

Walker, touching the disposal of Church property at Fergus, was referred to the Rev. Rural Dean Palmer to report on.

The Report of the Clergy Trust Committee was read.

Hon. G. S. Boulton, seconded by Rev. Dr. Strong, moved its adoption, and that it be inserted in the minute book of the Society, and that the same gentlemen be requested to manage the fund for the ensuing year. Carried.

The Report of the Western Episcopal Endowment Committee was read.

Rev. Dr. Cronyn, seconded by Rev. R. Flood, moved its adoption, and that it be entered in the minute book of the Society, and that the gentlemen who have noted on this Committee be requested to continue in office for another year. Carried.

Rev. H. Mulkins, seconded by Hon. G. S. Boulton, moved the amendment to the 18th section of the Constitution, of which he had given notice at the previous meeting,—which was carried.

The Secretary proposed that the names of Rev. W. Adamson and H. Joseph, Esq., be placed on the Standing Committee, the Rev. Dr. Scadding and Peter Paterson, Esq., retiring. Carried.

The Land Committee, Finance Committee, Secretary, Treasurer, and Auditors were re-appointed.

The Secretary then moved that the following gentlemen, whose names had been proposed last meeting, Messrs. Gates, Simpson, Vidal and Rev. A. Williams, be elected members of the corporation. Carried.

The meeting then adjourned until 7½, to re-assemble in the St. Lawrence Hall.

The meeting re-assembled at 7½ p.m.—The Lord Bishop in the chair. Prayers were read by the Rev. H. J. Grasett. The Lord Bishop requested the Secretary to read the annual report. The Rev. T. F. Kennedy read as follows:

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INCORPORATED CHURCH SOCIETY OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO.

Presented at the Annual Meeting at Toronto, held on Tuesday, June 16th, 1857.

In presenting the Fifteenth Annual Report of the Diocesan Church Society, the Committee can not but express a feeling of deep humiliation in announcing the fact, that instead of that large increase in the funds of the institution which might have been anticipated, there has been a falling off, which, though but small in the absolute amount, does nevertheless, in the mere fact that it exists, to any extent at all, afford ground for unfeigned regret.

Your Committee are quite aware that many reasons may be assigned which will tend to explain in a very natural way the deficiency which unfortunately appears.

The great monetary pressure which has existed for some months, the consequent stagnation in commerce which has ensued, and the enormous rise which has taken place in the cost of the necessaries of life, will go far towards accounting for the diminished offerings which have been contributed towards carrying out the work of the Church Society, and moreover, when it is taken into consideration that the collections in the various parishes are seldom made till near the close of the financial year, a period which has brought them within the full influence of the commercial and monetary difficulties which have recently prevailed, your Committee deem it a cause for thankfulness that the deficiency is no greater.

The fact of the existence of a deficiency, however, easily it may be accounted for, brings with fearful prominence before the mind, a custom, of the prevalence of which it affords incontestable evidence, that, namely, of making our first retrenchment in our religious offerings, whenever the circumstances of our time or position call for economy.

The absorbing spirit of reckless speculation which for some time past has been so rife among us has induced almost every class in their hot haste to be rich for this world, to run the risk of making themselves eternally poor by withholding from Him "who alone giveth power to get wealth," that portion of their worldly substance which of right belongs to Him.

There are other thoughts, however, which are suggested to the thoughtful mind, not so much by the deficiency itself as by the very causes which would naturally be assigned for the purpose of accounting for it.

After a period of unexampled prosperity, we suddenly find ourselves obliged to account for a falling off in our religious offerings by reference to a prevailing scarcity of means, a commercial crisis, and a ruinous rise in the price of every article of consumption, combined with, and in no inconsiderable degree arising from, a wild tendency to speculation, carried out, as we have seen in too many cases, without regard to the principles of Christian integrity, and often indeed in defiance of the simplest dictates of worldly honour.

As Christians we must recognise the divine government of the minutest affairs of men, remembering that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Heavenly Father's knowledge. We cannot therefore assign the prevalence of a state of things which strongly affects the interests of so many to the influence of chance, neither ought we be content to attribute them solely to second causes. There is a God that judgeth in the earth, and in these things we should recognise his chastisements; we should moreover pause to ask what may be the special provocations which call forth these visitations of His Providence.

Notwithstanding the sneer of the scoffer who would stigmatize as superstitious the practical recognition of the divine government, we can hardly doubt that as a community we have offended the most High by appropriating to secular uses that which had been set apart for the furtherance of His gospel, and that we have already begun to suffer the consequences of this evil deed.

The analogy of Holy Scripture, the consent of all nations, and the very nature of the crime might lead us to expect that misfortunes would befall the individuals or communities who were concerned in its perpetration. And he must be resolved to shut his eyes to the testimony of the past who will venture to deny that this probability regarded *a priori* is fully borne out by the testimony and facts of history.

If, then, as individuals, we would escape the guilt incurred by this act of the community, we must be careful in no way directly or indirectly to appropriate to our use that which we solemnly believe was dedicated to God's service. It can easily be ascertained what amount of the Reserve Fund has been awarded to our several municipalities, we should then make voluntary offerings for the service of God in addition to our usual contributions, equal in amount to the proportion of taxation which we should have had to pay

INCOME.

Your Committee now submit a brief statement of the Society's Income, and of the income and expenditure on account of its several objects, a

more detailed account of which will be furnished in the appendix to the printed report.

The income of the Parent Society for the past year up to the time of the books being placed in the Auditor's hands, exclusive of moneys received on account of Special Trusts, after deducting £220 2s. 6d. received on account of the previous year's income and acknowledged in the last report as received after the books were closed,

Amounted to.....	£3006	1	10
To this may be added amount received since the books were audited.....	218	18	11
The estimated income of the several Branches and Associations, so far as has been yet ascertained amounted to.....	£2756	6	6
Deduct as remitted to Parent Society, about one-fourth	959	14	2

Moneys received on account of various Trusts.....	371	7	5
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The Auditors report that the income of the Parent Society was £358 less than the last year, since the books left their hands £218 18s. 11d. has been received, so that up to this time the deficiency amounts to £134 2s. 7d. By comparing the above statement with that of the previous year it will be found that though the income of the District and Parochial Associations for the past year was in excess to the amount of about £419, only little over one-fourth instead of one-third was remitted to the Parent Society. The Parochial Reports generally are all of an encouraging character. Two or three have not as yet reported. From the fact that the deficiency in the income of the Society is not attributable to a falling off in the income of the Branches, your Committee are led to believe that the loyalty of our communion would more liberally respond to the quarterly appeals on behalf of the principal objects of the Society were notice not only given of the object to which the collection would be applied, but likewise the cause advocated at each quarterly sermon.

Previous to each quarterly collection your Secretary has, during the past year, been careful to insert a plain statement of the assets and expenditure of each fund in the *Ecclesiastical Gazette*, but now it is proposed that he transmit to every clergyman copies of the last paragraph, which has been usually printed on the fly leaf of the Annual Report, which, if they please, can be stuck up in their studies and vestry rooms, to remind them of the time when the several objects of the Society are to be advocated, and your Committee recommend that, whenever feasible, the collections be taken up within the months specified.

COLLECTIONS FOR THE MISSION FUND,

Taken up at 178 stations, amounted to.....	£295	8	4
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WIDOWS AND ORPHANS' FUND.

At 204 stations	£160	2	10
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GENERAL PURPOSES FUND.

At 152 stations	£255	12	7
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STUDENTS' FUND.

At 121 stations	£103	12	8
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Number of stations, 655..... £1204 16 5
A decrease when compared with last year of one hundred and seventy-six pounds, which can be accounted for from the fact that collections were only taken up at 655 stations instead of 717 the year previous. The year ending 30th March,