

## The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, NOV. 26, 1853.

## UNITED STATES.

Our exchanges from this quarter have furnished ample details of the proceedings of the General Convention of the P. E. Church, which met at New York last month, and continued in session for nearly three weeks. The proceedings were very interesting, but are too voluminous for our limited space.

The Delegation from the Church of England formed a novel and interesting feature in the scene, and the distinguished members of it received every mark of public and private consideration. Their departure is very feelingly alluded to in the Report. There were also present delegates from the Diocese of Toronto, for the purpose of returning thanks to the American Church for the courtesies shown to the agent for Trinity College, and for the liberal response, to the amount of \$10,000, which was made to his appeal in behalf of that Institution.

Among the important measures of the session was the appointment of two Missionary Bishops, one for California and the other for Oregon. The Rev. Dr. Kip of Albany, has been already consecrated for the former district. The Rev. T. F. Scott, of Georgia, has been named for Oregon, but has not decided on acceptance.

The usual Pastoral Letter from the Bishops to the whole Church, was issued at the close of the Convention. It is a document replete with wisdom, and breathing in every line the genuine spirit of the Gospel. We wish that our limits would admit of its entire transfer to our columns; but we must content ourselves with a few extracts, which we are sure will be acceptable to our readers.

The recent deposition of Bishop Ives for his defection to Rome, and the various opinions of the Church, are thus noticed:—

"We earnestly hope that the record of this deposition may conclude the list of apostates to the Romish Communion. For several years past our branch of the Church of CHRIST, as well as our parent Church of England, has been harassed by the advocacy of doctrines, and of ceremonial observances, leading in the same direction. The movement was commenced under the imposing counsels of learned and pious men, but possessed of more fancy and feeling than of sound judgment and discretion. It has been continued mainly by men of similar characteristics; men whose prurient imaginations required the gratification of an imposing ceremonial in religion, and whose morbid yearnings after greater holiness, led them to seek for it in the asceticism of the Church of Rome.

The agitations which have thus disturbed the peace of the Church within the last ten years, have been most deplorable in their consequences. Brethren in the bonds of the Church, who should have lived together in harmony and love, and whose only strife should have been, who should do most for the elucidation and extension of their common faith, have learned to look upon each other with distrust; to doubt each other's sincerity; to aggravate each other's supposed errors; to ascribe to each other's opinions consequences which the holders of those opinions would utterly disavow; and thus, instead of regarding them merely as illogical reasoners, they have learned to brand them as corrupt in doctrine.

The Church Press, too, and especially its periodical press, has had its share in this uncharitable work. We have no desire, indeed, to curb the legitimate freedom of the Press; but we would rejoice to see a self-restraint exercised in regard to its bitterness and licentiousness. We are aware that important truths are sometimes elicited, and more frequently sustained by free discussion. But we deplore the exhibition of all uncharitable feeling, and the use of all censoriousness of language.

The principles of sound churchmanship have no inherent tendency to Romanism, or to the opposite extreme. As they are deduced from the holy Scriptures, and exhibited in the Articles, Liturgy, and Prayer Book, they stand in happy equilibrium. It is only when one doctrine or office is magnified at the expense of the rest, that the equilibrium is destroyed. The tendencies to error and to extremes lie in part in the different constitutions of men: in the diversities of their tempers, education, and prejudice, and not in the system of Christianity itself. Some men rest upon the doctrinal soundness of their religion; others on its practical developments. Some are disposed greatly to magnify the efficacy of the Sacraments; others have been equally inclined to depreciate their efficacy. The only remedy for all these extremes is to receive and hold the doctrines of Scripture, and their summary in the Prayer Book, in due proportion, and not to magnify one doctrine or precept at the expense of another.

Again, there are differences among Churchmen arising out of the different schools of Theology in which they have been trained, and still other differences arising out of the various systems of metaphysics on which the different systems of Theology are based.

Now, in all these cases, a reasonable latitude of toleration should be allowed. It is impossible to make all men think alike; and so long as they will receive, in good faith, the doctrines of the Gospel, as they are exhibited in the Prayer Book, a charitable indulgence should be extended to minor differences, arising from natural temperament, or from the prejudices of education.

The Church contains in her apostolic organization the elements of her perpetual unity, and the sure means of composing every violation of her harmony. We must appeal to her standard, and to the sense in which she herself regards it. No mere party in the Church can claim the right to be the expounder of her faith.— Mere "man-followers" and the disciples of parties, are not to be regarded as her organs. Her authoritative voice speaks only through her standards.

But though the Church is an unit, and speaks always the same language, there are, notwithstanding, many members in this one body; and, as among many men there must be diversities of intellect, as well as various modes of education, it naturally happens that there should be some diversity in their apprehension of the Church.

The Bishops, however, fully believe that this diversity is not so great as is sometimes imagined. They are persuaded that much of the supposed difference of opinion arises from mere misapprehension. Such is the poverty of language, and such are the various conditions of the minds of men, that different individuals attach different meanings to the same words. Words themselves, too, may be equivocal, or they may become so by different conventional significations which have been attached to them in some way. The science of Theology has become peculiarly technical; and different schools and different denominations of Christians have each their peculiar Shibboleth, which they adhere to with great tenacity. Men who are candidly disposed, are therefore liable to misunderstand one another; and the evil is greatly increased where captious and fault-finding tempers are concerned.

To prevent misunderstandings, then, it would be wise to avoid using ourselves such equivocal words and phrases in our communications, and to cultivate a candid and charitable disposition, that we may not unjustly misapprehend the meaning of others.

In regard to baptismal Regeneration, much of the controversy which exists arises from the use of equivocal words, and from misapprehension. Parties attach entirely different meanings to the word regeneration, and ascribe to each other opinions which both would disavow. In proof of this, we may remark that all parties are ready to receive the doctrine as it is set forth in the Prayer Book, and as it is expressed in the Scriptures.

Instead, then, of spending our strength in unprofitable disputes about words, which only gender strife, it were better to devote our energies to the explanation of the great and fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, and to the enforcing of their saving efficacy on the hearts and consciences of men. The lamentable fall of our first parents, and the natural corruptness of all their descendants; the way of Salvation, devised by Infinite Wisdom, through the mediation and atonement of JESUS CHRIST; the necessity of a sincere repentance for all our sins; or of lively faith in the atoning sacrifice of CHRIST; of an active obedience to all divine commands; the necessity and efficacy of the Holy Sacraments, as means of grace; the indwelling influence of the Holy Spirit, for the sanctifying of our hearts, and the renewing of our natures; these are themes which may well call forth the warmest affections of our hearts, and the best energies of our mind, and which, instead of generating bitterness and strife, are calculated to fill the heart with the purest Christian charity. This is a work in which all may cooperate with hearty zeal—in which all may assist in building up the Church in the most holy faith. But the world around are pervaded by forms of error, against which nothing but active controversy can be successful. It should be a controversy, however, dictated and modulated by love. On the one hand we behold an all-grasping Romanism, which gives no quarter, allows no truce, but demands an unconditional submission. On the other hand are various forms of error, still pervaded, more or less, by the true spirit of Christianity, but constantly breaking into fragments, and steadily tending to latitudinarianism and infidelity. Amid these erratic tendencies, the best hopes of Christianity are centered in the Church of England, and in the Protestant Church of the United States.

On the subject of the defective supply of ministerial labour, the remarks of the Bishops were applicable to the Colonial field, no less than to their own.

In looking over the addresses of our Bishops in the journals of their respective Conventions, we find a general complaint of the want of more clergymen, and instead of the candidates for orders increasing in number, in proportion to the rapid increase of the Church, it is believed that their number is actually diminishing. The prosperity of our country in all kinds of secular business, and the prospect of wealth and distinction held out to young men of talents and education, may in part account for this result. But it must be admitted as generally true, that the pecuniary compensation of the clergy is entirely inadequate to their comfortable support, and that it has by no means kept pace with the increased expenses of living. It is, then, incumbent on the Church first to do justice in this matter, and then to take measures to increase the number of candidates for holy orders.—

There are strong worldly obstacles in the way of this increase; but they can be overcome by wisdom, zeal, and liberality. The clergy can do much by directing the minds of pious and promising young men to the same sacred office; pious parents may co-operate with the clergy in this good work. If a young man possessing the requisite qualifications, has not the pecuniary ability to procure an education, a wealthy friend or the parish to which he belongs, may contribute to his support; or, what is still better, may found a permanent scholarship. A wealthy and pious parent may acknowledge the providence of God towards him by devoting one of his sons to the sacred ministry; or if the son should decline the work, he may redeem him according to the principle of the old dispensation, by educating some suitable young man in his place. Indeed, there seems at present little probability of affording any adequate supply to the ranks of the ministry, unless young men of talent and piety shall be selected from the less ambitious walks in life, and be educated in whole or in part by individual or by parochial assistance. The establishment of scholarships, then, the permanent, or temporary, or both, appears to be called for among the first works of the Church. Some of the most distinguished lights of the Church of England have been educated in this way, and we shall do well to follow so good and instructive an example."

In connexion with the late gatherings of the Church in New York, a young member of one of our own congregations thus wrote:—

"I attended the opening of the Diocesan Convention of this State, (New York,) about a fortnight since. The sermon was preached by Bishop Spencer, late English Bishop of Madras, who has been obliged to leave India on account of ill health. A hundred and twenty-four Clergymen of this Diocese were present, besides many from neighbouring States. The whole lower part of the Church was occupied by them, with the lay delegates from the several parishes, and members of the Theological Seminary in New York. You cannot think what a beautiful effect the responsive part of the service had, when repeated by them as with one voice. I could compare it to nothing but the sound of many waters. Then the opening of the General Convention of all the Bishops, and great numbers of the Clergy, from all parts of the Union, was even more impressive. But I find I can only give you the facts, the feelings occasioned by these very interesting services cannot by me be communicated in words. I can only say as Bishop Spencer said of the General Convention, "it was a day very much to be remembered." There were present thirty-five Bishops, and it is supposed that there has been five hundred clergymen in the city during the convention. Among them was a delegation from England, all of whom I have heard addresses from. I was much pleased with the address of Bishop Ridley, of Fredericton. I have been at several missionary meetings, which have been very interesting. What I have been most pleased with in them was an address from Mr. Tong, a Chinese candidate for orders; his account of himself was very affecting."

"Rev. Dr. POTTER, Chairman of the Committee appointed to escort the English Delegation to Jersey City, reported that going on board the steamer the Committee made a few brief addresses, which were eloquently replied to; and he would not be discharging his duty as Chairman of that Committee, if he did not endeavor to convey to the Convention some of the feelings expressed by the English delegation towards this Convention, the Church, and the friends that they everywhere met. He felt it good to be there, and he thought that the members of that House, if present, would also find it good to be there. The parting words of the Rev. Dr. SPENCER were: "As soon as I meet my family, I will never neglect at my family altar to pray that our sister Church in America may be blessed, and supported, and extended in her great work, by the Almighty God." ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR.—that most loving and loveable man, who has the power of working upon the hearts of all as upon the heart of one man.—and: "It sometimes happens that the more a man feels, the less he is able to express.—In the different parts of this country, I have made friends whose good wishes I hope to retain, not only in my time in this world, but to all eternity." The speaker considered that the American Church, by this intercommunication, occupied a higher and grander position than ever."

If any one should say that it is unbecoming to publish what follows, our excuse must be, that compliments to the Church Times being scarce, and blows rather thick, we could not decline the application of a little plaster, in the shape of the following extract from the letter of an esteemed Subscriber of known piety and good taste.—"May I take the liberty of expressing my acknowledgment of the ability, liberality, and christian temper, with which you have conducted our Church paper, and my conviction that if it continues under your editorship, it must win for itself a permanent footing amongst the Churchmen in this Diocese. I thank you for so heartily espousing the cause of Temperance. It is uphill work, but still a- the cause of Truth and the ally of Religion, it must and will prevail."

We are sorry to observe that the Rev. Ezekiel Hawkins was unable to return to England with the other members of the Delegation, being detained in New York by the illness of Mrs. Hawkins.