

THE REV. MR. READ'S REPLY.

Orillia, 21th December, 1878.

MY DEAR SIR,—It affords me very great pleasure to offer to you and through you to the members of the little Church at Atherly my sincere thanks for the kindly sentiments which have prompted them to the substantial offerings just received.

The appropriateness of the season and the spirit in which they are made greatly enhance their value, but this is still further enhanced by the encouragement thus afforded, that the sacred ministrations of our Church are truly valued.

That they may be sanctified not only to the present comfort but also the eternal welfare of your little band, and that greater and more regular advantages may shortly be secured, is my most ardent prayer.

Wishing you and your family much happiness at the present season.

Believe me, my dear sir,

Very sincerely yours,

T. BOLTON READ.

D. G. Hewitt, Esq.,

Reeve of Mara and Rama.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH SOCIETY MEETING.

We regret that we can only give a brief outline of the proceedings at the very interesting Church Society Meeting that was held in St. George's Church on Friday, 31st ult. In consequence of the short notice, electioneering excitement, &c., the attendance was not so large as might have been expected. At 7 p.m., Dr. Atkinson took the chair, and the usual prayers having been read, the reverend chairman explained the objects of the meeting. He stated that for many years the custom had been for the district meetings to be held alternately at Niagara and St. Catharines, but that in consequence of the Hon. J. H. Cameron, a very influential member of the Synod—a gentleman fully conversant with the wants of the Church—having most kindly offered his valuable services to take a part in the parochial meetings through the District, he had determined to call a meeting in this parish. The notice given was very short, and he feared that on that account, and for other reasons, there would not be a large attendance. He regretted this very much, for it was most desirable that the laity should realize the exact position now occupied by the Church. The great Church Societies at home had transferred the aid they once gave this colony to other lands not so far advanced in wealth as this country; they had been deprived of their property, and their Church must now rely for her advancement upon the voluntary offerings of her children. The Hon. W. H. Merritt then moved the first resolution as follows:—

"That this meeting views with deep interest the increasing wants of the Church in this Diocese, and recognizes the necessity that exists for adequately meeting its requirements."

He spoke most feelingly of the blessings they enjoyed under the ministrations of their esteemed rector, and traced out the growth of the parish from a very humble beginning to its present high position. Now they possessed an excellent church, duly fitted out with every thing that was seemly and proper—they had also an excellent parsonage, and he could not omit bearing testimony to the great enthusiasm and unwearied industry manifested by the ladies of the congregation, on a late occasion, in liquidating the debt that remained upon it. Their zeal and energy was worthy of the greatest praise. But while they possessed so many blessings themselves, he felt that they also were bound to assist those who had not the same privileges. This was the great object of the

Church Society: but there was one feature in it which he confessed he did not like: that was the funding up of the money, expending only the interest, instead of devoting the collections from year to year to the main objects of the society.

J. F. Saxon, Esq., seconded the resolution in an eloquent and forcible speech. He reviewed the history of the Church in this colony, shewing the misrepresentations and frauds that had been brought to bear against her. Upon every possible occasion she had been dragged into the political arena, and made a foot-ball of by contending factions. He then took up a speech that had been made against her in Toronto, and shewed ably the subtle and insidious fallacies that pervaded its whole texture, winding up with an eloquent description of the scriptural principles on which she is based, and urging her children to stand by her in her day of trial, and not to permit her to fade away in any portion of the land.

The Rev. C. L. Ingles moved the second resolution:—

"That those who for Christ's sake deny themselves, especially in times like the present, in order that they may have wherewith to give to God's service and to the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom, may be assured of the Divine blessing."

He congratulated the congregation on their church, and the very graceful decorations emblematic of the holy season; and he earnestly wished that the members of the Church throughout the Province possessed similar blessed privileges to those they enjoyed. He then went on to show the duty incumbent on them to do what they could for their poorer brethren, and that they should use self-denial in order to do that duty efficiently. He believed that the distress that had fallen upon the land of late had been sent by the Almighty, for the neglect and apathy that prevailed among professing Christians. He illustrated this position by various references to the Holy Volume, and called upon the people to avert still heavier chastisements, by turning with renewed zeal to the extension of Christ's Kingdom on earth.

The Rev. Dr. Fuller, in seconding the resolution, expressed his satisfaction at seeing so many present, notwithstanding the untoward circumstances under which the meeting was called. He thought it was an excellent plan to hold such meetings before the collections were taken up, as they seemed to rouse the people to a sense of the important objects of the society. Former speakers had alluded to the alienation of our property, and the withdrawal of aid by the great societies at home; but he knew that if the people only did their duty, all would come out right. But we must banish from our hearts that narrow-minded selfishness, which would rest satisfied with supplying ourselves only with the means of grace,—we must remember that we have brethren remote from all Christian privileges—their habitation fixed in dry and thirsty lands where there is no fountain of living waters to refresh their souls—no public prayer—no sacraments.—Surrounded by these blessed privileges, we cannot, without an effort, realize the spiritual needs of the remote settlements. In one portion of this Western Province there were 50 Townships, inhabited by great numbers of their brethren, most anxious for the privileges they once possessed in their fathers' land; like David of old, their soul thirsting, their flesh longing for the spiritual blessings of former days. Dr. Fuller then alluded in strong terms of eulogy to the great zeal of the travelling missionary stationed at Welland, and the happy results arising from his ministrations. He could not conclude without alluding to an error into which the Hon. Mr. Merritt had fallen, with respect to the funding of the collections. All

the moneys collected were devoted to the various objects for which they were intended without any delay, with the exception of the widows and orphans' fund. This was the only money invested, and he was sure that every one who gave the subject mature consideration, would coincide with the views of those who determined that this fund should be exposed as little as possible to the influence of the financial depressions that occasionally fall upon all civilized communities. The reverend speaker then urged with much force the duty of denying ourselves in these times of pressure, in order to assist in the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. Standing, as it were, on the brink of a new year—having advanced so much nearer the hour of death and the day of judgment—we should seek for forgiveness of sins of omission and commission during the year just expiring, and go forth to meet the future, trusting, through God's mercy, to do our duty more earnestly and faithfully in the time still left.

The Hon. J. H. Cameron then moved the third resolution:—

"That the Church Society of this Diocese, as the duly authorised channel through which the contributions of the members of the Church may be directed to the aid of the poor missions and the promotion of the other Christian objects it has in view, deserves the countenance and support of all who wish well to our holy religion."

He said that every member of the Church could heartily subscribe to this resolution, for there was no organization for the extension of their holy religion that could so fully claim their support. In the mother country there were many organizations having various objects in view; as, for instance, the "Propagation Society," the "Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge," the "Additional Curate's Society," "Pastoral Aid Society," "Church Missionary and Bible Society," &c.; but the Church Society of this Diocese comprised all these objects in itself. If the members of the Church would only realize this, a society with so many noble objects in view would receive a ten-fold better support; they would readily and truly deny themselves to administer to it; and here he would declare in as forcible language as he could find, no matter what tortuous course political expediency may suggest, that he implicitly believed it to be the glory and duty of a nation to support a National Church. Look to the glorious old land, of which our proudest boast is to be the children, a mere speck on the map of the world, yet upon whose vast dominions the sun never sets! The God of our fathers has rained down blessings upon it; and why? Because the throne was based upon the altar; because the nation was faithful to the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The honourable gentleman then dwelt on the position of this colony; the fund intended by a pious monarch for the support of religion being alienated to secular purposes, and forcibly urged on the members of the Church to build up, so far as they could by their own efforts, what legislation had pulled down, showing that the Church Society was the true almoner of their subscriptions for this purpose. For what, said he, are the glorious objects this Society has in view? They are, the providing of ministers for destitute places; the sending of missionaries into remote settlements; the education of promising young men for the ministry; the building of parsonages. One of its main objects also was the diffusion of God's holy Word—sending forth the Bible and its best commentary, the Prayer Book, throughout the land. There is another object, the pensioning of the widows and orphans of the Clergy, which commands our warmest sympathies; and there is the training in Christianity of the Indians, who have been stripped of their lands, and their souls