

In the course of my address I shall, I think, be able to show that within these eight short years of the existence of our diocese a very great work has been accomplished. I doubt, indeed, if any diocese can show a more satisfactory record. I doubt if any diocese can show a larger proportionate increase in the number of clergy and church buildings. I doubt if any diocese can narrate such tales of earnestness and devotion on the part of those who press together to hear the word of God, men and women who will travel miles and miles over rough unbeaten roads in order to hear a few words from the lips of an ordained minister, to join in the beautiful services of our church, or to have an infant baptized. I doubt if any diocese has a larger proportion of earnest God-seeking persons than those which usually form the congregations in the backwoods of Algoma.

Before I tell a word of what I have to tell—let me boldly put the question to the conscience of all present, — *Has the setting apart of this Missionary Diocese of Algoma been a mistake?* Can any Christian man or Christian woman conscientiously say that the setting apart of this vast district was an erroneous act, that it were better if it had never been done? If so, let me know the reason why.

Do you say that it were better *these infants* brought by their devoted parents through swamp and bush some ten or twenty miles to receive the holy rite of baptism, had never been baptized? Do you say it were better that rail full of *candidates for confirmation* had never felt the Bishop's hand on their head? Do you say it were better those *sick and dying* had never been visited? Do you say it were better that those persons who through the ministrations of our clergy have been brought to a knowledge of the one and only Saviour—had never been taught? Do you say it were better that the *piteous cry of the Indians* for a missionary to be sent to them had not been attended to?

If the Diocese of Algoma had not been set apart, *how would these persons have been ministered to*, how would their spiritual wants have been supplied? *Toronto alone* could not have done it. Surely for a work like this it were better that *eight Dioceses* should unite and each furnish its quota than that the burden should all rest on the shoulders of one. Even now it is universally allowed that *not half the work is yet accomplished* that requires to be done, and how would it have been if during the past eight years there had been no Bishop to plead the cause of these poor settlers and Indians, and no special organization for the establishment of our Church in their midst?

But to proceed:—

Our Diocese embraces an area of 800 miles in length and from 150 to 200 miles in width. It takes in the Muskoka and Parry Sound districts, and extends northward, to the height of land above Lake Superior. Over this immense tract we have at present *fifteen missionaries* at work, each of them with one central post and from four, five, eight, or ten out-stations. Many of them are assisted in their labours by *lay readers* who were duly licensed for their work by our late Bishop. We have also as many as