

Bishop Richardson's Charge to the Synod

His Lordship Ably Reviews the Work of the Diocese for the Year—Fine Tributes Paid to the Late Archdeacon Newnham, and to Very Rev. Dean Neales—Young Men Entering the Ministry—Some Constructive Suggestions—Sunday Funerals Discussed.

His Lordship Bishop Richardson delivered his annual charge to the Diocesan Synod at a meeting in Christ-church Cathedral this morning. He spoke in part as follows:

It is once more my privilege to welcome you to your important duties as members of the Synod of this Diocese. I need hardly urge you, I am sure, to give to the discharge of those duties your most serious attention, yet it will not be out of place perhaps, if I venture to remind you that no assembly of this sort can do its best work without regularity and punctuality of attendance on the part of all its members. I would remind you also that the Synod is a religious body, and that full advantages ought to be taken by all its members, therefore, of the means of grace provided for us day by day. No better way of meeting our serious responsibilities can be found than by beginning each day with prayer and worship.

Health Recovery

As many of you will remember, illness deprived me of the pleasure of being present at the Synod a year ago, and I may take this opportunity of expressing to all my friends in the Diocese, clergy and laity alike, my deep gratitude for all the sympathy and kindness that I received in such boundless measure. I am particularly appreciative of the generous patience with which the clergy concerned accepted the temporary dislocation of their plans for Confirmation and other visitation work. It was only one more instance of the courtesy and consideration, which I have always received at their hands, and which have done so much to make my relationship with them so full of happiness. I can never make the clergy understand how much it has all meant to me. I am thankful to say that while I was laid aside for several months, I recovered my strength quickly, and was able to complete my programme of Confirmation work before the winter set in. I have been very busy ever since, but my health is now in a satisfactory condition, and there is no need for anxiety about the future.

We are greatly honored by the presence with us this morning of the Rt. Rev. Benjamin Brewster, Bishop of Maine, who graciously accepted my invitation on your behalf, to preach the Synod sermon. I welcome him very warmly to our meeting, and beg him to feel sure that, while he is with us, the Diocese is as his own.

Anniversary

Since last the Synod met, I have celebrated my twenty-fifth anniversary as a Bishop in the Church of God. A quarter of a century is a long time to serve in the episcopate, and the privilege of doing so is not given to many men. We are accustomed in this Diocese to long episcopates; Bishop Medley of blessed memory, was Bishop of Fredericton from May 4th, 1845, until September 9th, 1892, and Bishop Kingdon, who had served as co-adjutor from 1881 until 1892, continued to administer in the Diocese until October 11th, 1907. Thus during the eighty-seven years since the establishment of the Diocese there have been only three diocesan—a record that cannot be very common.

The past twenty-five years have necessarily brought with them many changes in the Canadian Church at large as well as in the life of this Diocese.

To the Diocese also the passage of the years has brought many changes. My mind turns back to the Synod as it was when I was called upon to take from the hand of my revered predecessor the staff of office. How few remain of those who were then the leaders of the Church of England in this Diocese! How many of them have been gathered to their rest! Within the past few days, indeed, one who was outstanding amongst them all has been taken from us. I refer, of course, to the death of the Venerable Obadiah Samuel Newnham, for thirty-

seven years the beloved Rector of the Parish of St. Stephen, Archdeacon of Fredericton since 1907, and for forty-three years Secretary of Synod. Formal reference to the fact will be made at the proper time and place in our proceedings, but I cannot deny myself the melancholy pleasure of paying a heartfelt tribute of affection and esteem to the memory of a beloved brother, and of a servant of this Synod whose life and work meant more to its efficiency and to the welfare of the Diocese at large than it is possible for us to understand. I do not desire to speak a single exaggerated word, but, as I look back upon the years during which I was so closely associated with Archdeacon Newnham, I am constrained to ask whether any diocese in the Dominion ever had a secretary who was quite his equal. I doubt it. He combined in wonderful poise and proportion those somewhat exceptional qualities of heart and mind that are so essential to the successful administration of such an office. Scrupulously careful in the discharge of every duty, punctilious in the performance of every task, exact in attention to every detail, accurate in every statement, Archdeacon Newnham has left an example that we may all strive to follow, and through it all he was the living embodiment of Christian courtesy and kindness.

Tribute to Dean Neales

The Very Reverend Scovil Neales was for almost seventeen years Dean of the Cathedral, and of the Diocese, and in both capacities he gave himself without stint to the service of the Church. On several occasions, when I was absent from the Diocese, Dr. Neales acted as my commissary, and I am indebted to him for the unfailing care with which he discharged the duties of that important office. As Chairman of the Board of Examining Chaplains, he endeared himself to the many candidates for Holy Orders who passed through his hands, and who will remember with gratitude the kindly interest that he took in them. Prominent in the nature of things in the synodic work of the Diocese, Dean Neales was also a valued member of the General Synod, in whose business he took a leading part. In this connection it is fresh in my mind that it was in no small degree due to the courageous stand taken by Dr. Neales in conjunction with two other representatives from the Maritime Dioceses, that the General Synod was saved at its last session from passing hasty legislation in connection with the office of the Primate, that would, in my judgment, have been gravely prejudicial to the best interests of that office.

Dean Neales was also for some years prolocutor of the Provincial Synod of Canada, over the deliberations of which he presided with much success. His genial presence and wise counsel will be greatly missed from our deliberations.

New Archdeacon

The death of the Ven. O. S. Newnham and the resignation of the Venerable David Forsyth left two of the Archdeaconries vacant, as you are aware, the Archdeaconry of Chatham was filled by the appointment of the Rev. Thomas Parker, M. A., and the Archdeaconry of Fredericton by that of the Rev. Alban Frederic Bate, M.A.

Encouraging Sign

As I compare the present with the past, I find further cause for thankfulness in the marked increase in the number of young men offering themselves for the sacred ministry. A Church that is not self-propagating as to its ministry is not a healthy Church and that was the condition in this Diocese for many years. Today it can almost be affirmed that the supply of candidates for Holy Orders is in proportion to our needs, although we must always bear in mind that it is the duty of every diocese to make a proportionate con-



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tribution of men—not less than of money—to the general needs of the Church beyond our borders. It is still necessary, therefore, to impress upon all the clergy the importance of making careful and systematic use of the Ember Seasons in this connection.

Possible Remedies

After referring to shrinkage in income and other matters His Lordship continued:

So far I have merely attempted to diagnose the disease from which we are suffering, and I must now go on to discuss possible remedies. For let there be no mistake in the minds of any present. Some remedy must be found. Some way must be found of balancing our budget for the present year. Unless effective remedial steps are taken, we are only too likely, as I have said, to find ourselves at the end of the present year with an overdraft upon the Mission Fund of more than \$200.00. It is impossible to contemplate such a prospect with equanimity. Let me say it once more. We must find a way of balancing our budget. We cannot go on plunging farther into debt.

The question was considered carefully at the meeting of the Board in January, and, in view of the gravity of the situation, I was requested to make a personal appeal to all the Church people of the Province for help in the emergency. As you are all aware, that was done. Mailing lists were procured from the incumbents of all the parishes and at the cost of a great expenditure in time and labor and money, some ten thousand letters were sent out over my signature, setting forth the gravity of the problem before us, and urging the recipients to make at least some contribution through the medium of an envelope supplied for that purpose.

It was not thought likely that the complete objective would be reached, and the deficit eliminated entirely, but it was confidently expected that the response would be worthy of the Diocese. You will regret to hear that quite the contrary proved to be the case, for the gross amount of the collections did not exceed \$700.00 from which the expense of making the appeal had to be deducted. Parishes which might reasonably have been expected to contribute hundreds of dollars sent in significant amounts, indicating quite clearly that they were not interested. That was bad enough, but what was even more disappointing is the amazing fact that almost half the parishes in the Diocese gave not a single cent. One can only come to the conclusion that most of the envelopes sent out were consigned carelessly to the waste-paper basket. The pity of it is that if the effort had been taken at all seriously, the Synod would not have been forced today to consider measures of retrenchment, from which the work of the Church is sure to suffer. As it is, the problem of the debt is still before us, and we shall be compelled to devise some policy or plan to safeguard the interests of the Mission Fund. As trustees for the Church, that is plainly our duty.

Must Balance Budget

The choice before us is very simple. We must either increase our income or lessen our expenditure. In saying this I have the operations of the Board of

Missions chiefly in view, but we must not overlook the fact that, together with our failure to provide adequately for the needs of our own work there is a failure also to provide our due proportion of the money required for missionary and philanthropic work of the Church as carried on by the General Synod. In taking steps to meet the one need, it is also our duty, therefore, to meet the other. It may very well be true, indeed, that the secret of our diocesan failure is that we are too narrow and provincial in our outlook—that we are inclined to take too lightly our responsibility for the wider missionary work of the Church beyond our borders. If, as a Diocese, we are to accept more wholeheartedly the larger obligation, it is quite certain that the smaller obligation would be easily met. In seeking, therefore, to enlarge our income with a view to balancing our budget, the logical line of approach to that end is that of the apportionment. We must not overlook the fact that not the interests of the Diocese alone are suffering by reason of our failure. All the departments of the Church's work in the Dominion, and overseas, are equally concerned—the M.S.C.C., the Social Service Council, the General Board of Religious Education and so on. Our failure is not a failure in part. It is a failure of the whole, and it is with this fact in view that a remedy must be sought. Once more, then, let me say it—any attempt that may be made to increase our income in order to liquidate our debt should include the Apportionment in its operations.

For there is the real secret of all our troubles. In the great majority of parishes there is no sense of responsibility for the payment of the Budget Apportionment in full. It is taken for granted that the task is too great for their powers and they are content to have it so. Why this should be the case, it is difficult to understand, for as I look down the list, I find that the following parishes sent in either 100 per cent., or more than that, of the amount for which they were asked.

Deanery of Chatham—Addington, Chatham, Hardwicke, New Bandon, Richibucto.

Deanery of Fredericton—Canning, Chipman and Douglas.

Deanery of Kingston—Hampton, Kingston, Norton, Rothesay Collegiate School, Waterford, St. Mark's.

Deanery of Shediac—Salisbury, Havelock and Shediac.

Deanery of Saint John—East Saint John, Coldbrook, Simonds, St. James, St. Mary's Victoria.

Deanery of Woodstock—Aberdeen and Brighton.

Now generally speaking, I cannot see anything to suggest that the parishes on this honor roll find it *mo' easy* to meet their apportionments in full than most of the parishes that fail. In point of fact, I feel quite sure that they do not find it more easy. It costs them no less in sacrifice. It requires no less for them in effort. Comparisons are said to be invidious, but they are sometimes very illuminating, and at risk of having the proverb hurled at me, I am prompted to ask wherein the missions of New Bandon, Richibucto, Canning and Chipman, Waterford and St. Mark's, Salisbury and Havelock, East St. John and Coldbrook, Simonds, Aberdeen and Brighton differ essentially from the ordinary run of Aided Missions, that they succeed in this important duty where so many others fail.

My fellow-members of the Church, the picture thus set before us has its modern application to ourselves, and it will be well for us to face the fact in all its bearings. Our financial difficulties,—the shrinkage in missionary offerings,—the deficit itself,—have their real source and origin, not alone, as we are apt to think, in the disturbed condition of the world-market, and its concomitant conditions, but in the low level of the Church's spiritual life. By multitudes of professing Christians and ordinances of the Church are almost habitually neglected. For very many attendance at the Lord's Table is infrequent and perfunctory. Unworthy standards of moral life are accepted and condoned. Divorce, with all its attendant evils, is rampant everywhere. The standards of business life have become debased in many quarters, so that the proud are called happy, and they that work wickedness are set up. God has been banished from the lives of many. Religion has been allowed to become superficial and selfish in its aims. Everywhere in the world, and

under the very shadow of the Church, these conditions are comparatively common, and it is certain that we cannot claim to be free from them. The call that comes to us, then, is the call that has recently echoed from the Vatican. It is the call to repentance. It is the call to prayer. In all earnestness, my brethren,—clergy and laity alike,—fellow-members in the church of Christ,—I bid you harken to the call.

The Prophet's Warning

Let us listen to the warning of the prophet once more. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me? But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings." The indictment is a very stern one, and we shrink from its application to ourselves, but we may well ask whether it may not be as true for us as it was for God's ancient people,—whether under stress of difficult conditions we have not allowed ourselves to follow the path of least resistance, and left unpaid our subscriptions to the church, and withdrawn our support from its missionary enterprise, for no other reason than that God has been forgotten in it all. It has not occurred to us that in so doing we have been robbing God. Nor has it occurred to us that there is any application to ourselves in the invitation of the prophet, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and your you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Since writing the above, the suggestion has been made to me that it might be wise to deal with the Diocesan Mission Fund deficit in the way that was taken once before under similar circumstances. It was in the year 1905, and a record of the transaction will be found on page 57 of the Journal for that year. The deficit at the time upon the Mission Fund was upwards of \$6,000, and the Diocese was confronted with a problem similar to that which I have been discussing. It was decided by Synod to fund the debt,—that is to say, to charge the deficit to a special fund account, and to pay interest upon the same. Provision was made by Synod to take in every parish two special collections each year, the proceeds of which should be applied to a reduction of the debt, together with the interest thereon, until such time as the liability should be discharged. It was quickly discovered, however, that the amount of the said collections was so negligible that little or no reduction of the debt was being made, and the liability remained against the credit of the Synod until a good many years later, when I organized a special appeal, by means of which the deficit was wiped out.

Orphans' Home

I welcome the opportunity presented by the delivery of this address to commend once more to the members of the Church of England, and to all others in the Province who will let me speak to them, the needs of the Protestant Orphans' Home. No institution for which the Church is in any sense responsible has a clearer or more compelling claim upon our liberality. It ministers to a large number of children, who without its tender care, and through no fault of their own, would miss altogether the training and protection which are the only guarantee to childhood of a happy and useful future. It is based upon definitely religious in its atmosphere, broad and non-sectarian lines, and is The institution is admirably managed, and makes the most of every dollar committed to its care. It is, in short, a home of which the Protestant people of the province may be proud, and one which they ought to feel it a privilege to maintain. We are greatly indebted to those in whose able and willing hands Nor is our response to the November appeal anything to boast about, when looked at from another angle. There were 75 Church of England children in the Home last year, so that we contributed just over \$31.00 towards the support of each child. But it costs on the average, we are told, \$22.01 to keep a child in the Home for one month. It appears, therefore, that our total offerings last year through the Church collections were sufficient to keep our own orphan children in the Home for about six weeks in the year. It is not in a critical mood that I call attention to

these figures, but in the hope that the publicity thus given to them may lead the members of our Church to welcome more warmly the privilege that comes to them on one Sunday in each year of contributing towards the support and upbringing of our own children in the Home.

A Warning Note

I feel it to be my duty to warn the members of the Church of England, and the public generally, against the activities of certain alleged representatives of eastern missionary work, who operate in the Province from time to time, and whose appeal for subscriptions it is very difficult for the charitably disposed to resist. Such persons are usually armed with a sheaf of impressive looking testimonials, which bear all the apparent hall-marks of authenticity. It is to be noted, however, that in almost every case such testimonials are based upon some one document, which purports to have been issued by some high authority in one or another branch of eastern Christianity, but the genuineness of which it is quite impossible to test. In most cases, moreover, these testimonials are very cautious and non-committal in their character.

Sunday Funerals

I have been asked by a number of the clergy to make some reference to certain matters in connection with funerals. The first is the very common custom of holding funerals on Sunday, whenever that is possible. It is not difficult to understand why the custom is so common. For most people Sunday is a day of leisure, and if possible therefore for them to attend a funeral service with less inconvenience on that day than on any other. Hence the number in attendance is sure to be considerably increased. One can sympathize with that point of view. From the standpoint of the Church, however, and of the clergy, there are strong reasons why Sunday funerals should be avoided whenever that is possible. In the first place—and this is mainly true of the country parishes,—Sunday funerals often interfere seriously with the programme of services for the day. Not seldom they make it necessary to cancel at short notice one of the regular appointments, thus depriving some congregation of ministrations, which may be at the best only infrequent. These are not trifling difficulties, and I would urge the laity to give them due weight.

It must be admitted I am afraid that far too little consideration is shown the clergy in respect to funerals. Only too often it happens that the hour and place are fixed for a funeral without any previous reference to the clergyman who is expected to officiate. That ought never to be done. As a matter of courtesy and convenience, no details of the sort ought to be settled without having first consulted the Rector of the parish. There is another matter to which reference should be made. It happens at times that the incumbent of a country parish is called upon to take a funeral at a considerable distance from his home, and quite outside the territory for which he is responsible. Sometimes the call comes from those whose connection with the Church is of the most attenuated character. The family in question belongs to that class, who return themselves as belonging to the Church of England in answer to the inquiries of the census officer, but who neither subscribe to its support, nor attend any of its services.

Now, no clergyman worthy of this office will ever hesitate to answer such a call, but he ought not to have to do so at his own expense, and that is not infrequently what happens. Such things ought not to be. No fees are charged for funerals, but those concerned ought to see that the clergyman, who is serving them, is not out of pocket thereby.

The question of funeral sermons also has been referred to me recently. Now the Book of Common Prayer very wisely makes no provision for the preaching of a sermon as part of the service for the interment of the dead. No sermon could add any impressiveness to the solemn dignity of the service itself with its touching prayers, and the recitation of appropriate passages from Holy Scripture. It is true instinct to treat with reverent reticence the life that has been taken away. As everybody will understand, the failure to observe that rule is beset with grave difficulties, and it

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