

REPORT OF THE NEWCASTLE DISTRICT BRANCH OF THE CHURCH SOCIETY, FOR THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 12, 1866.

The seasons, as they roll over us in quick succession, naturally serve to remind the Christian, that "the time is short," and that, consequently, "whatsoever his hand findeth to do," in his Divine Master's service, "he should do it with all his might." Through the good hand of our God upon us, we have graciously been spared and dermitted to labour through the course of another year in advancing the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom; but here, at the very outset, the question solemnly forces itself upon our consciences—"what have we done?" And in endeavouring honestly and conscientiously to answer this question, we are compelled to make the humiliating confession, that we have too frequently "left undone the things which we ought to have done"—that as stewards of the manifold gifts of God, we have not been as faithful as we should have been—and that as Christians redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God, we have been deficient in zeal, and love, and devotedness to his service.

With this humbling sense of their own short-comings, your committee desire to thank the Almighty Disposer of events, for whatever measure of success may have attended their labours during the past year. And they now proceed to lay before you a brief statement of the operations of the society, so far as they have been reported in each of the parishes or missions comprising the district.

Reports have been received from the different Parochial Associations, in the following order, viz. :—

CAPAN PAROCHIAL ASSOCIATION.

This committee report that in consequence of the severity of the weather, the parochial meetings were not as numerously attended as they otherwise would have been. This will be understood, when it is recollected that the present winter has been one of unusual severity, and that in consequence of the frequent heavy snow storms, the roads in many places have been rendered impassable.

The following improvements, although of a strictly local nature, are deemed not unworthy of notice in this report.

ST. PAUL'S PAROCHIAL COMMITTEE.

During the past year the grave yard of St. Paul's Church, comprising an area of three acres, has been neatly enclosed with a good substantial board fence, and the interior of the Church is being painted in imitation of oak, and the work is very nearly completed. The cost of these improvements has been estimated

at about £50, and it is thought that the portion of the funds of the Parochial Association available for local purposes this year will be sufficient to liquidate the balance still due on them.

This committee has raised during the past year the sum of £12 5s. 0d.; one-fourth of which will be transmitted to the Parent Society.

ST. JOHN'S PAROCHIAL COMMITTEE.

This committee report that the members of the congregation have within the past year, procured an excellent melodeon, at a cost of more than £20; the expense of which has been defrayed, partly from the funds of the association and partly from voluntary subscription for that purpose. A new lightning-rod has also been erected, with a view to the preservation of the building; and this appears the more necessary, as the previous tower of this Church was destroyed by lightning.

Your committee are happy to hear that most of the members of the Church in Cavan have faithfully and cheerfully paid their subscriptions to their minister's salary during the past year—an excellent example, and worthy of general imitation, when we consider the greatly increased expenses of the clergy, in consequence of the high price of all the necessaries of life. If the incomes of the clergy are not regularly and duly paid by their people, difficulty and embarrassment must be the consequence, and the people as well as their pastor will suffer by this neglect and injustice.

The sum of £17 15s. 0d. has been raised by this association for the past year, one-fourth of which is at the disposal of the Parent Society.

PERRYTOWN PAROCHIAL ASSOCIATION.

The Rev. John Hilton having been recently appointed to the charge of this mission, two Parochial Associations have been fully established, and your committee believe with complete success, and with every prospect of future usefulness. There are two churches within this mission, the one at Perrytown, the other at Elizabethville, five miles apart; and for each congregation an association has been wisely established.

When the objects of the Church Society were duly explained to the people at Perrytown, by the clergy then present at the meeting, they came cheerfully forward and subscribed the sum of £4 15s. 0d. in the church, which, by the zealous exertions of the missionary and two earnest-minded parishioners, was subsequently raised to £12 3s. 9d., most of which was paid at the time of subscribing.

ELIZABETHVILLE.

After Divine Service upon New Year's Day, there was a parochial meeting held in the Church at this place, and the members of the congregation have subscribed the sum of £4 13s. 4d. And it is believed that had the worthy missionary been enabled to visit the people of that neighbourhood in sufficient time, in order to explain to them the nature and objects of the Society, a much larger amount might have been raised.

But, taking into consideration the fact that the missionary has been only recently appointed, and that by many of our people there the objects of the Church Society were very little, if at all understood—your committee feel that the mission of Perrytown has done extremely well, and has in this respect set a very good example to other rural missions similarly circumstanced.

The members of both Parochial Committees in this mission gladly avail themselves of the three-fourths allotted to local purposes, in order to procure communion plate and covering for the altar, both of which are greatly needed. But a hope is at the same time expressed that hereafter a much larger proportion than one-fourth will be sent to the Parent Society for general purposes.

The committee at Elizabethville make special mention of Mr. M'Murtry, by whose energy and very great exertions the Church at that place has been chiefly erected.

CARTWRIGHT PAROCHIAL ASSOCIATION.

This committee report that a highly satisfactory meeting was held according to appointment, at which the clergy then present, together with several of the laity, enforced and very ably advocated the claims of the Society. The people, as on two former occasions, came forward and paid down their subscriptions, amounting to £10. This is an example which might be copied with advantage by some of the older and more settled parishes in our towns and villages.

It appears that the subscriptions in this township have been nearly doubled during the two years that the Church Society has had a Parochial Association established therein. This clearly shows that as the claims of the Society become better known to our people, they are the more ready and willing to assist in supporting and carrying on its operations.

There is one feature in this mission which deserves a special notice in our Report, because it clearly shews the rapid increase of the church in our rural parishes; increased church accommodation is already needed, the church having become too small for the congregation.