progress would be a very great stimulant." Thus it is evident to your committee that much is already gained, and they pray God that still more fruit may result from their efforts to send the glad tidings of the gospel as proclaimed by our reformed church to those too long neglected lambs of the flock of Christ.

Your committee would here advert to the gratifying result of the necessarily infrequent visits of the Rev. the Rural Dean to Merrittville. By the good providence of God on Sunday evening the 19th August last after at least nineteen miles travelling and two full services with confirmation, our Venerable Bishop visited that town and held a confirmation in the court room, which was crowded to excess with a most attentive congregation and seven candidates were confirmed. The Bishop addressed the candidates and congregation in his accustomed happy manner, with perhaps more energy and force than usual, this being his Lordship's first visit, setting forth the institution of that holy and apostolic rite, and urging all to increased holiness in heart and life. On Monday his Lordship proceeded to Marshville, where however he only held an afternoon service and preached, the candidates here through some mistake as to the day appointed not being present.

Hence it is evident to your committee that the seed sown has, though perhaps at rare intervals, through Christ wonderfully brought forth fruit. May this fruit be lasting and ripen, and be the earnest of a still larger harvest in God's good time! In rendering their tribute of humble and hearty thanks to Almighty God for this apparent fruit from the labours of the Society, your committee would suggest, that, as part of our travelling mission is now provided for, the attention of the Society be turned, as soon as practicable, to the yet destitute and remaining portion. And they trust that the time may soon arrive, when they may be enabled, through the liberality of the members of our Church in the more favoured parts of the Deanery, to employ another missionary, in order that many now destitute of the bread of life, may have it broken to them.

Your secretary preached sermons in behalf of the Society at Fort Erie, and the Ridge Bertie, also at Thorold. He also attended a meeting of the Parochial Association at Dunnville, where there appeared much interest in the workings of the Society. He also proceeded with the Incumbent to Port Maitland, but through some untoward circumstances there was no meeting. The Rev. the Rural Dean kindly preached on behalf of the Society at Stamford and Drummondville. Your secretary was to have been at Merrittville, Port Colborne and Marshville, but owing to the state of the roads at the time, and indisposition, he was, he grieves to say, prevented.

The committee would strongly recommend that the regulation of this District Branch Association be as far as practicable more generally carried out; and meetings be regularly held by the various Parochial Associations at such time and place as to them shall seem most convenient, though the attendance might unhappily be small. And the neighbouring clergy are respectfully requested to aid one another to the utmost of their ability in bringing the claims of the Society before the people.

From the reports received, your committee are rejoiced to say that there is not such a falling off as might have been anticipated from the unpar-

alled pressure of the times. The Parish of Niagara report as having received since the last annual meeting the sum of \$50, being the annual contribution of R. Hiscoitt Esq., together with \$4 50cts. collected by that individual in his own neighbourhood. Your committee have great pleasure in being able to report \$228 20cts. as the amount collected for 1858, being an increase over last year. This goes to prove that the churchmen of Niagara have not forgotten that beautiful injunction, "Be merciful after thy power, if thou hast much give plentifully, if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little; for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity."

The Parish of St. Catharines reports with great satisfaction the amount of subscriptions for the current year to be £60 1s. or \$240 20cts. In consequence of the commercial depression under which the country is now suffering, and which has been severely felt in this Parish, the amount above reported is much beyond what the Parochial Committee at this particular time had reason to expect. And they feel, that next to the influence of God's grace, by which the heart is moved to give, they are bound to acknowledge that much of this success is owing to the laudable and zealous exertions of two young ladies who acted as collectors within the town.

The Parish of Louth, no report received.\*

The Parish of Thorold, the chairman of this parochial branch reports that as the time came round for making our annual collections for the Church Society I had my fears that in consequence of the universal complaint of scarcity of money our collections would be much less than usual this year. However, I am happy to say that in this respect I have been agreeably disappointed. The congregation at Port Robinson have considerably increased their contributions this year; for this we are indebted to the very active exertions of the young gentleman who has for the three last years made the collections, and to the increase of the congregation during the past year. The congregation of Thorold have not been as well canvassed. The consequence of which is, that the contributions of the whole parish amount this year to \$122 70cts. being \$10 25cts. more than last year. Your committee would respectfully suggest that the hint given in the close of this parochial report be taken by all the parishes in the Deanry, which is, I think that for all the parishes on the line of the canal the earlier after the close of navigation the collections are made the better will be the returns.

The Parish of Chippawa reports an increase over last year, the amount being £49 1s. 3d. or \$196 25cts.

The united associations of Drummondville and Stamford in the Parish of Chippawa report that owing to various causes, such as the removal of several of the large subscribers, and the increased demands upon the liberality of the members of the Church in this parish, coupled with the general cry of depression, the amount to be reported this year is not near so large as last. This is, however, no just cause for the withholding our usual quota at least from that handmaid of the Church in this Diocese, the Church Society. They would, however, trust that at another annual meeting they may be able more favourably to report and shew a steady increase in the Society's funds, given with a feeling of reverence and gratitude. Much however has been done, All Saints Church has been opened, and a very large proportion of the debt remaining on the building

liquidated; the congregations have also materially increased their contributions to the curate's stipend. The amount to be reported is £6 16s. 10½d. for general purpose, and £9 3s. 3d. for special objects, making in all £15 1½d. or \$60 03cts.

The whole amount raised for church purposes from all sources within the bounds of this united association for the year ending Easter, 1858, was £108 11s. 1d. or \$434 22cts.

The committee would therefore say that although there is a diminution in the Society's funds, yet they have reason to believe that there is a growing attachment to our Church pure and holy as she is, protesting alike against formalism and superstition on the one hand, and a rabid indifference on the other. The number confirmed last summer was nearly double that of any preceding year, being 23 for Drummondville and 11 for Stamford. The Parish of Port Erie reports the sum of \$37 50cts.

The Parish of Dunnville and Port Maitland, report \$45 or £11 5s.

In conclusion, your committee yet feel bound to say that without doubt the smallness in the Society's income is in a great measure to be attributed to the general depression of the country, as they cannot suppose there is any diminution in the desire to do what in us lies for the spiritual advancement of our destitute brethren.

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," is a text as strongly applicable now as formerly. It recognises no depression, it is conscious of no inability; however poor we may be or think that we are, still the same proportion of our means is required of us by God for the cause of Christ and His Church, and whether we have little or much, the poor should gladly give of that little, and the more wealthy of their abundance even an increased proportion. The gospel must be preached, missionaries must be sent forth, they must be supported; if therefore any say we cannot this year do any thing, let such ask themselves whether they have denied themselves any one superfluity or gratification! Whether they have not sustained their previous manner of living, have not rather continued their round of gaieties and pleasures, when the money spent in such ways is in truth needed by God for the spread of the gospel, but is now actually thrown away. While your committee cannot but deplore that in many instances, appearances would lead them to believe that a decrease in the expenditure has been first made in that which has been contributed in the cause of the church rather than in our own pleasures and superfluities, yet they look forward in hope that ere another annual meeting is held a more healthy state of things may arise, and the members of the Church within the bounds of this district association be more alive to their responsibilities, and the greatness of the sin of beginning at the House of God, when we would curtail our expenses. Our contributions to the spread of the gospel should come from our first fruits, and until such is the case, we dare not affirm that we have a single eye in the cause of God. The calls for increased exertions in the missionary cause come year by year louder and more loudly, and we cannot at the peril of our immortal souls hold back when we know our assistance is needed. Then your committee would say, notwithstanding the depression, let the contributions of the members of the church be but in the same proportion to their incomes or wages now, that they were a few years ago, and we shall not again have to complain of a deficiency; otherwise it may be said as of old "will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me; but if ye say wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." Mal.

All which is respectfully submitted.

CHAS. LYCESTER ISLES, Secretary.

\* The Parish of Louth has since reported to the Parent Society direct, that the sum of \$33 25cts. was collected, and remitted \$15 30cts.

The Parish of Grimsby has reported that £3 17s. 6d. was collected, and remitted the whole to the Parent Society. T. S. K.