

not the ability to serve them. We have now only to refer to the official (government) census to see the results of this neglect. In this diocese the proportion of church people to the population is in 1887 about one to five.

Let us now proceed to note the progress of the Church during this period. One of the earliest Church Society Reports gives the following list of places, within the present limits of the diocese, where churches were erected previous to 1839:—Niagara, Grimsby, Ancaster and Dundas, Stamford and Thorold, St. Catharines, Guelph, Nassagaweya, Hamilton, Wellington Square, Fort Erie and the Ridges.

Guelph. In 1832, the Rev. A. Palmer was appointed to the mission of Guelph, and parts adjacent. The next year he completed a church capable of holding 400 people. Mr. Palmer called his bishop's attention to the fact that he was in the centre of a tract comprising the townships of Guelph, Eramosa, Erin, Esquesing, Puslinch, Nassagaweya, north half of Waterloo, Nichol and Garafraxa, all of which were very generally settled; and within that tract there was, save himself, neither clergyman nor catechist of the Church of England—a space not less than thirty miles square. In consequence of Mr. Palmer's appeal, a travelling missionary was soon afterwards appointed for this district, with head-quarters at Nassagaweya.

Hamilton and Barton. In 1834 the Rev. J. Gamble Geddes (now Dean of Niagara), was sent by Bishop Stewart of Quebec to visit Hamilton, which was described as a flourishing place where the people were desirous of building a church and of having a resident clergyman among them. At that time occasional services were performed in the Court House by the Rev. John Miller, then Rector of Ancaster, and in his absence, by a Divinity student, Mr. J. C. Usher, afterwards Rector of Brantford. In March, 1835, Mr. Geddes was appointed as missionary to Hamilton and Barton and parts adjacent, extending from Glanford and Saltfleet in one direction to Wellington Square in the other. Mr. Geddes was in a few years relieved of Barton and Glanford by the appointment of the Rev. R. N. Merritt.

Wellington Square, now called Burlington, was organized as a parish in 1835, when the church called St. Luke's was built, chiefly through the efforts of Mrs. W. Kerr, the daughter of old Chief Brant. The Rev. F. Mack was the first clergyman. In 1836 he was succeeded by the Rev. H. O'Neil. Rev. Mr. Geddes held services after Mr. O'Neil's departure till Rev. T. Greene's appointment in July, 1838. Mr. Greene extended the ministrations of the Church to Waterdown, Lowville, Hannahsville, and was instrumental in forming congregations at Palermo, Bronte and Oakville.

In 1839, when Archdeacon Strachan was consecrated Bishop of Toronto, the number of persons professing adherence to the Church of England in this province was roughly stated at 150,000, being over 40 per cent. of the population. The

number of clergy in the exercise of their ministry was 77. The number of churches built or in course of erection was about 100.

The population of the districts which now constitute the Diocese of Niagara was 78,000. There are no statistics to show what proportion of the population belonged to the Church at that date. Although our people had during the previous decade been wandering away in large numbers from the Church, and although this portion of Upper Canada had always been a stronghold of dissent, there must still have been fully thirty per cent. who desired to worship in the Church of their fathers. The clergy—only ten in number—were all more or less itinerants. Many settlements were wholly unprovided with the ordinances of our holy religion. In the whole of the newly erected district of Wellington, which was everywhere scattered over with a Church population, there was but one clergyman. A large section of country in the Niagara and Gore districts had no clergyman. In the whole county of Halton, with a population of 32,000, there were but two clergymen. Our people had a deep sense of the value of religious services, and a strong manifestation of attachment for the Church. In some places churches had been built without any definite prospect of a clergyman. With these advantages it might be supposed that the voluntary system would work successfully. Bishop Mountain, in his report in 1838, said it was a failure. "Even," he said, "if the country were far more advanced, and the people had some command of money, I am persuaded that the clergy could not be provided for by the operation of the voluntary system." Our first bishops and clergy and laity were accustomed to the endowment system, and they had little confidence in any other. What was to be done? Neither clergymen, nor the means of maintaining them, were to be found for the tenth part of the destitute stations. External assistance was promised to a very limited extent. The necessities of the times demanded other agencies for neglected districts, and the principle of self-help to be laid down as far as it was possible. Had a lay ministry been established, under the direction of the clergy, to work among our people in destitute parts, thousands of them would have been saved to the Church. If the Church had taken those who had purchased to themselves a "good report," and made of them readers, sub-deacons, yea, priests even, if necessary, we should not have to state that in 1848, out of 148,000, the population of the present limits of Niagara diocese, there were but 30,000 church people. Such a course, we know, was pursued when necessity required it in primitive days. Such was done by our Church in England after the departure of the Romanists and Puritans from her fold. Such a course, we know to our sorrow, was pursued by the Methodists in this country. Local preachers, exhorters and evangelists were appointed to do frontier work. They were, as a rule, very ignorant men, but they were hard workers and