

Reflections.

PREACHING IN THE SURPLICE.

To the Editor of the Echo.

REV. SIR,—A friend has drawn my attention to the article in your paper of the 31st ultimo, calling on me to explain the circumstance under which I had preached in the surplice in St. James's Church, Kingston, at the late Confirmation. As I perceive this has given serious offence to some persons in that congregation, and caused a good deal of public remark, I shall with pleasure furnish you with a full and candid account of the affair.

Having occasion to visit the Bay of Quinté on business during the summer, I arranged with our venerable Bishop, who, I understood was travelling alone, to accompany him on his confirmation tour through the Midland Deanery; and his lordship did me the honour of requesting me to act as his Chaplain at the several stations where confirmations were to be held. The appointment at St. James's was at six or half-past six p.m., and as the Bishop, on his previous visit, had experienced a good deal of difficulty in preaching at that hour, owing to the uncertain light, he requested me to do so.

While robing in the vestry, which, I would remark, is at the entrance of the church, the Rev. Mr. Mulkins, the minister in charge, requested that I would preach in the gown, as that was the practice in that church; but as I considered that I would have duties to perform in the chancel (where it is always customary to wear the surplice) immediately after the sermon; and never having adopted those decided views either for or against its use in the pulpit, which unhappily prevail in certain quarters, I observed to him it would be very inconvenient to change; and I thought, under the circumstances, it would not be noticed. But not wishing to decide the matter myself, before we proceeded into the church, I asked the Bishop which I should wear, and having the surplice on at the time, his lordship, no doubt deeming it immaterial, directed me to wear it. It is, however, but justice to his lordship, that I should state my belief, that he was not aware of the incumbent's peculiar objections to the use of the surplice in the pulpit, for had it been fully represented to him by Mr. Mulkins or myself, it is very probable he would have directed me to change.

In the chancel, Mr. Mulkins renewed his request that I would use the gown. But being unwilling to trouble the Bishop again on a subject I had hitherto deemed so unimportant, and having a strong objection to parade up and down a long and crowded church in canonicals, which would have been necessary, the vestry being at the other end, I thought it better to remain as I was, trusting that the good sense of the congregation would not view it in a serious light.

But on the following day, when Mr. Mulkins informed me that my conduct had been animadverted upon, and that he had received a letter from one of the church-wardens demanding an explanation, I requested that gentleman to assure him in reply, that I had no intention to give offence, and that my reason for retaining the surplice was merely a matter of convenience. I further stated that I did not use it as a badge of party, as they imagined, but was quite indifferent to the use of the gown or the surplice in the pulpit—my custom for years (even long prior to disputes in the Church on this and other unhappy points) having been to use the gown on all ordinary occasions, but on Communion Sundays, or other occasions when changing would be inconvenient, to use the surplice throughout the services, as I believe is very commonly the case.

I had hoped that this explanation would have enabled Mr. Mulkins to satisfy the offended parties, and that it was not till some time after my return, that a friend, while travelling, met with and forwarded to me the number of the Kingston Commercial Advertiser containing the correspondence between the church-wardens and Mr. M. on the subject. This, I was pained to perceive, had been introduced, under authority, to the notice of the public, with imputations against myself and one of the Kingston clergy (which, I am at a loss to imagine), of so offensive and uncharitable a nature, that I resolved not to notice them.

And here I would beg to observe, that although, on first hearing of the serious offence, some persons had taken at the circumstance, I was disposed to feel amused, yet I candidly admit that could I have formed a correct estimate of the great importance attached to this act by the parties alluded to, or had I been aware that it would have elicited such an amount of agitation and uncharitable feeling, my duty as a Christian would

have prompted me to avoid casting such a stumbling-block in their way.

The disposition evinced by a few to carry matters to extremes, and that even in things which ought to be indifferent, has a very mischievous tendency both on the interests of our Church and of religion generally. It is, no doubt, an artifice of our great enemy, and, judging from appearances, a most successful one; for it is painful to perceive how much of that "godly union and concord" which ought to subsist amongst us, has been hindered by fostering this disposition. The affixing of shibboleths and names and badges to parties, often subjects those who wish to be moderate, and cherish more of their Master's spirit, to serious misconstruction. Many instances of this kind have occurred to my own knowledge. One or two I will mention. In the good city of Kingston, a clergyman who was officiating in one of the suburban churches, was obliged to preach in his surplice because there was no gown; and again, in the cathedral church of St. James's, Toronto, a clergyman, not less esteemed for his piety and learning than his anxiety to avoid giving offence, preached in the surplice, under the impression that it was the practice, while I can testify how readily he would have used the gown, had the attendant clergy called his attention to it. In both these instances the most ungenerous suspicions and coarsest abuse were heaped on these clergymen, through the public press. And even since my unintentional offence at Kingston, at the archidiaconal visitation in Toronto, I again unintentionally transgressed by preaching in the gown in a church where the surplice was invariably used. However, notwithstanding the peculiar views of a small minority of the clergy and laity, I am happy to believe that this matter is viewed with indifference by the bulk of our people, and that even many of those whose views accord on most points with the incumbent of St. James's, do not look upon the surplice as the badge of a party, as some would wish them to do, but use it in the way I have been in the habit of doing.

And now, Rev. Sir, having inadvertently subjected myself to what I cannot but consider the ungracious censure of a portion of the congregation of St. James's, I am willing to bear all the blame which *the case really merits*; but I must protest against the over-zealous and unfair efforts that have been used to aggravate my act into a designed offence. Can it be possible that a congregation so favored in regard to religious teaching as St. James's is reputed to be, should be so wanting to themselves and uncharitable to me, as to suppose, (and that generally, as it is stated on authority) that I could be so lost to every sense of propriety and religion as to go to the House of God, on the Lord's day, on a most solemn and interesting occasion, in the presence of my Bishop, with the premeditated and malicious intention (at the instigation of another) of availing myself of my sacred office to wound the feelings of the ministers and members of a large and intelligent congregation? Surely this cannot be seriously or generally supposed by the congregation of St. James! I nevertheless feel sensibly this attempt to injure me in the estimation of those whom I have known so long, and whose regard I value so highly.

In apologizing for occupying so much of your space, I beg leave to thank you, Rev. and dear Sir, for the courteous manner in which you have alluded to this matter, and I must say it forms a gratifying contrast with the ungenerous conduct of your Kingston contemporary. As I am by no means indifferent to a "good report" among my friends and acquaintances throughout the Diocese, and particularly among my former parishioners in the Midland District, I would avail myself of this opportunity to assure them that my views and principles as a minister of our venerable Church, remain unchanged, and I pray God I may be enabled, through grace, "to continue in the same unto my life's end."—I remain, Rev. Sir, your faithful servant,

SALTERN GIVINS.
Springfield, Toronto Township,
17th September, 1855.

ADVANTAGES OF EMIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND.

To the Editor of the Doncaster Gazette.

SIR,—Having lately returned to England after a residence of eight years in Australia and New Zealand, and wishing to make known the great advantages offered to agricultural labourers and other suitable emigrants in the latter colony, I request that you will insert the following statement respecting the settlement of Canterbury.

The two large islands known as New Zealand are together about equal in extent to Great Britain and Ireland. They are of nearly equal size, and are separated by Cook's Straits, which vary in breadth from

80 to 90 miles. Politically they are divided into the six provinces of Auckland, New Plymouth, and Wellington on the north island; and Nelson, Canterbury, and Otago on the south island.

The Province of Canterbury, settled by the late Canterbury Association in December, 1850, occupies about one-third of the large south island, between the parallels of 43 and 45 south latitude, and is bounded on the north by the province of Nelson and on the south by the province of Otago. The greater part of the Province is occupied by the great range of snowy mountains, which extends from north to south throughout the whole length of the island, and varies in elevation from 7,000 to 12,000 feet. On the west coast the mountains approach the sea so as to leave very little level country, and at present no settlements have been formed there. The available part of the province, comprising about 4,000,000 acres, lies between the east coast and the snowy mountains, and varies in breadth from 20 to 50 miles. The greater part of it consists of a very extensive plain, appearing to the eye quite level, but rising gradually from the coast to the mountains, where its surface is about 500 feet above the level of the sea. At the northern and southern extremity of this plain the country consists of downs and hills of moderate height. Opposite the middle part of the plain Banks Peninsula joins the east coast. It is about the size of the Isle of Wight, and consists of a mass of volcanic mountains from 2,000 to 3,000 feet high, and containing the harbours of Port Lyttleton and Akaroa, and several other inlets of the sea.

The province as above described, with the exception of some swamps near the coast and of extensive swamps on Banks Peninsula and small patches of forest on the plain, is an open country covered with grass, and in its wild state estimated to be capable of supporting 1,000,000 sheep and 50,000 head of cattle. The best soil is near the coast where there is a tract extending about six miles inland, of alluvial deposit, very fertile. Near the mountains there is also good soil. The middle part of the plain is the worst, much of it being stony and poor, and quite useless for agricultural purposes, until the land becomes densely peopled and land valuable. The province is well watered by numerous rivers, the largest of which have their sources in the snowy mountains and flow across the plain in very wide beds—in some instances a mile wide. At ordinary times the water is admirably transparent and pure, and flows swiftly in several comparatively narrow channels, fordable on horseback, through the bed of gravel or shingle. In the heavy floods, occasioned generally by the melting of the snow in summer, the whole river bed is covered by a torrent of muddy water, and is quite impassable. Near the mountains the river beds lie several hundred feet below the level of the plain, and are bounded on each side by a succession of terraces or steps, with intervening strips of level ground. For a few miles before reaching the sea some of these rivers flow gently into one deep channel, and are navigable for small coasting vessels. Some of the small rivers, such as the Avon, upon which the town of Christchurch is situated, rise within ten miles of the coast by very copious springs, and receiving very little surface water, never become turbid or flooded, and vary very little in extent of water throughout the year.

The Climate of Canterbury is remarkably healthy and temperate, but it is not considered so agreeable as that of Nelson or of the north island, owing to the prevalence of strong north-west winds during the spring and early summer months: though coming over the range of snowy mountains they are always warm, and drier than the winds from other quarters, and may perhaps owe these properties to the great Australian desert, which is situated about 1500 miles off in a straight line. The highest range of the thermometer observed by me during three summers was 91° in the shade for a few hours in one day. During a hot wind in Australia, Fahrenheit's thermometer in the shade frequently rises to 105°, and sometimes to 115°. The autumn and winter weather is for the most part calm and serene like September weather in England, except during July and August, when strong gales from the south-west and heavy rains are prevalent. Sharp white frosts occur at night frequently, but black frosts are unknown. There are usually two or three slight falls of snow during the winter, but it never remains throughout the day except on the hills. The summers are longer than in England, but long continued droughts are never experienced, and the crops are more certain than in Australia. There is less thunder and lightning and sultry weather than in England, the hottest weather is usually accompanied by a refreshing breeze, and labouring men, say they can get