

can seldom fail of making a deep and salutary impression, not only on the confirmed and their parents, friends and neighbours, but on every beholder.

In this Diocese, where opportunities for religious instruction are yet so few, you will find it in general a laborious work to prepare your young people for confirmation; but it is of imperative importance that it should be well done. Many will be found very ignorant, from causes over which they had no control, and they will require much patience and much gentleness. Some are timid and unable to communicate what they really understand, especially if examined in a hasty manner or with a seeming indifference. Endeavour to gain their confidence that they may feel at ease; and do not perplex them with intricate and difficult questions.

As Sunday Schools increase, the labour of preparing your candidates for Confirmation will be in some degree diminished; but even then, the chief responsibility remains with you. And although a knowledge of the Creed, the ten Commandments, and the Catechism, may appear but a small amount of Christian instruction, it will require no small diligence and prudence to bring it fully within their understanding. At the same time, be slow in refusing admission to those who are past or of the proper age, who appear to be anxious and doing their best to acquire the necessary qualifications; for they may have had very confined opportunities, and are perhaps engaged in continual labour, and not likely to be better prepared at a future period. In all such cases, exercise a wise and kind discretion. A steady perseverance on your part will seldom fail in accomplishing a tolerable preparation, provided the candidates feel, and believe that you are interested in their welfare.

XVIII. I can scarcely express my satisfaction in terms sufficiently strong in regard to the Theological Seminary. Seminary which was established at Cobourg a few years ago.

It was, from the first, placed under the sole management of the Rev. Dr. Bethune, and has prospered far beyond my most sanguine expectations. A success which I chiefly attribute to the superior ability and sound discretion with which it has been conducted by its learned and amiable Professor, to whom my thanks as well as those of the Diocese are justly due, and hereby cordially tendered.

And here also we have most thankfully to acknowledge that for the continuance, and indeed we may say for the very existence of this Institution, we are beholden to the unwearied kindness and munificence of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. That noble and venerable Association has made an annual grant of 500*l.* Sterling towards its support; of which 400*l.* is divided into ten scholarships, and the remaining hundred enables the Professor to employ an Assistant to relieve him from some portion of the duty of his populous and extensive mission. On every side this Diocese finds itself under the deepest obligations to the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and the only way we can offer compensation is by devoting ourselves more and more to the increase and stability of that Church of which it is so bright an ornament.

The Theological Seminary will, it is hoped, in time become the foundation of a still more extensive Institution, to be attached to the Cathedral, as was the custom in former ages, that it may supply the whole Diocese with Clergymen, instead of vacancies, to which it is as yet chiefly confined.

It is quite impossible for an Ecclesiastical Establishment of any extent, to continue long, without the greatest inconvenience, to have its spiritual wants supplied from so great a distance as the mother country. For many years, few or no Clergymen have been found willing to come to this colony; and although the cause is worthy of all rejoicing, it points to the growing necessity of educating young men for the Church among ourselves. The great number of churches building and parochial cures established in England, have created such a demand for Clergymen upon the spot, as to preclude the hope that we can be supplied longer from that quarter to any extent.

Besides it must be conceded, that a body of Clergymen trained up in the country where they will be required to exercise their ministry, with a full knowledge of its localities and an intimate acquaintance with the habits and dispositions of the people, and with an equality of literary and spiritual fitness, possess advantages over those who come as strangers to the climate and the people. But yet I should like a sprinkling, from time to time, of men from home. They refresh and keep us up; and I find them by experience as much, perhaps in some instances more, devoted to their duties than our native Clergy.

XIX. The great vice of the present age is the want of Christian Faith and elevation of principle. All is material, tending downwards, and confined to this world. The Society is full of suspicion, reckless in its desires, eager for change, and hostile to every thing of a tranquil and settled nature. Whatever is ancient, is despised because it is old; and whatever is new, is valued because of its novelty. This innovating spirit has thrust itself into both politics and religion with fearful and convulsive effect. He who, with respect to Christianity, thinks that truth and order, as taught by the Apostles, is a safer guide than modern rationalism, fanatical delusions and heartless infidelity; or in politics, that our ancestors were not altogether ignorant of the principles of good government or the true sources of domestic happiness, is pronounced far behind the spirit of the age. A spirit which, being entirely earthly, issues in boundless selfishness and an incessant craving after wealth and power, and which it seeks to gratify at the expence of every sound principle, while it holds in contempt and disbelief all that is generous and noble in human nature. It is every where at work, and with no less temerity in this colony than in other quarters of the world. And is it to be said that we have nothing to do with this destructive spirit which sets itself against law and order, and fears neither God nor man? And that we have no duty respecting it to discharge? Do not our people form nearly one-third of the population of the Diocese, and are we not deeply concerned in every thing that relates to them in their various relations of life? And if the confusion and disorder which some misguided men among us are promoting, threaten our hearths and altars, our lives and properties,—are we to sit still and fold our hands, and submit to be told that with such matters the Clergy have nothing to do? Such sophistry is worse than idle: it is false and deadly. We have a right, in virtue of our divine commission, to deal in a becoming manner with every principle which guides man's thoughts,—with every motive which sways his conduct,—with every action which affects his happiness, or makes one human being different from another. But in thus dealing with all who are within our reach, we are not to be directed by the rules of worldly wisdom or worldly pride, but with

such motives and principles as are pure and holy. Nor are we to abstain, because, in the opinion of some, it may be unprofitable and unpleasing; for in thus abstaining, we should be neglecting our duty both to God and man;—to God, because all things should be done to his glory; and to man, because all our actions and proceedings should tend to his good. Not to come forward in such times as these, would be to surrender a portion of our ministry, and to confess that man, in his social and political character, is not an object of Christian teaching.

Every good Christian is an enemy to faction and party-spirit, and is, from principle, a man of peace. He feels it to be his first duty to continue obedient to his Sovereign and her laws, and to love his country with an abiding affection; and therefore it is that we hold the teaching of such duties to be part of our ministry, and fit and necessary subjects of private and public instruction, when occasion requires. Now this important function we discharge in the most effectual manner, by enforcing the salutary influence of Gospel truth on all the relations of domestic and social life. Under such influence, we feel that the exercise of our franchise, or any other civil right, should be considered a religious trust, to be used conscientiously. Hence it can never be right in us to support any person in attaining the station of Representative, or any other political authority, unless such person be qualified according to Jethro's definition, dictated by inspiration,—“An able man, one that fears God; a man of truth, hating covetousness.” Can you suppose, if our present distinguished Ruler, a gentleman of great ability and experience, and of unquestionable truth and integrity, and most anxious for the welfare and happiness of the colony, were surrounded with such men, that the present unhappy state of affairs would exist even for a single day? But, unfortunately, our people, misled by those who make a trade of politics, are too little disposed to look out for men to represent them of moral and religious habits, and who fear God and honour the Queen.—They do not think this a religious duty, and seem to be better satisfied with worldly qualifications than those of peace and virtue. Hence we are fallen on evil days.

But it is our duty, my brethren, to do all we can to infuse a better spirit among our people, in this as well as in all other matters, and at the same time to make them sensible that human choice and human policy are of little avail, unless God be honoured in the Councils of our Rulers, and that without confidence in the divine government, vain is the arm of flesh. In regard to that political question which at this moment more particularly divides the public mind, it is quite sufficient to observe that the responsibility which we require in public men, is inflexible integrity,—a love of justice which nothing can shake,—and a deep conviction that they must one day render an account to God of the trusts and talents committed to their charge.

Never did any country possess in more abundance the means of political comfort and happiness than this,—the kind protection of the most powerful Empire in the world, a fine climate, a fertile soil, equal laws admirably administered, and as much freedom as is consistent with social enjoyment; and yet from ignorance, waywardness, and the love of change, and these fermenting only in a small portion of our people, we are threatened with utter ruin. We have no real grievances of which to complain, or which may not be readily redressed; for our Mother Country has made herself chiefly known to us by acts of generous kindness and indulgence. Even when she has been induced to adopt measures which were found unwise in their operation, they were in general entertained from a desire to conciliate our affections and promote our interests. Her errors have been those of an indulgent parent, giving way to our frowardness, and carrying her conciliating policy to a pernicious extreme, when a more stern and vigorous proceeding would have been far more to our advantage. For the political evils with which we are afflicted I can see no remedy but in the greater prevalence of religious principles, guided by firmness and justice on the part of government.—To these alone, as taught by our beloved Church, can we look for the permanent restoration of peace and order; and this will ever be the consequence of the teaching of the true Church of God. Her children will always be found the friends and promoters of truth and justice, and anxious to establish on earth something of the tranquillity and felicity of heaven.

XX. The employment of the Press was forced upon us some years ago, in self-defence. The bitter calumnies of our Press, enemies against the Church were believed by many, because suffered to pass without contradiction; for those Journals which were the most ready to insert the most atrocious accusations against her, refused to admit a word in her defence. The “Church” newspaper was therefore established for our protection, as well as to supply a convenient medium of communication between the Bishop and his Clergy; and most successfully has it answered our intentions. It has from its commencement been ably conducted, and been continually gaining ground with all persons of intelligent and honest hearts; and for some time past it has sustained a high character both at home and abroad. That every article has been faultless,—every correspondent judicious,—and no point of discussion carried too far, I do not assert; but this much I will affirm,—that those who are best acquainted with the troubles, and anxieties, and vexations which beset the editorial chair of a newspaper, and particularly a religious one, and that sick or well, present or absent, it must be published on a certain day and at a certain hour, feel agreeably surprised that in the course of so many years, so little matter really objectionable has appeared in its columns. It has been essentially useful in making known among our people the true principles of our Catholic Church, in her unity, doctrines and discipline. Nor has it been less useful in counteracting the influence of certain Journals which have been constantly employing the most vindictive and vituperative language against her. The truth of all this is so manifest, that I feel myself warranted in respectfully urging upon you the duty of using your influence in extending the circulation of this excellent Journal in your several parishes and neighbourhoods, in a manner more hearty and zealous than some of you have hitherto done. I would also recommend to such of you as may have leisure, to write an article occasionally on some prevailing calumny or misrepresentation of the day. We shall thus render the Press what it was undoubtedly designed to be by the Giver of all good, and what under his wise providence it will in time become,—the promoter of Truth and the servant of Religion. Not that I call upon you to be writers, for this may be inconvenient; and many of you have neither time nor inclination for such employment; but I do call upon you to support the “Church” newspaper, although every word or article may not be according to your views and wishes; for

to expect this, would be to expect an impossibility. It must be conducted by one mind, and the minds of its readers are many. The Press is an engine of vast power, and, if rightly directed, of immense importance, and it will be used in this Diocese for good or evil, whether we hear or whether we forbear. Now our object is, through this Journal, to promote the cause of our holy Religion as taught by our Church in her Articles, Common Prayer Book, Creeds, and Homilies. It is the only channel by which our people through the whole Diocese can be effectually warned against the venom of the revolutionary journals and pamphlets which are daily occupied in poisoning the sources of our domestic, civil, and political welfare; and it is the only means we possess of guarding our people against the sophistries and cavils of Dissent and Romanism on the one hand, and of infidelity and irreligion on the other. Such are the objects which the “Church” newspaper seeks to accomplish, and hitherto with a measure of success far greater than we had reason to anticipate. It has had, from the beginning, my full confidence; for although I could not approve of every thing it contained, the spots were as trifles to its merits; and knowing the great ability and true piety of its Editor, I feel little sympathy with those who, because of some minor differences, are ready in a moment of irritation at a word or expression which they dislike, to turn against an instrument so extensively useful and almost essential to the prosperity of the Church. I know that it is much read and esteemed in the neighbouring States as well as in England, and takes its place in the first rank of the religious periodical press. I therefore again recommend it as worthy of your zealous and strenuous support.

XXI. With respect to the theological discussions which have for some years been disturbing a portion of the Church in the mother country, I see no reason to depart from an expression of opinion which I delivered in my primary Charge nearly three years ago. So far as the Oxford writers brought forward doctrines warranted by Holy Scripture, and which, though for a time nearly forgotten, have been held by the Church in all ages and in all places, viz. the Apostolical Succession as declared in our Ordinal,—Baptismal Regeneration as set forth in our Catechism, and baptism and Confirmation Services,—and the real though spiritual communion in the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist, as shewn in the Communion office,—and that the Church is by divine appointment the depositary and witness of the truth, they did good service. And this the more especially, because their teaching was illustrated and recommended by a conscientious zeal, a disinterestedness, and holiness of life, which deservedly won affection and esteem. But so far as any of them have indulged a leaning towards Rome, or attempted, in the slightest manner, to gloss over or palliate any of her numerous and deadly corruptions, or have brought forward their individual opinions in favour of novelties which have neither the sanction of Scripture, nor are supported by the authorized formularies of the Church, I can give them no countenance, and for these they have been seasonably rebuked by their own Bishops. Fortunately we have nothing to do with these proceedings and controversies. At peace among ourselves and sincerely devoted to our Church, her scriptural Liturgy, and Articles, as our bond of union, we are all of one mind: we act together in the greatest harmony as brethren embarked in the same holy cause; and are ardently prosecuting, under our Master's banner, the great work which in his mercy he hath entrusted to our care. On two points only, connected with this controversy, has my opinion been requested, and to each I shall address myself as briefly as possible.

I. PRIVATE JUDGMENT ON MATTERS OF RELIGION.

The Church of England has never recognized, much less maintained, the unqualified right of private judgment, in matters of religion. At the same time, she requires nothing of any man to be believed as necessary to salvation, except it be read in Scripture and proved thereby; and thus she admits the utmost freedom consistent with Revelation. When we have once satisfied ourselves that a doctrine is founded on Scripture, it then becomes our duty to receive it with implicit faith, and to preserve it as a sacred deposit entrusted to our keeping, whole and entire, without adding thereto what to our limited faculties may seem needful, or taking away what we may think superfluous. Our Church, therefore, requires us to believe with the understanding as well as with the heart; and when occupied in ascertaining the truth of her doctrines as tested by Scripture and other helps, we feel ourselves employed in a work peculiarly honourable, and not in a labour of bondage nor under the control of a taskmaster, but in the enjoyment of all the liberty and responsibility of accountable agents engaged in an enquiry of the greatest importance, and of which life or death may be the consequence.

While therefore the Church of England allows every thing truly valuable in the exercise of private judgment, she condemns those who disregard all authority, and rashly set up their own will and pleasure as the only standard which they will admit. It is true she requires the sponsors at Baptism to receive her faith implicitly in the name of the child, but she provides that this child shall be so taught as to believe with the understanding before it comes forward to be confirmed. Certain of the truth of her doctrines, the Church fears no honest enquiry. On the contrary, in all her teaching, she aims at enabling her children to give a reason for the hope that is in them, and to be able to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. When our youth come forward with honest and good hearts, they discover that what they have been taught by authority in childhood, rests entirely on Scripture, illustrated and confirmed by the testimony and traditions of the Church, and her more distinguished saints and martyrs from the earliest times. Hence the Church acknowledges the duty or obligation imposed upon all Christians, to examine the foundation of their faith, and to prove all things; that they may hold fast that which is good.

She not only acknowledges, but she even encourages a sober and searching enquiry, while she contends against rash interpretations and a too ready adherence to our own fallible judgments. It was in accordance with this view of the right of private judgment and the wise limitations appointed by the Church under which it should be exercised, that Bishop Willson has a thanksgiving among his devotions, that we are not left in the affair of eternity to the uncertainty of our own reason and judgment.

In fine, unlimited private judgment in religious matters is not the doctrine of the Reformation nor of the Church of Christ in any age; for if the Bible were to be believed according to every man's interpretation, there could be no such thing as heresy or erroneous doctrine. Again, the Bible as explained by every man's private judgment or opinion, is not

the doctrine of Protestants. For one reads the Bible without any knowledge of the original language, or any help from, or any deference to, authority, which in all other matters he respects, and he becomes an Arian, or a Socinian, or a Quaker, &c. Private judgment must therefore, in matters of religion, be directed and controlled as our Church directs and controls it; otherwise there could be no such thing as religious error or heresy, or dissent.

2. TRADITION.—On the 8th April, 1546, the Council of Trent decreed, under the sanction of Anathema, that the Tradition, Scriptures and Tradition are to be received and Tradition, venerated with equal affection of piety and reverence, and that in the Canon of Scripture are included intermixed the books generally called Apocryphal. Now it is scarcely to be wondered that, after this, the word Tradition became to Protestants unpalatable, and closely associated in their minds with reasonable as well as unreasonable antipathies. Nevertheless, the dispute concerning its true import is not one of principle, but of fact and degree; since all parties admit the usefulness of tradition in its proper place, and to a certain extent. Nor do they reject any tradition which can be traced by direct testimony to the Apostolic age, because it is evidently of Apostolic origin. This, which may be considered a true definition of ancient and legitimate tradition, was acknowledged by Luther and the Reformers on the Continent of Europe, as well as by those of the Church of England.—It repudiates the dogma of the Romish Church, which places tradition on an equality with Holy Scripture; and it rejects all the practices of that Church which cannot be traced to the primitive age. But our Reformers had no intention of condemning tradition indiscriminately. They knew that, in strictness of speech, Scripture is itself tradition, written tradition,—that, as far as external evidence is concerned, the tradition preserved in the Church is the only ground upon which the genuineness of the Books of Scripture can be established. For though we are not, upon the authority of the Church, bound to receive as Scripture any book which contains internal evidence of its spuriousness; yet no internal evidence is sufficient to prove a book to be Scripture, of which the reception, by a portion at least of the Church, cannot be traced from the earliest period of its history to the present time.—What our Reformers opposed, was the notion that men should, upon the mere authority of tradition, receive, as necessary to salvation, doctrines not contained in Scripture. They neither bowed submissively to the authority of tradition, nor yet rejected it altogether; and this is still the doctrine of our Church on this subject, at the present day, and to which it is our duty to adhere. Even those who declaim the most arrogantly against tradition, and condemn it wholly and without discrimination, are found adopting many things on its authority,—such as Infant Baptism, the Christian Sabbath or Sunday, Female Communion, Confirmation, and the like. These practices are received, not on account of express proof from the Word of God, but because they are found, by ecclesiastical history or tradition, to have been so received from the times of the Apostles.

In fine, the judgment of our Church respecting the legitimate use and authority of tradition is briefly this:—“She pays profound respect to the declared voice of the primitive Catholic Church as a help and guide for interpreting the Scriptures and judging of the Christian doctrines, but it is a respect subordinate to that which she pays to the written Word of God, which she regards, and rightly regards, as the only divine source and standard of religious truth.”

XXII. There is yet one topic more to which I beg to call your attention. You are aware that almost all the Churches which have been built in this Diocese have been Churches and assisted by donations from the two great Societies in England, and in general by subscriptions from places beyond their locality; and that, in many instances, the congregation for whose benefit any particular Church was built, has contributed but a very small portion of the expence of its erection. Now you must, my brethren, bear in mind that the object which the Societies and distant contributors had in view, was the benefit of the poor, and to provide that the seats in such Churches should be free and not monopolized by a few families on the spot, merely because they may have subscribed something more than their less opulent neighbours. The accommodation in each Church is equal in value to the expence of its erection, and therefore if it be not altogether free, such a portion at least as the donations and distant subscriptions cover, ought to be so, and set apart for the benefit of the poor.

If a Church, for instance, cost £500 in building, of which £200 only have been raised within the parish, and £300 have been derived from abroad, then three-fifths of that Church belong unquestionably to the poor, and two-fifths only to the local subscribers. Moreover, the two spaces should be so apportioned as to give equal convenience both in seeing and hearing, and the one should in no respect possess any advantage over the other.

I request particular attention to this important subject; because I have learned with much regret that, in two or three instances, the local contributors have in a great measure monopolized the Church, by erecting large and unsightly pews, and by so doing have almost entirely excluded the poor. This is not only injustice, but actual robbery, if not sacrilege, and must be corrected.

It is with great satisfaction that I turn to some Churches recently built, where little or no assistance was received beyond their locality, and where yet ample accommodation has been provided for the poorer part of the congregation by their wealthier brethren. This is acting in the true spirit of Christian charity, and will, I trust, be universally followed.

XXIII. And now, my brethren, having brought before you such topics as appeared to me most suitable at this time, for your serious consideration, let us pray to Almighty God that we may become better servants of Christ and of his Church than we have hitherto been, with more singleness of heart and more energy of purpose, that we may be enabled, as faithful and wise Stewards, to feed his flock; being assured that if we love them and feel an ardent desire for their salvation, we shall become like the scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, who brought out of his treasures things new and old. Thus shall all obstacles be removed from our hearts that might hinder us from bringing our congregations to a knowledge of the truth; and we shall be animated with that zeal and wisdom from above with which the first Preachers of the Gospel were endued, and be found powerful both in word and doctrine to promote the glory of God and the salvation of our people, and to reckon as nothing the opinions of men, so long as we are instruments in our Saviour's hands of extending his kingdom and accomplishing his will.