

with the Church of England, that in so doing she follows the counsels of her founder, and we doubt not best employing the circumstances of her position, and hastening the time when she shall, as we hope and believe, be regularly ingrafted into the church of her fathers.

THE CHURCH.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, AUGUST 21, 1841.

The Lord Bishop of Toronto, for the greater convenience of several of the Clergy from the Eastern parts of the Diocese, will hold his Primary Visitation in the Cathedral at Toronto, on Thursday, the 9th September next, instead of Wednesday, the 8th, as previously announced. Divine Service will be performed at 11 o'clock, A. M.

The Clergy are expected to appear in full black robes.

Several petitions have recently been presented to the Provincial Legislature from the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese of Quebec, but not having been favoured with a copy of any of them, we are unable to state the precise terms in which they were couched. From a document, however, which has been kindly furnished to us by a Member of the Legislature, we apprehend that all these petitions contained a remonstrance against any system of Education in which the Bible should not be adopted as a class-book.

The following is the petition, signed by the Bishop of Toronto on behalf of himself and the Clergy of his Diocese:—

"To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the Province of Canada, in Provincial Parliament assembled:—

"The Petition of the Bishop and Clergy of the Diocese of Toronto,

"HUMBLY SHEWETH:—

"That your Petitioners having seen the draft of a Bill for the establishment of Common Schools, (introduced to the consideration of your Honourable House by Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Eastern Canada,) from which all reference to Religious Instruction or to the Bible, appears to be studiously excluded, beg most respectfully to submit that, while they are anxious to promote the diffusion of general knowledge throughout the Province, they are convinced that such knowledge, to be productive of any real benefit or substantial good to the people, must be guided by the unerring wisdom of God as revealed in His Word;

"That they deprecate the adoption of any enactment which shall either directly or indirectly sanction a principle opposed to that free access to the Holy Scriptures which is the inalienable right of every British subject, and which ought only to be directed, restrained, or abridged by the dictates of his own conscience, or by his willing deference to the suggestions of his spiritual advisers;

"That schools in every Christian community ought to rest on Gospel principles, and their immediate as well as ultimate object ought to be the inculcation of pure and undefiled religion; for if the condition of the poor is to be ameliorated, the tone of public morals raised, and the vital interests of the Province advanced, it can only be done by bringing up the rising generation in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by continually remembering, during the business of instruction, that in every child a spirit dwells more precious than the whole world, to be trained to immortality, and destined, if duly prepared, to pass the regions of corruption and death to the bosom of its God;

"In thus bringing forward our holy Religion as constituting the only sound basis of Education in a Christian land, your Petitioners are not unaware of the difficulty which has been experienced in introducing it in countries like this, where the population is divided into many denominations; but the difficulty, as they apprehend, has been chiefly occasioned by an injudicious interference with the rights of conscience in vainly attempting to neutralize all religious principles and to separate the refined morality of the Gospel from its peculiar and sublime doctrines,—attempts infidel in their tendency and evincing a deplorable ignorance of human nature, and of the uncompromising purity of the Catholic faith;

"In order to prevent, as far as your Petitioners are concerned, those religious intermeddlings and collisions which are so injurious to the peace and happiness of society, and which must be anticipated as the result of a system in which the ministers of various religious denominations are made jointly to participate in its direction and management, your Petitioners most humbly pray that the education of the children of their own Church may be entrusted to their lawful pastors, subject to such regulations as may ensure an uniformity in the secular branches of study to be pursued in the Province at large, and that an annual grant, from the assessments raised, proportionate to the number of children ascertained to belong to the communion of your Petitioners, be awarded for their instruction.

"And as in duty bound your Petitioners will ever pray, (Signed,) On his own behalf and that of his Clergy.

"JOHN TORONTO."

"Toronto, August 11th, 1841."

What effect this petition may have upon the bodies to which it is addressed, it is very difficult to conjecture; for the hostility which Lord Sydenham, as a public man, has ever shown to the Church in England, has marked his policy in this country; and as, at present, he commands a majority in both branches of the Legislature, it is to be expected that just so much weight will be attached to the petition, as His Lordship chooses to assign to it.

As regards the subject-matter of the petition, we cannot but repeat our decided opinion, in which the Church at home bears us out, that to exclude the Bible, as a class-book, from Common Schools, or to substitute extracts from it, is a procedure which nothing can justify. "I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." This is the fearful warning given by St. John, at the end of his Revelation; and if applicable to that sublimely mysterious book of Scripture, how much more so to those parts of it which contain narratives or precepts, of the plainest import, evidently written for the guidance and instruction of the most unlettered?

Here we shall be met by the observation, that there are certain parts of Scripture, in the selection of which all denominations would concur, and which parts are the most suited to the religious education of the youthful mind. But supposing this selection made, what must be the effect of it, but to impress the idea, so unfounded and so dangerous, that one part of Scripture is of more authority than another? We grant that every judicious and pious person would direct the attention of a child to some parts more than to others, but at the same time he would never venture to mutilate the Holy Volume—to print particular portions of it, and omit others: because the end of this, we repeat, would be to instil the idea, that all Scripture is not of equal authority! and then what would be the further consequence? Each man,—as is too much the case, even at present,—would become the architect of a religious system for himself. One text he would reject as too hard to be understood;—another, as contrary to reason; a third, as of mere secondary consequence. Many a verse of Scripture, which to a common or careless eye, seems void of point or utility, is frequently valuable from containing some incidental testimony to the truth of what has gone before, or corroborating some other part of Holy Writ. Those passages, too, which it is painful, however salutary it may be, to hear read aloud, would of course be omitted, and the severe condemnation of the vices of the heathen world would be almost unknown. For, although the Bible would always be accessible at home in its full and uncurtailed state,

yet the passages read and studied in youth, would be the most durably imprinted on the memory, and have a much more powerful effect than the portions excluded from the selection. In truth, this mode of treating the Bible, just like any uninspired work of human production, would diminish that reverence with which at present it is generally regarded, and have a strong tendency to encourage scepticism and infidelity.

We are indebted, as we predicted we should be, to our esteemed cotemporary, the Montreal Gazette, for an outline of the Common School Bill, which will be found on our fourth page, and to which, in the absence of a copy of the bill itself, we feel quite safe in referring. It will be perceived, on turning to this, that the Government, if Mr. Day's measure pass into a law, will be able to introduce whatever system of education it may please, for it has secured to itself, and properly as we think, the appointment of Superintendent,—which Superintendent will, in fact, be the Minister of Education, and possess most extensive powers; for he is, amongst other things, invested with authority to appoint in each district five persons, of whom, at least, two shall be resident Clergymen, (a term, by the way, to which Dissenting Ministers have no right,) as a Board of Examiners, whose duties shall be to make written rules, regulating the course of study and the books to be used, &c. Now it is very palpable that the Superintendent will be a person holding similar opinions with the Governor-General, and that the Board of Examiners appointed by him, will of course be selected from their kindred views.—Thus, though the whole Bible be not nominally excluded from Common Schools, it will be virtually; for, from what has already transpired, there can be little doubt that an attempt will be made by the present administration, to thrust the Irish system of education upon the people of this Province. We have all along gone upon the presumption that the Bible will not be altogether excluded from Common Schools. This might be too bold a step, even for a Liberal Government, to take at first.

Into the details of the bill, we have no inclination to enter. It seems complicated, and deficient in providing for one uniform system of education throughout the Province. If we interpret it aright, there may be as many different systems as districts.

The (London) Ecclesiastical Gazette for July, in its report of Societies' Meetings held in June and July, contains the following intelligence relating to the two Dioceses in Canada:—

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE. A letter was read from the Lord Bishop of Montreal, stating that he had been in communication with the Rev. W. Anderson, of William Henry, Lower Canada, who is desirous of taking immediate steps for the erection of a church, for the use of the Protestant families at that place, and who has not only induced several individuals in his neighbourhood to subscribe towards this good work, but has promised to contribute £50. from his own very small means. The Bishop added in reference to this application:—

"In affording aid from the Church-building funds, which, at different times, have been under the Episcopal direction in this diocese,—by means of grants from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and otherwise,—it was a rule of the late Bishop of Quebec, that no money should ever be paid till the building should be actually raised and covered in. Possibly the Board might judge it sufficient to enforce such a condition as this with respect to the two buildings required in the present case. It is the purpose of Mr. Anderson to erect the frame of the parsonage-house first, and to adapt it temporarily to the purposes of public worship,—it being necessary that the new church should occupy the site of the old,—which circumstance, without such an arrangement, would cause an interruption of divine service in the place. William Henry, otherwise called Sorcel, is an important station in the diocese. Mr. Anderson has certainly been instrumental, in the hands of God, in recovering a great deal of the ground for the Church, and, I trust, in truly promoting the work of His Divine Master. Under all the circumstances of the case, the well timed bounty of the Society might, according to no unreasonable arguments, be productive of happy, holy, and long-continued fruits.

"I have now to bring under the notice of the Committee a very similar application from the Rev. L. Doolittle, missionary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in charge of Sherbrooke and Lennoxville. It differs from the application of Mr. Anderson in comprehending the statement of a specific amount of money actually subscribed. The same condition, however, which I have suggested in the other instances might be exacted in this, with respect to the merits of the case, I will here beg leave to transcribe a few observations which I have made in relation to them, in a letter addressed by this mail to the Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel;—Lennoxville and Sherbrooke, particularly the latter, are important places,—places where things may be done upon a different scale from that which is adapted to mere ordinary country missions; and the assistance given must bear proportion to this circumstance. Sherbrooke is a growing village,—the place where the jail and court-house are established for the district, and the functionaries connected with the administration of justice reside,—the head-quarters of the military in the Eastern Townships, and the focus of business and enterprise in that part of the country.

"The congregation at Sherbrooke being dependent upon the missionary resident at Lennoxville, and having only one service upon a Sunday, the degree of spirit with which they have come forward is at least equal to my expectations; and so long as this defective arrangement shall continue, I am most anxious to give encouragement to the people upon every occasion in which they look to the care of the Church. The Green Shepherd will, I trust, in his own good time, raise up men for the most efficient supply of the flock; but, in the mean time, the utmost consideration should be shown to them in the manner of seconding their own endeavours. To Him, who is 'over all, God blessed for ever,' I must commit the issue; but, under Him, it is to the great Church Societies that the Colonial Church must turn her imploring looks in all the struggles and wants of her present condition."

Applications from the Rev. W. Anderson and the Rev. J. Doolittle accompanied this communication from the Bishop. The Board agreed to make the following grants:—

Towards building a church at William Henry..... £200

Sherbrooke..... 150

Lennoxville..... 100

W. Hughes Hughes, Esq., informed the Society that Mr. Justice Hagerman, who is now in England, is about to return with his family to their residence at Toronto, Upper Canada; and that Mrs. Hagerman would gladly take out and distribute in that neighbourhood any books which the Society might see fit to grant.

It was agreed that books be placed in Mrs. Hagerman's hands to the value of £10.

A letter was read from the Lord Bishop of Toronto, (22nd April, 1841), forwarding a statement of the manner in which he had disposed of portions of the Society's grant of £2000 for the spiritual wants of Upper Canada. He said:—

"The Society will perceive from the enclosed statement that a vast amount of good has been effected by their magnificent grant of £2000 devoted to the spiritual wants of Upper Canada; and yet when it is considered that there are already three hundred townships in this diocese, each containing about one hundred square miles, in almost every one of which an active Clergyman may find ample employment, they will not be surprised that applications for Clergymen, and for aid in building churches, should daily multiply. There is now before me a list of forty places where churches and missionaries are required. To some I have made small advances, as appears from my statement; and to some I have made promises of help; but I neither give nor promise till I find that they are exerting themselves to the utmost of their ability.

"Besides the three hundred townships, others are yearly forming as the settlements extend.

"I have now the honour to acquaint you, that I have drawn for the balance of the grant of £2000, namely, £545. There was, as admitted in your letter, a balance of £1045, but of this sum we have devoted £500 for the purchase of Books and Tracts, which I hope are now on the way out. The remainder, £545, I now draw for, to enable me to satisfy some advances made through the bank, and to redeem the several promises made on conditions, which will be complied with during the summer. It is also a propitious time for drawing, as I am to receive 12s per cent. premium, which is the highest that the bank has ever given.

"I have also drawn upon the Society for £25, on account of the church which Captain O'Brien and others are building at Shanty Bay, on the banks of Lake Simcoe, as authorized in

the postscript to your letter of the 9th July, 1840, for it is advancing rapidly."

The Bishop, in a letter dated Toronto, May 24, 1841, applied for aid towards defraying the cost of building a church in the town of Hamilton, district of Gore, Upper Canada. A memorial from the Rev. J. G. Geddes, minister of the church, stated, that the increase of the population of Hamilton had rendered it necessary to take steps for erecting a suitable place of worship, the service having been for some time performed in the District Court House; that a handsome and commodious structure, capable of containing 800 or 1000 persons, had been opened for Divine Service on the 21st of July, 1839; but that the heavy debt incurred presses very heavily on the Memorialist and his congregation. His Lordship said, "Mr. Geddes is an active and meritorious clergyman, and has done much for the church in his mission."

The Board agreed to grant £100. towards the church at Hamilton.

SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.

From the Bishop of Toronto.

Toronto, 8th June, 1841.

"I beg to tender my warmest thanks to the Society, for complying with my recommendation in favour of the Rev. Messrs. Armstrong, Cooper, and Scadding, and likewise for adopting the catechist, Mr. Hogg, and the interpreter, Mr. Hill. "The congregations of March and Dundas request me to present to the Society their grateful acknowledgments, for the munificent grants made towards building their respective churches. Such prompt and generous attention to my requests is rapidly strengthening my hands, and increasing the attachment of the people to our ecclesiastical establishment. How, indeed, can it be otherwise? There is scarcely a congregation in the diocese that has not cause to bless the Society for reasonable and liberal assistance."

On the afternoon of Wednesday last, the Parishioners of St. Peter's, Cobourg, presented to their Rector, the Reverend A. N. Bethune, a very handsome service of Plate, consisting of an elegant massive Salver,—a Teapot, Coffee-Pot, Cream Ewer, Sugar Basin and Tongs, and Butter-Knife. All these articles are of solid silver, and the chaste beauty of their pattern and execution, attracted unqualified admiration. The inscription,—which, together with the Parishioners' Address and Mr. Bethune's Reply, will be found under the head of our Canadian Ecclesiastical Intelligence,—was engraved upon the salver, surmounted by the arms of our reverend friend, and the other articles bore his crest. The cost of the whole was £120. currency. The merit of their selection is due to Samuel Rowse, Esquire, of London, whose valuable services have been recognized in a Resolution unanimously adopted by the subscribers to the Plate.

Although we were unavoidably prevented from being present on this gratifying occasion, we are enabled to state, from information kindly forwarded to us by a friend, that the ceremony of presentation passed off in the happiest manner. At 3 o'clock, in the afternoon, nearly 200 persons had assembled on the English-looking Lawn, in front of the neat and pretty Rectory-house, to witness the delightful scene. Having formed themselves in a circle round the table, which stood on the lawn supporting the Plate, Mr. Rutan came forward, and having read the Address, formally presented the noble and costly testimonial of Christian gratitude. Mr. Bethune responded in an audible and impressive manner, and the countenances of all present evinced how much of solemn feeling was mingled with their rejoicing. The company then retired to the Rectory and partook of a collation provided by their gratified host. The sun shone with a propitious brightness; and the groups of ladies and children and moving forms, now seen, now hid amid the shrubberies on the lawn, presented a scene to the eye, in perfect accordance with the moral emotions to which such an occasion must have given rise.

Mr. Bethune, considered solely as a country clergyman, in which lights alone we are now regarding him, most thoroughly merits this mark of his Parishioners' esteem. Indefatigable in his parochial duties,—evangelical in his preaching,—apostolical in his reverence for Church-order,—he has not only been a faithful shepherd to his own flock, but has carried his ministrations to the townships around Cobourg,—in many instances preventing our Church from remaining altogether unknown, and Churchmen from being altogether cut off from its ordinances,—and laying the foundations of additional Churches, such as that which we are happy to hear, is being brought to a completion in the picturesque village of Grafton. Long may his valuable life be spared to his family, his friends, the Province, and the Church!

His congregation must not be left without our humble tribute to their never-failing charity, and cordial co-operation in their Rector's plans. Whatever good work is to be done, receives their prompt and efficient assistance. In one thing above all others, do we wish that our other parishes would imitate them, and that is, in the erection of a School for daily instruction, in connexion with the Church, which on a liberal plan, and at a great expense, they are preparing to carry into execution.

In justice to Mr. PRINCE, we give insertion to the following from the Mirror of Parliament:—

THURSDAY, August 5.

Shortly after the meeting of the house this day, Mr. CAMERON moved that the petition of the Rev. Mr. Hall and others, of the county of Stansfeld, on the subject of Education and the propriety of using the Bible in Common Schools, be referred to a select committee of seven members, with power to send for persons and papers, and to report thereon.

Upon this motion a debate ensued. When the Reporter entered the House, he found Col. PRINCE addressing the motion. He had the greatest pleasure in supporting the motion, and he could scarcely trust himself to speak with calmness and moderation upon the conduct of those members who had opposed it. But the subject was too solemn to be debated with excited feelings. By the vote about to be given upon this question, the character of that house would be stamped with honour or branded with disgrace [hear, hear.] The motion merely asks for reference of the subject to a select committee; if we refuse that motion, we virtually repudiate the admission into our schools of that sacred volume upon which all our hopes in a future state depend. Looking at the Bible as the most ancient book of history,—as a specimen of language the most concise and elegant, and perfect, I contend that it ought to be admitted as a class book for the instruction of our youth, and I feel assured that not one Roman Catholic, of education, in one hundred, will dissent from this proposition [hear, hear.] Then, sir, why hesitate to support this motion? But I put the sacred volume upon higher grounds; I look upon it as the rock upon which our future hopes are built; I consider that part of it called the New Testament as the best and greatest constitution that man can look to for happiness in this life or in the life to come. And though I am no bigot in religion and will cheerfully concede the point that there are many roads to heaven,—(and God grant we may all meet there after the disputes, turmoils, and troubles of this life have passed away)—yet I cannot concede that we should even indirectly cast a slur upon the Holy Bible by voting against the motion of my honourable friend. What, sir, will the country say to us? what will the country think of this first United Parliament, which deliberately refuses for the first time [and this is the only all our hopes in a future state depend.] Looking at the Bible as the most ancient book of history,—as a specimen of language the most concise and elegant, and perfect, I contend that it ought to be admitted as a class book for the instruction of our youth, and I feel assured that not one Roman Catholic, of education, in one hundred, will dissent from this proposition [hear, hear.] Then, sir, why hesitate to support this motion? 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