

tion to pay such fees to a private school as alone can make it pay expenses, and our means are insufficient to allow of our sinking an annual sum in supplying the deficit.

It is a matter of the deepest regret to me not only because I am as strongly as ever attached to the principal of Religious Education, but also because we have, in regard to Lorne College, approached so nearly to success. We have been just, as it were, on a balance, and it needed only two or three more boys to constitute such a margin as would have secured a sound financial basis.

I feel that I can do no more at present, but can only wait until the Churchmen of the Diocese are so sensible of the need of Church Schools as to be willing to undertake the expense of establishing them and the responsibility of maintaining them.

**SYNOD.**—The Synod of last year was unable to meet, owing to the death of the Lay Secretary. It was summoned for form's sake, to comply with the Constitution. I propose summoning the Synod, to which lay delegates will be elected at Easter next, for Tuesday, April 17th., and I hope by the early announcement of the date we shall secure a full attendance for the consideration of several important matters, such as the Canons on Discipline and Marriage laid over from the last Synod; the proposed Canadian Church Union, and the question of Provincial Organization. The last is perhaps the most important of all, inasmuch as it involves, necessarily, the surrender of a certain amount of Diocesan independence, and it will have to be our care in organizing a body superior to our Diocesan Synod to maintain in all their integrity the privileges which of right belong to the latter. It will be proposed to appoint delegates, Clerical and Lay, to meet delegates from the Synod of the Diocese of Columbia, and representatives from the Diocese of Caledonia. The meeting will, I presume, be held in Victoria, and it would be convenient if it could be fixed for April 19th. so as to allow of our Clerical delegates returning home for Sunday, if necessary.

I hope that this important matter will have due consideration when the time comes for the selection of Lay delegates.

**THE DIOCESAN FUND.**—In the letter which I caused to be read in the Churches on Christmas Day, relative to the Diocesan Fund, I fully explained the object of that Fund, and I expressed myself as strongly as I felt disposed to do regarding the personal burden which the insufficiency of that Fund imposes upon me. The offertories on that occasion, throughout the Diocese, amounted to a little over \$100.00, and the contributions that have since come in include only one of \$50.00 and two or three of \$5.00 each.

I fully accept it as part of the responsibility of my office both to inculcate the duty of generous almsgiving and to be forward in setting an example of it, but the continued absence of response, whether to one's appeal, or example, produces a kind of lonesomeness which is rather discouraging, and more especially when there is an important principle involved in the appeal, the principle, viz., of Diocesan unity as opposed to exclusive Parochialism.

I can only hope that as parochial needs become more fully satisfied this principle will receive more attention than at present.

**CONFIRMATIONS.**—The Confirmation list of 1887 is, I hope, the most unsatisfactory we shall ever have to report. Except amongst the Indians scarcely any work whatever in this direction was done, and none at all in some of our most important parishes. The date of my return was well known and I fully expected to be called upon for Confirmations in every parish before Advent. I hope that no Candidates may have been lost through the delay but it is, unfortunately, too probable.

**THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE.**—The Confer-

ence of Anglican Bishops, held every ten years has been appointed to be held this year in London, in the month of July, and in obedience to the summons of the Archbishop of Canterbury, it will be necessary for me to leave for England towards the end of May. My absence will be a comparatively short one on this occasion, since I go for the specific object of the Conference alone. I need hardly say that, equally with my last year's journey, my visit will involve no expense to the Diocese.

**PASTORAL STAFF.**—I cannot conclude without a word of acknowledgment of the beautiful gift presented to me last year of a Pastoral Staff. I do not, indeed, so far flatter myself as to suppose that the gift was wholly personal. The staff is to be, we may hope, the official symbol of the Chief Pastor of the Diocese for many generations. Nevertheless, I may perhaps, at least, assume that personal regard has made me the first holder of it. I hope you will give me, along with it, your constant prayers that I may always use it to the Glory of God and the benefit of His Church, while it will always be my prayer and my strong endeavour so to rule and so to live that some increase of Unity may be the fruit of my labour.

### A BAPTISMAL QUERY.

**SIR,**—May I, without being suspected of challenging controversy, invite attention to a subject worth considering, but, so far as I am aware, not much considered?

Those who study the Baptismal Offices of the Church must be struck by the extreme care with which the verity of the sacrament is guarded no less than its doctrine. Many Churchmen probably think the ordinary rule, that baptism shall be administered only "upon Sundays and other holy days," and immediately after the Second lesson, rather burdensome to the congregation. But the subject is plainly considered of the first importance. It is because on those days, "the most number of people come together," there may be the most number present to "testify the receiving of them that be newly baptized into the number of Christ's Church." To "testify," not only to see. It is that there may be overwhelming evidence and proof producible in every case that the person who claims, or may claim to be a real member of the Church is so indeed; that the whole congregation may be certified, if necessary, that there is no false or invalid claim to the brotherhood.

This comes out still more strongly in the Office for Private Baptism. The child, if it lives, is to be brought to the Church, that, if the parish priest had himself baptized it, "the congregation may be certified of the true form of baptism by him before privately used." In which case he is to say, "I certify you," &c., specifying the time and place of the baptism, and that there were "divers witnesses," who could of course be called on to testify "to the due and prescribed order of the Church" then and there used. The congregation are not called on to accept the fact of the baptism or its validity on the bare word of the priest that he had baptized the child privately.

If some "other lawful minister" had baptized it, neither the priest himself nor the congregation is expected to be contented with the simple assertion of those who bring the child "that the same child is already baptized," but the priest is to put precise questions to those who bring it. And he is to be governed entirely by the answers to those questions there and then publicly given. He may possibly have private and personal knowledge of all the facts—e.g., if one of his assistant-curates had baptized the child, told him all about it, and

duly entered it in the register. No matter. For the purpose then present he is assumed to be as ignorant as the congregation. He has to "find by the answers of such as bring the child that all things were done as they ought to be," and then, and not otherwise, he is to "certify" the Church "that all is well done and according unto due order." But if the answers are such that "it cannot appear" (that is, that the answers themselves do not demonstrate to the congregation then present) that all is well done, then, whatever the priest's own knowledge or conviction may be, he is to baptize the child conditionally, that the congregation may be absolutely certified of the reality of the baptism.

Such extraordinary precautions does the Church take even within her own body to guard against the possibility of error. And I think no one who duly considers what it is that she is guarding will think these precautions excessive. I am afraid, however, they are by no means always observed.

Now the point to which I would invite attention is this:—If the Church thinks such minute care necessary in cases occurring within her own body, it is likely that she would require less care in cases where persons are to be received into the communion of the Church from external societies? As a matter of notorious fact, such cases are very common. Numbers of persons from various dissenting bodies are brought into the Church from time to time. Are there, then, in these cases, or even in any appreciable proportion of them, any precautions taken in any respect commensurate with those prescribed by the Church herself in her public offices, to certify the congregation of the faithful by full and plain evidence publicly set before them that all is "well done," if not "in due order, concerning the baptising" of these persons?

If such precautions are not taken, why not? Ought they not to be taken? And ought not conditional baptism to be administered in every case in which the answers publicly given to questions publicly asked are not such as to satisfy the congregation according to the requirements of the Church in her baptismal offices in cases of "reception," after private baptism?

I am not now raising any question as to the validity of dissenters' baptisms. But I may be permitted to add two remarks—first, that we can hardly think the Church would be less careful in such cases than in those of baptisms administered by her own ministers; and secondly, that there seems reason to think that the dissenters are, to a considerable extent, growing more careless about baptism.—*John Walter Lea, in the Church Chronicle, Kentucky.*

### CORRESPONDENCE.

[The name of Correspondent must in all cases be enclosed with letter, but will not be published unless desired. The Editor will not hold himself responsible, however, for any opinions expressed by Correspondents.]

### THE ALMS OFFERTORY.

*To the Editor of the CHURCH GUARDIAN:*

**SIR,**—I feel sure that nothing can be more distressing to the one who loves to see all things done "decently and in order" than the irreverent manner in which the majority of Churchwardens present the alms to the officiating priest and then rush from the sanctuary as if in an hurry to get back to their seats.

Would not the custom observed by the Churchwardens of a certain parish Church in this Diocese, viz., of standing in a reverential attitude before the Holy Table, while the alms which they have just delivered to the clergyman, are by him humbly offered to God, be more in keeping with the rubric which directs that they shall "reverently bring it to the priest?"