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THE ISSUE OF THE HOUR.

The following words from Bishop Scarborough, of New Jersey, are worthy of thoughtful consideration by all earnest members of the Church. He said in his late address to the Convention of New Jersey:—"The gravest question for the present or future is not, as some think, that of liberty or lawlessness, whether by excess or omission, in using the offices of the Prayer Book. It is whether we shall be able to gain and retain our hold on the young life of the nation, or whether it will drift away from us into hopeless unbelief. This is the issue of the hour, and if we are wise, we will not refuse to see it, and make provision for meeting it fairly and fully." In another portion of his address, he says:—"The Church which gets the little ones of this generation, will get the men and women of the next." We wish these words could be read in the hearing of every Synod that assembles in this year of grace. They are words that should startle and arouse us to action, vigorous and marked action on behalf of the little ones who are confided to our care. As long as we conduct this paper, we shall not cease to call on the Church to take up the measure of her duty to the children. Grave and practical difficulties are in the way of Christian training of the young. These are admitted. But we want to see the practical and earnest minds of the Church grappling with the question. We want to see some of the ability, learning, and business qualities, found among our clergy and laity directed to planning remedies for these difficulties. We are not proposing remedies in this article, or saying that faithful work is not done, but it is admitted on all sides that the work is incomplete, and the results small, compared to what they might be. The destiny of the Dominion for the next century depends on the generation who are growing up. Into our country are coming representatives of every nation of the old world. They bring with them inherited tendencies, manners and customs. The warm blood of the South is mingled with the colder blood of Northern regions. In time, the descendants of these people intermarry, and form the nation. It is the province of Christianity to mould the nation for good, to take these heterogeneous masses with the blood of all nations circulating in their veins, and win them for Christ, for morality, for law and order. If this be not done, then looming in the distance is the red flag of the Commune, anarchy and ruin. Now, if we can get the children, we have the men and women of the next generation. Is there not a growing irreverence, a half concealed skepticism, and gross ignorance of the great truths of religion and their relation to each other, as well as much sin, among numbers of the rising generation? Time and thought must be given to the subject of training the young, if we wish to hold them for Christ. And if we can do this, the course of good government, morality and order, will be assured in the near future.

THOSE RECENT LARGE ACCESSIONS.

In chronicling the recent accessions of a "host" of ministers from the various denominations to the Church, as we did in our issue of the 8th inst., when the names of forty-nine (brought up to fifty-four by a correspondent,) were given, we are led to enquire as to the practical effects which this large number of able minds,—for in nearly every case they have been recognized as men of standing and of pulpit eloquence in the denominations to which they formerly belonged,—will exert upon the Church into whose Ministry they have now been received.

That this is a matter of great moment to the Church, none with the facts before them will care to deny.

Increasing in this ratio, the accessions of future years will represent a large proportion of the whole Ordinations, and must therefore exercise a corresponding influence upon the whole Church. These men are to be of the Church's teachers. To them will be confided the moulding of the minds of the young, and the placing of the Church in the high position which, it seems, in the good providence of God, she is destined to attain.

Now, as we of the Canadian Church are so intimately related to our sister across the line, both geographically and otherwise,—and a very large proportion of the accessions have been in the United States,—it must be apparent that any permanent impress upon her will sooner or later make itself felt on ourselves, and that, therefore, it is a matter of grave concern to us to know what influences are at work there, and whether the Church is progressing free from any admixture of the radicalism which has marked the course of the large dissenting bodies of that country.

It is well, under these circumstances, to have it generally known, as a matter of fact, that the Bishops of the United States, especially since the unhappy Cummins schism, have made the standard of admission high, and that these men have been especially recommended as scholars and judicious thinkers.

This is well. No man ought to be Ordained until he has given satisfactory evidence of possessing the needful qualifications. First, and as an all-important preliminary, he should possess holiness and blamelessness of life; and then he should undergo a lengthened probation of instruction and discipline, to ensure the reality of his scholarship and convictions.

The fact that these men have been willing to give up, in several instances, much better positions, in a worldly point of view, and that in many cases the most tender ties have had to be severed, while they have been respected for their godly lives, as well as noted for their scholarship and their conservatism in the denominations they have left, justly entitles them to claim excellent and satisfactory antecedents, and justifies every confidence that their future course will be loyal and true to the Church of their adoption.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND ON PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

No. II.

DURING the next ten years the Church will be under pressure upward or downward. To achieve any position it must cast off the swathing bands and stand up in the manhood of a workman's habit. It must not any longer lie in the cot for big brother to poke fun at. A baby is a very innocent little thing and amusing to play with, but the Church of England in this Province ought by this time to be tired of acting little boy, and should strike lustily for position. An aggressive Church lives and thrives, and no other. But how shall this be accomplished? An earnest, go-ahead clergyman would be the sort of man the laity would look upon with

suspicion, unless he would consent to work ahead on latitudinarian lines, and be earnest in negations,—splash away at the soup, but make no enquiry for the pea. And besides, there is no unity among the clergy. True, many agree in sentiment, but there is no united action. Each one stands and falls on his own *think*. Exchange of pulpits! When and where? Clerical meetings at centres for mutual edification, prayer, mission purposes, etc.! O ye winds, breathe it not! Every man is his own Bishop, and—shall we say it? Pope. Then, first of all, the Church here must have a head. Prince Edward Island and the Magdalen Islands should form a Diocese. We need a Bishop who can be on the Island,—one who will make the clergy obey the laws and rules of the Church; one who will organize, and insist that Parish Popes shall cease to be; one who will gather up the scattered brands, and concentrate the flame and heat; one who will encourage little brother to leave the cradle, to grow, to stretch himself, to be a man; to display bone and muscle in the war of aggression on the world. Such a war must, from the nature of things, be for a time unpopular, but all would come right in the end. And secondly, the Church must have some deliberate Assembly, not once in two years, but some Annual Assembly, and on the Island. The laity must be encouraged to enter into questions of Church Government and discipline. All that relates to them should have their sanction. A Church layman is made for something else besides attendance at services and giving to the Offertory. At first the laity will find themselves at sea on almost every Church question, and if there be anything in them, as there is, they will read and work up, and become pillars to the Church. At present the laity could not hold their own, if attacked, as Churchmen. An average Baptist could puzzle and turn into ridicule a dozen Churchmen, on theological and Church questions. As a people, the laity know absolutely nothing about the Church. The bare mention of well-known historical facts will frighten many, and any attempt to assert the Church's claims and authority, (as not being a *sect* of Christians, but a part of the Catholic and Apostolic Church founded before a written Gospel, and passed on through the ages), would raise the cry of Popery. Many of our laity dare not face the truth on a Church question.

X. Y. Z.

PAROCHIAL PAPERS—IV.

THE BIBLE CLASS.

NEXT in order of importance, we place the Bible Class. The Bible Class serves three purposes.

First, it solves that most interesting and perplexing problem, how to retain our boys and girls after they become too old, or think themselves too old for the Sunday School. A judiciously conducted Bible Class, with its two branches, one for males, the other for females, will act as a stimulus upon the clergy, and will keep our youth to their place in the Church.

Secondly, the Bible Class induces *real* study of Scripture. Knowledge of Holy Writ is much less thorough than the majority of our pulpits take for granted. There is a certain amount of reading, and conscientious reading, so far as it goes, which is nevertheless very superficial. When you have counted out the conceited, half-instructed critic, the fanatical text hunter, and the weak-minded sentimentalist, there are few Bible students left. The Bible Class is an opportunity for guidance and counsel as to systematic study which ought not to be neglected.

Thirdly, the Bible Class should lead to the study of Scripture as a whole. The Bible is not only read very superficially by many Christian people, but it is read as a collection of books having very little

connection with each other, and as containing different principles for different periods. The object of the Bible Class should be, not only to train those who attend it in real Bible study, with all the light that can be brought to bear upon the sacred page from critical and exegetical sources, both happily abundant; but also to bring the Bible before them as a grand whole. One volume, it proceeds, through human hands, and at different epochs, from one Divine author; revealing Him after His own plan from first to last; having a deep and intimate connection not always easily discerned, between its several portions, and, as St. Augustine expresses it, unfolding the New Testament in the Old, unfolding the Old Testament in the New. The Bible is not a book of puzzles. It is not a fetish, or a charm. It is the Revelation of God to man. As such, it must be studied as a whole, or it will but be half used. And this requires guidance.

The Bible Class should be conducted by the Rector. If he is better engaged, and wishes to hand it over to another, it should, if possible, be entrusted to one who to vital piety unites a knowledge of the original language of at least the New Testament. Or a commentary should be provided which the parish priest approves, and expects to be used in the work of preparation. *The responsibility is always his.*

The class should be begun by a short service, and a hymn. No time should then be lost in coming to the subject at once. The writer can do little more here than suggest a general outline. The needs of individual parishes differ so much; the ideas of clergy as to what will most profit different classes among their people are so varied, that what one finds useful, another may not. But there are one or two principles which are essential.

The preparation should be thorough. If a clergyman does not master the subject himself, how can he expect his pupils to be interested. They need, and must have, solid food. No trite common places, or hackneyed remarks, will hold them. They must feel that there is something real to be gained by their attendance, or they will not go.

The instruction, after the passage has been read, should be catechetical. This keeps the attention much better than the hortatory method, and allows a more free use of illustrations.

If practicable, the lesson should be distributed by leaflets among the members of the class on the meeting previous, and be studied by them at home. They should always be encouraged to ask questions for themselves, which keeps up the interest. The expense is trifling, and the work much more thorough.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

A WELL KNOWN clergyman of the Diocese of Nova Scotia has kindly placed at our disposal some notes of a speech delivered by him several years ago before the Synod, upon this important subject, when the present School system of Nova Scotia was about becoming the law of the land.

We can readily understand the indisposition on the part of the clergy at that time to vigorously oppose a measure, which was considered by many of the laity, and by the great bulk of Protestants outside the Church, to be so entirely for the public good. This did not prevent, however, some at least from expressing opinions adverse to the new state of things; and these notes will be found interesting as showing how accurately the speaker described what is now admitted to be a great evil in the School system of the Lower Provinces.

We published some weeks ago, at the suggestion of a correspondent, an article which recently appeared in the organ of

the Presbyterians, showing how the views of that religious body have changed; and we have seen in print sufficient; to justify us in assuming that the other bodies of Christians are agreed in desiring a change.

We predict that this question will sooner or later be felt to be so momentous as to call for special legislation to satisfy the demands of the Christian people of all denominations.

"Those of us who have received a scholastic or collegiate education, even in a country like England, where the religious element is not eliminated, know how, from the practical prominence given to Classics and Mathematics, Theological and Biblical knowledge seemed of quite secondary and inferior consideration, and to the present very great regret of many of us was comparatively neglected, or relegated to future years; and if under the comparative advantages of the English system this resulted, much more may we fear, that where, under a purely secular system, our children and our youth are taught to regard the knowledge of the things of this world as the only necessary knowledge—there the knowledge of the things of God—there the true education of man—will gradually, but surely fall into contempt. This, I think, must be the effect on the minds of those, who, day by day, are carefully instructed in secular wisdom, but never see God's minister, and never are publicly taught God's truth, save for a few moments on one day out of seven. What, in fact, are we by such a system, saying to our children, but just the converse of our Saviour's teaching. "It is of more advantage to gain the world than to save your souls." "It is better for you to know how to get on in this life, than to be educated not only for time, but also for eternity."

And if so, then my brethren, with such a system, we—I do not say as Christians merely, but even as thoughtful men—must at once join issue. For education, true education, what is that? Not simply the information of the understanding, not simply a collection and knowledge of certain facts, not merely the power to use these cleverly for our own selfish good. Nay! Education is the drawing out and developing the powers of manhood in us every one, the power of the spirit, and the love of the soul, as the cleverness of the intellect—those faculties which bring principle and virtue, and morality and feeling to bear upon our thoughts, our designs, our life; and what can develop this but religion? What can induce this but the thoughts of God, of Christ, of judgment and eternity, of Heaven and Hell? These tremendous truths instilled into our minds—taught as eternal verities—these, and these alone, can call out those answering faculties and qualities of our nature which make us men of honour, and men of truth.

Banish the thought, then, of these, the teachings of such truths from your system of public schools, and you ignore the deepest and truest faculties of our being; you develop in undue proportion the mere intellectual and worldly faculty. You go far to turn out a race of clever men, no doubt. Take care that they do not prove to be "clever devils." I speak advisedly. Satan himself is an intellectual being, clever enough, God knows; worldly enough, prince of this world; but what does he want? Feeling, love, principle. Is it not true? Let us beware, then, lest by remaining content with a system which induces worldly knowledge and cleverness, but which forbids the introduction of that knowledge which is at the root of all true feeling, principle and virtue, we help forward in our children the characteristics and disposition of the devil himself.

And here, in confirmation of all that I have said, I have only to refer you to the able report of the English Commissioner, the Rev. Mr. Fraser, on the secular school system of America. You will there read, that whilst calculated to produce a clever and intelligent race of men, its effects as regards principle and morality are most lamentable; that in all that goes to make men, great and good men, a nation wise and true, it fails miserably. That in America, thoughtful men are convinced that it is too rough-and-ready a method to cut the gordian knot of our sectarian difficulties, by banishing religion from our schools, and are wishing instead thereof to inaugurate a system of denominational schools.

This latter, I believe, is simply impossible for us. In the face of this impossibility, what are we to do? After hearing