

and the three-fourths of the Thornhill Association annually placed to the credit of this fund, exclusive of the dividend in the current year, will on the 13th of April next give a total to the credit of this fund of £83 18s. 2d. £25 19s. 4d. was the amount of the $\frac{2}{3}$ returnable to these associations and available for parochial objects during the past year, of which £18 15s. was the share coming to the Thornhill Association, and £7 4s. 4d. less cost of collection, to Vaughan, which latter was expended on necessary repairs of St. Stephen's Church.

2nd. Turning from the consideration of parochial objects to matters of a more general interest, your Committee are gratified in being enabled to report, that the income of the Parent Society, on which, next to God's blessing, its efficient working evidently depends, has during the past year exceeded that of former years. Cheering as this intelligence is, it is nevertheless not without its drawback. Your Committee regret to find it stated in the Society's last report, "that with all their hopeful expectations for the future, the Society cannot look with entire complacency on the result of its work during the year which has just closed, for, although there has been a considerable increase of income, it is by no means commensurate with the growing wants of a rapidly increasing population."

However interesting and instructive, it would occupy more time and space than can now be conveniently afforded to enter into a minute detail of all the various and multiplied wants that arrest the Society's attention, more or less in every part of this vast diocese, and in every department of its labours; and it is less necessary here, because the Society's Report, containing an interesting and circumstantial account of all such details, will shortly be in the hands of subscribers. Your Committee will therefore confine their observations within a narrower compass—the bounds of the Home Rural Deanery—with which your association is more intimately connected.

By the 18th rule of the Society's constitution, it is enacted, that district associations in connection and correspondence with the Society shall be established, comprising one or more districts (as shall be approved by the president), the same to be composed of the clergy resident within the bounds of the district, and all other members of the Church who shall contribute to the aid of the Society's funds. A committee of management shall be chosen and a treasurer appointed, who shall receive and account for all monies raised by the parochial associations within the district, coming into his hands; and retain for general district purposes the $\frac{2}{3}$, if not required by the parishes.

Several district associations were established after this model immediately upon the formation of the Society, and although such organization may fairly be objected to in theory, yet in practice it is found to work beneficially; several of these associations now supporting one or more travelling missionaries, and a Bible, Prayer-book and religious Tract Depository within their respective bounds.

It is only very recently that this Deanery has been constituted a District Association, and district matters of general interest have consequently been so far but partially attended to. There is at present no travelling Missionary; no Bible or Tract Depository, strictly speaking, within the bounds of the district. The Committee of management are therefore extremely anxious to supply as speedily as possible this deficiency; and to obtain the necessary funds, it is proposed to assess the $\frac{2}{3}$ returnable to the Parochial Association. But your Committee, after mature deliberation and with every desire heartily to co-operate in any scheme which may be found practicable and generally adopted, are of opinion that to trench upon our parochial funds in the present state of our resources would be giving the death-blow to all hope of being able to conduct our parochial undertakings to a successful issue within any reasonable period.

The object must however be somehow or other accomplished. Your Committee therefore, after giving the subject all the consideration in their power, have decided to recommend, that in taking up subscriptions, the collectors be respectfully requested in future to solicit contributions to the three following objects:—1st. The ordinary and customary support of the Society; 2nd. The district travelling missionary fund; and, 3rd. The district Bible and Prayer-book and religious Tract Society; and your Committee allow themselves to indulge the hope, that these several objects will receive a generous and hearty support; not only on account of their intrinsic merits, but further, in consideration of the benefit accruing to the district from the appropriation of the Clergy Reserves Fund to secular purposes.

In last year's report some observations were made upon the subject of the secularization of the reserves, and a mode pointed out by which its disastrous effects might in some measure be mitigated, if not wholly obviated. Not that your Committee ever meant to recommend that a re-appropriation of the Clergy Reserve Fund to its original purpose should be made the subject of discussion at the Council board of each municipality; for they were aware that such reappropriation, if carried, would, in the present state of the law, be illegal. But they thought and still think

that all who regard the secularization as an unjustifiable act of spoliation are in conscience bound to give back to the Church an amount fully equivalent to the benefit they derive therefrom.

That the secularization of those funds at least, which were realized by the sale of the Clergy Reserve lands, and solemnly set apart for the support of religion, was an irreligious act and almost wholly without precedent in European states, your Committee are daily more and more convinced, and the statement made by that distinguished man, the Chevalier Bunsen, in his recently published work which has lately caused so much sensation in Europe, if anything were wanting, would fully sustain that conviction. It is as follows:—

"I believe I may lay down the maxim, as *universally adopted* by all juriconsults, that church property is sacred; but not like private property, irrespective of the use made of it. The possessor for the time being has no right of disposal over it; he has simply the usufruct, and that only under certain conditions and for a public end. If that end be not answered, those conditions not observed, the state has not only the right, but the obligation to take away the property from the possessor or corporation; still, so far as possible, for the better attainment of the same end; not for the enriching of the public treasury. This is (he continues) what on the whole really took place at the Reformation, as far as the rapacity of princes or aristocratic corporations allowed; and only on such and similar appropriations of ecclesiastical revenues has the blessing of God rested." And a little further on he proceeds to say that: "In modern times, England, and recently also Sardinia, are those states which have treated this question most honestly and generously. In the retrenchment of the capitular bodies in England, and the reduction of the incomes of those retained, *every penny* has been devoted to the augmentation of parochial stipends, the miserable condition of which formed a disgraceful contrast to the princely revenues of certain dignitaries. So likewise Sardinia, in abolishing those monasteries and convents which did not devote themselves to education and works of mercy, has most solemnly established the principle, that the money thus saved should be expended for the benefit of the clergy, for whom no adequate provision had been made."

Here then, we have, not the private opinion of an individual, nor an inference deduced from a chain of abstract reasoning which might possibly be erroneous, but the distinct statement of an incontrovertible matter of fact, by an individual of eminent experience and ability and of vast research; and also, be it remembered, not a member