

ANNUAL
REPORT,

OF THE

HALIFAX DIOCESAN COMMITTEE

OF THE

SOCIETY

FOR

PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

FOR THE YEAR 1826.

HALIFAX :

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THE HALIFAX DIOCESAN COMMITTEE of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, offer to their Members and the public at large, a Report of their Proceedings for the year 1826.

During this period little has occurred that is deserving of particular notice ; the concerns of the Committee have been carried on in the ordinary quiet way ; and they have much pleasure and thankfulness in being enabled to state, that their operations have suffered no interruption, and in expressing a hope, that the important cause which they have undertaken to promote, has, under the blessing of Providence, prospered in their hands.

While, however, they consider it their duty thus to make known their real state, and to shew that their progress in the good cause is gradual, and steady, and sure ; and while they encourage a sanguine hope, that this Committee may continue long to flourish, and by extending their influence, be a blessing to the people of this land, who desire to obtain a portion of that knowledge which it is their primary object to disseminate ; yet the Committee feel most sensibly the loss which they have recently sustained, by being deprived of the services of their late Secretary, under whose influence they were originally established, as the first branch of the Society abroad ; and by whose persevering zeal and exertions, they have been brought to their present state of usefulness, and happily been instrumental in the establishment of District Committees, in various parts of this and the neighbouring Provinces.

If any equivalent can be made for such a loss, it is to be derived from the hope,—that being called, as Bishop of Nova Scotia, to fill another and a higher office in the Committee, they shall still have the advantage of his advice and continued superintendance ; and that thro' his Lordship's influence and watchful care over the Institutions connected with our Establishment, we may see the benefits of the Committee, spreading still more widely over every part of this extensive Diocese.

1st. THE CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE PARENT SOCIETY, has been kept up with much satisfaction and no less benefit to our local concerns : valuable supplies of Books have been regularly received, and remittances made with punctuality.

By a recent rule of the Parent Society, which has lately been received from the Rev. William Parker, their Secretary, it appears that as all Members of the Society

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residing within the limits of any Foreign Committee, may transfer their annual subscriptions to the Funds of such Committee ; it has been thought right to charge all supplies of Books to the Foreign Committees at *cost prices*, instead of *reduced prices*, at which they were formerly furnished. Though this Regulation is founded on just and reasonable principles, and cannot therefore be complained of ; yet its operation must affect our interests at first ; but we may hope that time will remedy the inconvenience which is now experienced.

The Members of the Society in this country, will be glad to hear of the great prosperity of the Parent Society. The following short extract is from their last Report:—“The receipts for the year 1825 have amounted to 65,314*l.* 16*s* 5*d*, being an increase of 2,927*l.* 13*s* 1*d* upon the sum received during the year 1824. The whole number of Books and Tracts delivered from the Society's stores, between the audit in 1825 and the audit of 1826, amounted to 1,490,691.”

“The distribution of Bibles, Testaments and Books of Common Prayer, has considerably exceeded even the large issues of the preceding year. In 1824 the Bibles distributed amounted to 50,402, in 1825 to 68,008, in 1824 the Testaments and Psalters distributed, amounted to 68,652, in 1825 to 83,556. In 1824 the Books of Common Prayer distributed amounted to 133,459, in 1825 to 165,152. A portion of this large increase,—viz. 8384 Bibles, and 24,748 Books of Common Prayer, has been produced by the excellent measures for supplying the religious wants of the army, which were announced in the last Report. This statement will suffice to shew that the Society continues to enjoy the undiminished confidence of the Public : and is steadily proceeding in the discharge of its first great duty—the distribution of religious books.”

2d. The DISTRICT COMMITTEES, especially in the neighbouring Province, have increased to so much importance and consequent usefulness, that they have generally deemed it necessary, as was intimated in a former Report, to correspond directly with the Board in London, and receive their Books from thence, instead of obtaining them from the Stores of the Diocesan Committee. Many local circumstances rendered this measure desirable and even necessary, especially in the cases of the Committee at St. John and Fredericton in New-Brunswick, whose importations were very considerable, and whose Books could be obtained as expeditiously, and at the same expense in a direct channel from the Stores of the Parent Society in London, as they could be obtained in Halifax. We trust, however that we are still in union with them in spirit and in object; and cannot but embrace this opportunity, of expressing our sincerest pleasure that, as a Branch of this Stock, they have now grown into a goodly tree; and are gradually extending with exemplary zeal, their operations more widely, and scattering the good seed in a field which may produce a plentiful harvest; and thus abundantly reward them for all their pious exertions, in the conviction and proof that their labours have not been in vain.

The COMMITTEE at SYDNEY in CAPE BRETON, which from the absence of a Clergyman and other discouragements, had declined; has been excited to new exertions at the recommendation of the Bishop, when he visited that Island, whose numerous population has very inadequate means of religious instruction. The exertions of the Committee therefore in that Country, are particularly wanted; and it may be hoped, that a blessing will attend them.

The DISTRICT COMMITTEE at Liverpool in this Province, must here be mentioned with marked attention. It has been lately established under the direction and as-

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sistance of the Revd. EDWARD WIX, of whose prudent zeal, industry and perseverance in the cause of this Committee, too much cannot be said. The Members of that Committee have already increased to a respectable List; and hopes are entertained that others will shortly be added to their number; and that, as a District Committee, it will be second to none in usefulness. Several packages of Books have already been sent to Liverpool. Information has been received that these Books are anxiously sought after, both in Liverpool and the Settlements in its neighbourhood. Similar exertions would easily effect the establishment of a Committee in almost every parish in the Diocese.

3d. THE DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS AND TRACTS from the Depository of the Diocesan Committee during the last year, has been much greater than for several years last past. The removal of the Books from the Library in St. Paul's Church to that in the National School, has been attended with evident advantages, especially as a facility has been thereby afforded to the Assistant Secretary of attending to applications; and thus the sale and circulation of Books and Tracts have been much increased. Besides occasional donations to needy individuals, various Schools have been supplied with Books gratuitously.

The following packages of Books and Tracts have been forwarded to orders from the Country during the present year.

To Lunenburg,	Rev. J. C. COCHRAN, and others	7 Pckgs.
Liverpool,	Rev. EDW. WIX, and others	3 do.
Yarmouth,	H. G. FARISH, and others	3 do.
Wilmot,	Rev. A. GILPIN,	1 do.
Aylesford,	Rev. E. GILPIN,	1 do.
Chester,	Rev. J. SHREEVE,	1 do.
Rawdon,	Mr. GORMAIN,	1 do.
Sydney,	Rev. CHAS. INGLES,	1 do.
Bay Chaleur,	Mr. DEBLOIS,	1 do.

Being nineteen Packages amounting to the Sum of £94, besides which sixteen other packages have been gratuitously distributed thro' the medium of the Clergy, partly by orders on this Committee from the Society for Propagation of the Gospel, and partly by the Bishop of Nova Scotia from a fund at his Lordship's disposal, amounting together to the Sum of £98; making in the whole £192, exclusive of large supplies distributed in the town and neighbourhood of Halifax.

A Collection was made in St. Paul's Church, Halifax, amounting to the sum of £27 1 9 after an appropriate and excellent sermon, preached by the Venerable Archdeacon SPENCER. This Sum has been expended in the selection of a stock of Books, to be distributed gratuitously to the needy members of that Congregation. Some of these Books have already been distributed; a considerable portion of them is still on hand to meet such applications.

4th. The ACCOUNTS OF THE COMMITTEE are by no means in an unpromising condition, as the following statement will more fully shew—

The Committee have lately remitted to the	£	s.	d.
Parent Society - - - - -	300	0	0
Amount still due to the Parent Society - -	298	2	1½
Value of Books now on hand about - - -	250	0	0
Amount of debt due to this Committee about	100	0	0

There are funds in hand, besides other debts and the annual subscriptions, sufficient to authorize the Committee to purchase a Bill for 100l. Sterling, for transmission to the Parent Society, towards the liquidation of our debt.

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It may not be improper here to state for general information, that the receipts from sales, subscriptions and debts collected, amounted last year to the sum of 289*l*.

5th. THE EDUCATION OF THE RISING GENERATION in sound religious principles,—a cause intimately connected with the best interests of society, has always been a leading object with this Committee. The National School in Halifax, the child of our Committee, has been nurtured with paternal care and affection. The School for Boys is under the management of Mr. GORE, and contains 198 Scholars (Free 120—Paying 78); that for Girls is under Miss BARNETT, and contains 91 Scholars—Free 60—Paying 31; in all 289 Children.

This School has been established since 1816, and has yearly sent out into the world, a number of young persons with a good education,—such an education at least as is sufficient for all the ordinary purposes of life,—for qualifying them to discharge with satisfaction to themselves, with credit to their teachers and benefactors, and with benefit to all, those duties that may belong to their situations in life. Nor must the advantage of such an education be overlooked in a moral point of view. It will be readily admitted that every system of education which has not religion for its basis, is radically defective—is deficient in its main point. This truth will strike us as of especial force, when we apply the observation to children of the poor and destitute; for where are they likely to obtain a knowledge of their moral and religious obligations,—of those principles which if rightly instilled and properly received, are to have their effect in making them good men and useful members of society; if they receive them not in the course of their attendance at School? Ample provision is consequently made for religious instruction; the children are early taught their duty to God and man, and the plain object and leading doctrines of Christianity. Of such Schools surely this must be their best recommen-

dition, with those who are friends to social order and the prevalence of moral principle ; and will further operate as an inducement to them, to continue their laudable exertions in promoting Christian Knowledge in the world.

The education of the Poor is especially contemplated and provided for in the National School ; and all who are willing to avail themselves of its benefits, are freely admitted without reference to their religious creed, or any other circumstance than their need of instruction. Those whose Parents desire it, attend their own spiritual teachers for catechetical instruction, and the public worship of their choice. Such are the liberal, and we trust sound principles on which this School is conducted. For a series of years it has met with the approbation and encouragement of the Public : its merits have been proved ; It never was more efficient, nor more ably and excellently managed than at the present time ; and the Committee and its supporters are sanguine in their hope, that it may long continue to prosper, and dispense the acknowledged blessings of a virtuous education.

The only alteration which is considered desirable, is a provision for more attention to the advanced Scholars to meet the general wish. This will shortly be effected, as a very able assistant has been engaged, that the Master may devote a larger portion of his valuable instruction to the higher classes.

The pecuniary assistance which the Trustees are now enjoying from a liberal grant of the Legislature of the Province, is here acknowledged with our best thanks. This assistance has been of the greatest service to our Institution, not only in promoting generally the cause of Education, but also in the total liquidation of a heavy debt which had been contracted for the building of the School-house, and had created the greatest embarrass-

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ment to the Trustees. During the last year seven Schoolmasters have received instruction in the national system, and are now teaching Schools in this Province, Bermuda, and in New Brunswick.

The Committee feel so much satisfaction in reviewing the result of their humble labours, that they hope others will be excited, as themselves are encouraged, to assist and extend their exertions ; and they earnestly request the prayers of the pious and the faithful for a blessing to attend them.

In behalf of the Committee,

ROBERT WILLIS, SECRETARY.