

Charge Of The Archbishop Of Fredericton To Anglican Synod

The Archbishop Deals With the Question of Playing Golf, Tennis and Other Games on Sunday; The Laymen in the Church — Mixed Farming For New Brunswick, and Other Live Topics.

At the opening of the Church of England Synod this morning His Grace Archbishop Richardson delivered his annual charge to the clerical and lay delegates assembled.

Archbishop Richardson's charge is always of widespread interest not only in his own church but to the public generally. In addition to matters connected with the internal affairs of the church the Archbishop hands out some good advice regarding mixed farming. He suggested that just as the western farmer planted too much wheat to the exclusion of other farm products so there is a tendency among New Brunswick farmers to go in too much for potatoes to the exclusion of mixed farming.

Other matters discussed included the inadequate supply of candidates for Holy Orders and the matter of playing golf, tennis and other games on Sundays, the layman and the church and church affairs in general.

The Charge

My dear Brothers of the Clergy and Laity,

Once more, in the goodness of God, it is my privilege to address you in Synod. I welcome you very heartily to your responsible duties, and to the brief opportunity of closer fellowship, which meetings such as this afford. Business of great importance will come before you at this session, and I know that it need not urge you to approach its consideration with earnestness and zeal. It is my prayer that God the Holy Spirit may guide us in all we say and do.

Each successive meeting of Synod reminds me of the swift passage of the years. When first I presided over your deliberations, I was the youngest Bishop in Canada, both in years and by consecration, and now in the latter respect I stand first upon the list, while on next St. Andrew's Day I shall have been for 29 years in episcopal orders. That the years have been happy I need hardly tell you, but you will let me say that nothing has contributed more to their happiness than the loyal and affectionate support that you have given me throughout. I shall never cease to be grateful for all that this Diocese has been to me. Pray for me, dear brothers, that I may be given health, and strength, and wisdom for as long as it may please God to let me work amongst you.

I am happy in knowing that since last we met in Synod the ranks of the active clergy have been untouched by the hands of death. The Rev. J. R. deWolfe Cowie, who has been living in retirement since 1920, passed to his rest a few days ago after a long and trying illness, which he bore with truly Christian fortitude. Gifted in many ways far above the average, he served the Church in this Diocese, and elsewhere, with a zeal that will not soon be forgotten by those who were his contemporaries.

As always we have suffered losses amongst the faithful laity, who serve the Diocese in Synod, and mention will be made of the fact in the report of the Committee on Memorials to Deceased Members. We sorrow in their passing, but rejoice in the assurance that they have gone to their reward.

Not many changes have taken place in the clerical staff of the Diocese during the past twelve months. After twenty-six years of unceasing labour in the Mission of St. David, St. Patrick, and St. James, the Rev. D. W. Blackall has retired from active work, and is now on the list of those who are in receipt of pensions, and within the next few days the Rev. A. W. Teed who has worked as a devoted missionary in this Diocese for more than forty years, will seek the rest and relaxation that he has earned so well. During all that long term of service under difficult and laborious conditions, Mr. Teed has set us all a notable example of devotion, which we shall not soon forget. It is our prayer that both these ministers of Christ may find peace and happiness in their declining years.

I do not propose to spend much time at this session in discussing in detail the condition of the Diocese, nor shall I note the various changes that have taken place in the incumbencies of parishes. For the past few years many of the clergy have been working under extremely difficult conditions. In view of the widespread depression it could not be otherwise. I am happy to testify to the steadfastness and zeal with which they have faced their difficulties. Never, perhaps, have those difficulties been greater than in certain parts of the Diocese, at least, they are at the present moment. The complete collapse of the potato market

has placed many farmers in a position more precarious than we have ever seen before. I suppose, and the effect upon the finances of not a few parishes has been disastrous.

Advice to Farmers

The place of potatoes in the agricultural life in important areas of this Province is not dissimilar to that of wheat in the Prairie Provinces, and our farmers are entitled to the sympathy of all their fellow-citizens. Despite the wisdom of the old adage that the shoemaker should stick to his last, I venture to express the opinion that the salvation of agriculture in New Brunswick will not be found in potato growing on the large scale, that has heretofore obtained, even though some relief should be found in the development of new industrial markets, and the like, but in a widespread increase of mixed farming. With the aid of wise governmental supervision, it will be found possible, I believe to make poultry raising, dairy farming, and the production of high class bacon, an entirely profitable enterprise in this Province. It is true, no doubt, that before that goal can be fully reached, some serious difficulties must be overcome but experience will prove I think that those difficulties are not insuperable.

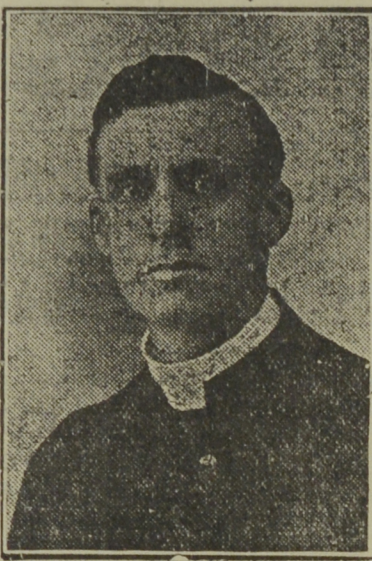
Difficulties

As I have already suggested the Church in this Diocese, and as much may be affirmed, I am sure, of all religious bodies—is laboring under many difficulties I believe, however, that the worst of these difficulties will soon be over. There is good reason to hope that prosperity will return in the not distant future, and we shall then be able to deal more effectively with the financial problems that have been perplexing us so greatly.

Under present conditions, however, it is imperatively important that all members of the Church should meet the situation with courage, and in the spirit of real sacrifice. I cannot urge that upon you too strongly. The Aided Missions must look facts in the face, and realize the necessity of making a greater effort to give more largely towards their own support. In some of them, at least, there is a disconcerting readiness to appeal to the Board of Missions for larger grants in times of financial stress instead of making a greater effort to increase their own contributions. They seem to be under the impression that the Board of Missions has unlimited resources, and are quite oblivious of the fact that so far from that being the case, every increase in the aggregate amount of the grants in aid calls for a corresponding increase in the voluntary offerings of other parishes, many of which are finding it far from easy to meet their own liabilities. Nor does it seem possible to make some of the Aided Missions understand the fact that it is the duty of the board, not less than the duty of an individual, to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," and cannot properly, therefore, continue in a policy of spending each year more than the amount of its income. In our anxiety to assist the Aided Missions to the greatest possible extent, that is precisely what we have been doing, and the practice cannot be continued.

The Diocese, as a whole, must make a greater effort to meet the Budget Apportionment, and this effort concerns the Aided Missions not less than it concerns the Self-supporting Parishes. It is no more the duty of the Self-supporting Parishes to respond to the Apportionment appeal than it is the duty of the Aided Missions. The obligation is one that rests equally upon both classes of parishes and differs only in the size of its monetary expression. I appeal most earnestly to all parishes alike to deal with the Budget Apportionment in a spirit of fuller sacrifice. I am not unmindful of the fact that many of our people are already doing their utmost in the matter, but there must be very many others for whom greater generosity of giving would be easily possible. Let us respond to the missionary appeal as to a call that comes to us from God.

A call that comes to us from God. It is because we do not think of it as such that we fail so largely in our duty. The thought of God is not clear and vivid in our lives. That is why so many of us are little more than nominally Christian. We have no close and personal experience of God—the experience that can only come to us in richness as with deliberate intention we surrender ourselves to the leadership of Jesus Christ—as we behold in Him the Lamb of God that



MOST REV. J. A. RICHARDSON
Archbishop of Fredericton, Delivered Charge at Synod Today

take away the sins of the world, and follow Him. We have been reminded many times in recent years that only the Gospel of Jesus Christ can save our civilization. The witness is a true one, but it needs to be supplemented by the warning that the saving efficiency of the Gospel itself is applied to the world by individuals—by men and women who have found in Christ their peace and happiness, and are eager to share that peace and happiness with others. My brothers of the Clergy, suffer the word of exhortation. Consecrate yourselves, and your pulpits, to the preaching of Jesus Christ. Count no day well spent, and no sermon finished, that does not in some sense exalt the Crucified. Let all your pastoral work tell to that end. Proclaim the Christ, the King.

Condition of Diocese

In the general condition of the Diocese I find much to make us hopeful, and in spite of all that is said to the contrary, I see no real cause for pessimism. So far as I am able to judge, for example, there is no falling off in the number of people who habitually attend the Church's services. In comparison with, say, twenty-five years ago, no doubt, there has been a loss in that respect, but, unless I am much mistaken, that is largely due to the fact that church attendance is no longer looked upon as a sort of hallmark to social respectability. Generally speaking, I think, if people go to church today, it is because they want to go, and not because they feel they have to. We have gained in quality what we lost in quantity, and the change is, perhaps, a good one. It can never be stated with the gerat emphasis that the success of the Church is the leavening power of God in the world cannot properly be stated in terms of arithmetical calculation. In one of his notable essays, Dr. W. R. Inge insists that "Christ never expected, or taught His disciples to expect, that His teaching would meet with wide acceptance . . . He made it quite plain that big battalions are never likely to be gathered before the narrow gate," nor, he adds, is Christianity ever "likely to be a popular creed" (Outspoken Essays—The Indictment against Christianity). We must beware, therefore, of the worship of mere numbers.

Men and the Church

I confess, however, to finding some ground for misgiving in one feature of modern religious life. So far as I am able to judge, there has been a shrinkage in recent years in the number of men, who make a regular practice of attending church, so that in the average congregation there is a vast preponderance of women. To a considerable extent, perhaps, that has always been the case, for, whatever the cause may be, the religious instinct would seem to be weaker in men than in women. It is greatly to be deplored however, that such a large number of professedly christian men are seldom seen in a place of worship.

It is a disturbing factor, and one of which we clergy are bound to take serious account. I shall be told, no doubt that it is not easy to find a remedy for the evil, and yet I believe that there is a remedy, if only we will use it with consistent earnestness. Honesty compels us to confess, I fear, that we who have been solemnly set apart to shepherd souls, and upon whom there rests therefore, a very grave responsibility, are far too prone to content ourselves with dealing with our congregations in the aggregate rather than as individuals. In our zeal for the sheep who are more or less safely in the fold, and to whom Sunday by Sunday we minister from prayer-desk and pulpit, we pay little attention to those who are in the wilderness of spiritual indifference, and who seldom or never listen to our teaching and exhortation.

The Stray Sheep

We fail to follow the example of the Good Shepherd in going out after the one sheep that has gone astray. It will be well for us clergy to sit down quietly before our parish lists from time to time, and to consider the number of those who are seldom, if ever, seen in church, and then to ask ourselves what personal effort we have ever made to persuade them to better things. We shall find, I am afraid, a very considerable number of our people, and particularly, perhaps, of men, to whom we have never made a personal and direct approach in the name of Jesus Christ. We have acquiesced in their spiritual sluggishness. It is not thus that souls are won.

There is ground for encouragement, I think, in the fact that there would seem to be a steady increase in the number of our people, who, more or

less regularly, go to the Holy Communion. The Blessed Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood means more to the Church today than it meant a generation ago. That is partly due, no doubt, to the fact that, generally speaking, clearer and more definite teaching is being given upon the subject, while in all classes of churches, the administration of the Lord's Supper is being surrounded with more dignity and greater reverence. There remains, of course, much room for improvement in this respect, for we are yet far from giving to the Holy Communion its proper place as the great central service of the Church, yet it is unquestionably true, I think that a great gain has been made in recent years.

Much improvement may be marked again, and I record the fact with great satisfaction—in the organized work that is being done among the young people of the Church in this Diocese. The marked extension of the work of the Anglican Young People's Association is full of hope and encouragement for the future. More and more branches are being established in parishes in different parts of the Province, and I look forward with confidence to still more rapid progress. I would earnestly commend this excellent organization to the clergy. As a means of holding the young people of the Church together I know of nothing equal to it, and as a training-ground for future leadership it is invaluable. Let us take this opportunity of assuring the leaders in this movement that they have my complete confidence and sympathy.

On the whole, I find much in the state of the Church's life to make us hopeful, and nothing to justify the pessimism in which too many are prone to indulge. Only too often, if I may quote the happy illustration of one of the foremost amongst English Bishops, the attitude of leaders of the Church is like that of a commercial traveller, who makes the rounds, saying, "Fewer and fewer people are taking our goods, and those who take them do not seem particularly pleased. And I haven't much faith in them, myself. Still you might give me an order. At least, it won't do you any harm." Pessimism is never helpful, and least of all is it helpful in the Church.

Candidates for Holy Orders

The question of an adequate supply of candidates for Holy Orders is once more giving me some anxiety. There is no actual shortage of men at the present moment, but unless more candidates come forward, we shall find ourselves confronted with a serious problem before many years. It must be borne in mind that a period of six years is required in preparation for the Ministry, and it is necessary to think always in terms of the future. Financial considerations have been urged upon me as a reason for accepting no more candidates at present, but such an argument is unsound. If the vacancies in the parishes are to be filled as they occur, and it would be suicidal not to fill such vacancies whenever possible—we must have a larger number of men in training than we have at present. It is necessary, of course, to exercise great care in the selection of candidates, and no man should ever be nominated to the Bishop by a clergyman, about whose fitness and qualifications for the work of the priesthood he does not feel reasonably sure. Yet we must always be on the alert to encourage in our young men the thought of the ministry as a life vocation.

The fact that there has been a falling off in the number of young men offering themselves for training suggests to my mind that there is a good deal of slackness in the observance of the Ember Seasons. At a former period in the history of the Diocese, which many of you will remember, when we were suffering from a serious shortage of missionaries, it was in the widespread observance of these periods of special prayer and instruction that the remedy was found. In recent years, however, that wholesome practice has not been followed so faithfully, I have reason to suspect. I am quite sure that that is the case in many parishes. We have not honoured God by asking Him insistently to put into the hearts of young men the desire to serve Him in the priesthood, nor have we afforded Him an opportunity of contributing to the support of candidates in training by the use of the Ember Envelopes.

Lay Readers

It is regrettable that more is not made in this Diocese of the office of Lay Reader. I have said as much on former occasions, but without much effect, I fear, for the number of licensed Readers in the Diocese remains pitifully small. Exclusive of the Church Army officers, who are in a somewhat special class as all-time workers, there are in the entire Diocese only 19 laymen, who hold my license to do this important work.

It is hardly to be expected, of course, that in every parish the right sort of laymen can be found willing and able to undertake this work, but, even so, ought not we clergymen to ask ourselves whether in many such cases the fault for the failure may not lie with ourselves rather than the laymen? May it not be true that we have not sufficiently impressed upon our people the dignity and duty of service, that in the emphasis which we rightly lay upon the loftiness of service in the sacred ministry we have lost sight of, or, at least, obscured, the fact that all God's people are called to service? The First Epistle of St. Peter was addressed to "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," and, therefore, to Christian people at large, yet he reminded them in the most emphatic way that they were not only "a chosen generation . . . a holy nation," and "a peculiar people," but also "a royal priesthood." There is much reason to fear that the Church of England is often forgetful of that fact. We fail to impress sufficiently upon our people that laymen and clergymen alike are called to exercise a priesthood of holy service. Primarily, no doubt, that priesthood is to find expression in, as St. Peter, indeed points out, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, but the significance of the word "priesthood," as here

(Continued on Page Three)

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