

that the Church in the colonies is a purely *voluntary association*. We thankfully accept the assigned position, only stipulating that it be real and acknowledged. Let there be no latent subjection to English ecclesiastical law, no necessary appeal to any English tribunal

Long taught and accustomed to consider ourselves an integral portion of the Church of England, and bound as she is by the decisions of Government, we are naturally startled in these later days to find that we are not so closely connected with the mother Church, and are not affected by the same law which now rules her movements. Yet, so it is. We bring the subject forward at the present moment because the time has come when we must take some action on the subject, and we cannot well do so without acknowledging and assuming our independent position as a voluntary association.

We are in this diocese no longer quite in accordance with the discipline and practice of the Church of England. There both Houses of Convocation have recently altered the Canons regarding sponsors in Baptism. This alteration has been confirmed by the authority requisite to make it the law of the Church in England; but that authority does not extend to the colonies. We still follow the former practice in conformance with the Canons we have received. It depends therefore entirely upon the Church of Nova Scotia to alter the present Canons so that they may be conformant to the present rule in England, or to authorize the continuance of the older custom. The Church in England has taken a step. It is in our power to follow or not, as we please. Practical reasons will probably point to the expediency of adopting the change in the Canons. So too with regard to the subscriptions of candidates for the Ministry. The English Church has substituted a declaration, while the former subscription is still adhered to in this diocese.

Again, with reference to Holy Orders. Instead of the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, a new oath was substituted in England by an Act of 1858, to be administered before ordination, and there is now no oath at the ordinations. Here, however, it is still (if we are not mistaken) the custom to administer the two former oaths at the time of ordination

The Bishops of our dioceses probably feel some hesitation in administering these oaths without any positive authority for doing so; although one of them be rubrical and both sanctioned by long custom. They would perhaps be much relieved if their several Churches would assume the responsibility of any change, or the continuance of the present custom.

These and other matters connected with discipline and practice our "Voluntary Association" may well consider; and we may be thankful that we have a Synod already established, representing nearly all the diocese, recognized by the Crown as the representative of the Church of Nova Scotia, and fully capable of handling such matters of interest.

But for the sake of uniformity in practice, it would be well for the several dioceses to act together. Why should not the Church in the Maritime Provinces do as they now do in Canada,—elect their own Metropolitan, and have their Provincial Synod? Canada is too distant, and her districts already too large, to make it desirable that we should be united under her Metropolitan; but we have Church members enough in Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to form a province and act in unity for ourselves. The Crown will issue no more letters-patent, even of the partial character already given; and it appears to be the design of the English Government that in Church matters, as well as in politics, the colonies should think and act for themselves.