

surrounding islands, which you know is the diocese committed to my charge, and in which I am thankful to say you, who read this report, are already interested? We too have our gold "fever." At Alberni, on the west coast, there are already two large mines in working order, and in all parts of the island claims are "staked out," and almost everybody you meet has a piece of ore in his pocket, which he will tell you contains a nameless proportion of gold, silver, or copper, and sometimes all three! If the truth be told, too often those who are deeply in debt to the tradesmen of the place, instead of attempting to pay their bills, are speculating with their last dollar, and men who at almost infinite pains cleared the land, and made themselves a home, are tempted to throw it all up and go in search of gold. Of course, a day may come when Victoria may be as important as Johannesburg or San Francisco, when the coal-mines of Nanaimo and Wellington may supply fuel for countless smelters.

But all this is not yet, and never was there a time when the Church needed financial support more than the present. The "hard times" have made themselves terribly felt, and many who were rich a few years ago, and could afford to give liberally, are now deeply involved in debt, and cannot even pay the taxes on their lands; while a property that has upon it no mortgage is rarely to be found, and the interest upon the mortgage is often unpaid. I speak feelingly. A mortgage of 26,000 dollars (£5,200), belonging to the Bishopric estate, has produced 135 dollars (£23) in the last three years.

Fortunately, however, my appeal has not to be for my own stipend, but for carrying on and spreading the work in the diocese. It is with deep pain that I have again to record the fact that the S.P.G. has refused all my appeals for help. Why this is so, no one out here can understand. In the last letter which my revered predecessor wrote not long before his death, he described this neglect as "simply scandalous." A grant of £300 a year would have made all the difference to the work here, and the authorities of the venerable society can form no idea of what the result will be of their refusal to help. I have begged for a special investigation of the needs of the islands, but no answer is forthcoming. Notwithstanding this, I am thankful to say that we have not been forced to reduce the number of our clergy, and, although our Mission Fund is overdrawn to the amount of 1,500 dollars (£300), the miserably small stipends of the clergy have been paid regularly every quarter. We hope that the Lenten offering in the diocese, supplemented by help from you, will reduce this overdraft and also enable us to meet the next quarter's grants. It cannot be said that we do not try

to help ourselves. Last year for Church expenses (apart from endowments and interest upon investments), nearly \$4,500 was collected in the diocese for carrying on the work of the Church, and of this amount £3,000 was raised in Victoria. According to the returns of the clergy, the total number of communicants is 1,500, so that it would be easy to compare the amount given with the collections in parishes in the old country. While dealing with statistics, I may add that there were 275 baptisms, 111 confirmation candidates, 80 marriages, and 70 burials. It is a difficult matter to state the actual numbers belonging to the Church of England. In 1891, when the last census was taken, 10,485 returned themselves as members, but the population has certainly decreased since then, and the actual number of those whom the clergy return as attached to the Church, is about 7,000.

During the past year we have welcomed the Rev. R. A. Bosanquet, who obtained the permission of the Bishop of Norwich to resign the living of Brightwell, near Ipswich, and volunteer for work in the diocese for five years. Oh! that others may follow his example. So far as the settlers are concerned, the addition of three clergy to our ranks would enable us to cover the whole ground—but for lack of those three much is left untouched. Alberni, which I have already mentioned, calls loudly for a resident clergyman. Every month do I receive appeals from Church people there, asking when their wants are to be supplied, and at present the utmost I can promise is an occasional service. Last October, when I was able to pay them a visit, which can only be done by a drive of fifty miles from Nanaimo, it was most trying to have to listen to their complaints, and within three months from now it is more than probable that the population will be doubled. With a grant of £100 a year from the S.P.G., I could give them what they want at once. I had hoped to ask Mr. Bosanquet to undertake Alberni, but just as he arrived the parish of St. Alban's, Nanaimo, became vacant, as Mr. Taylor wished for other work, and I was thankful to be able to appoint him. In Nanaimo, six or seven years ago, there was a large "pay-sheet" for the miners every month, but owing to complications of trade with the United States and other causes, the output of coal has lately been reduced, and there is extreme difficulty in collecting sufficient to pay the ordinary Church expenses (including, alas! interest upon a large debt), apart from the clergyman's stipend, which in Mr. Bosanquet's case is merely nominal.

At our other coal city of Wellington, Mr. Cooper has obtained the help of the Rev. S. Asquith as curate, and together they are able to undertake a large district, including North-