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## DIocese OF QUEBEC.

CIRCULAR TO THE MISSIONARIES OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL AND THE CHURCH-WARDENS IN THEIR MISSIONS, WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

QUEBEC, 10th November, 1852.

REV. SIR AND GENTLEMEN,—I received some time ago a communication from the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, informing me of the result of certain deliberations of the Finance Committee of that Society, which, as the Secretary states, had reference to "its expenditure in the *older Colonies*, that is, mainly, the Dioceses of British North America." And he gives me to understand that the Society being disposed to accede to the recommendations of the Committee, (subject to any modifications which, at the suggestion of the Colonial Bishops or otherwise, it may be seen expedient to adopt,) we may now consider as ripe for execution a project, for which as we have long had notice of it, and to a partial extent, have founded upon it some of our arrangements of late years, within the Diocese, we cannot plead that we are unprepared,—a definite project for the gradual reduction and ultimate extinction of that expenditure, as made from home.

Such a measure as this, therefore, is to be regarded as actually in full train; and although the Society will, of course, preserve untouched the interests of individual Missionaries, and is not prepared, as I apprehend, to impose prospectively, any precise limitation upon the exercise of its bounty in helping to meet the new exigencies of progressive settlement in the country, yet with reference both to all existing and to all future Missions, the Society has announced its desire to limit its assistance henceforward, "in all cases, to a specified time."

It is evident, therefore that the crisis has arrived in which the Colonists are called upon to make their own resources for the support of their Religion, available to the utmost possible extent. I am well aware—no person can have better opportunities of being so—that in many of the Missions of this Diocese, beyond almost any other in the Colonies, the amount which the people can contribute towards the support of their Minister, is very inconsiderable, and in some instances so trifling, as scarcely to be felt in the form of addition to his humble stipend. But be it little or much which they can do, the maxim must be practically recognized, the habit must be cultivated, the rule must be enforced (and this has been done with success in some very poor and what had been considered unpromising places among ourselves,) that they who *own unto them spiritual things* shall be suffered to reap of their carnal things; and this for three especial reasons:

1. That it is a *duty* lying upon Christians, which is clearly laid down in the Word of God, and ought to be regarded as not only a duty but a *privilege*: 2. That the Society which, under God, has been the parent and nurse of the Colonial Church, feels it to be a duty on its *own side*, while serving the cause of his Church upon earth, to apportion its help according to the disposition manifested by the recipients to make a return of fruit,—remembering it to be a declared principle of the Divine proceedings themselves, that *from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath*; and 3. That since it appears to be contemplated

to allot, from time to time, a certain sum and no more, to the whole Diocese, the greatest vigilance and care must be exercised that *no portion* shall be denied the blessing of religious ministrations, because the means which might help that portion are absorbed in places from which something might be spared which has been made chargeable upon the general fund.

The details of all the arrangements here in question, I am not now in a position to furnish. The plan of operations has not been finally digested, and the communications passing upon the subject, between the Society and myself, have not been brought to their close. But I have judged it best to apprise you without loss of time, of what is in contemplation; and there are certain points of a practical kind, which (admitting the possibility of special cases of exception,) are capable of being immediately carried out, within the Missions themselves, and to which I take the liberty accordingly, of directing your attention at once.

1. That in every Mission where it has not yet been done, a *glebe*, varying in extent according to circumstances, but in no case less than 50 acres, should be acquired towards the future maintenance of the incumbent, and vested in him and his successors, according to the provisions of the Church Temporalities Act, (6 Vic., cap. 32, Sec. 16.) I think that no vacancy should be filled up which may be created by the death or removal of the Missionary, till this and the next following condition shall have been complied with; and to obviate the effects of too sudden a call upon the people in this way, preparation should be made before-hand for the contingency here indicated.

2. That a Parsonage-house, (wherever there is none already provided,) should be erected, and vested in like manner as the glebe,—the same to be completed within a specified time; and that in the mean time, suitable and sufficient accommodation for the Missionary should be provided, free of charge, by the congregation.

3. That a monthly Offertory-collection for a general Missionary fund should be established in all the Missions.

4. That a return should be prepared in all the Missions, of the amount (if any,) received for pew-rents, and the purposes to which it is applied, together with a statement of the prospect which may exist of its augmentation, and the extent to which it can be made applicable towards the support of the Ministry, or the formation of an accumulating fund for that object.

5. That in places already enjoying the benefit, through the bounty of the Society, of a glebe or Parsonage-house, or both, a proportionable addition should be looked for, to their contributions under the heads No. 3 and 4.

It may be proper, in order to your being better enabled to set before the people the claim which the Society has upon their thankfulness, and the additional call which, from this very consideration, presents itself for some new and systematic movement to raise means within the Missions for the benefit of the Church, that I should here exhibit the particulars of what the Society has been latterly doing and is actually doing for us. The statement refers to the whole of Lower Canada, in which the Clergy Reserves fund is a common fund for the benefit of both Dioceses.

The Clergy Reserves fund is placed by an Imperial Statute under the control of the Society, constituting, however, but a small