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PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

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Strachan at that moment had a realization that the shadows were closing around his world, and that a stronger power than the divine right of kings and their councillors was staring at him through the "ever-opening eyes of the 'thy creature'" whom he had come to answer. In Mackenzie's stormy, fire-darting mind some consciousness of the portents of the encounter may have been stirring; but none, certainly, in Strachan's granite head. The archdeacon treated the whole proceedings with lofty indifference. He came before the four commissioners, regarding them as a watchful lion might have allowed his speculative gaze to fall on a quartet of mysterious jackals. The business in hand was idiotic; they were, upon his soul, endeavoring to make him—him, remember—commit himself to make him impart information—to them. Beyond any doubt they were four fools. Mackenzie went on with his questions:

"Is the lieutenant-governor obliged in matters of state policy to ask your advice as an executive councillor?" Strachan looks at him—"I refer you to the constitutional act." Mackenzie—"In what way is the government of this colony responsible to the public opinion, as expressed by the representatives of the people in parliament?" Strachan—"I could not answer that question otherwise than by saying that the government is quite as responsible as any other government." Mackenzie—"Do you consider the clergy corporation legal?" (The clergy corporation controlled the Clergy Reserves.) Strachan—"Certainly, I do." Mackenzie—"Ought not the whole public revenue to be paid in the gross into the exchequer or treasury of the colony, and the proceeds applied only according to law?" Strachan—"I do not answer that question."

He "does not answer" such questions; he leaves this absurd commission to its impertinent investigations; withdraws, having divined nothing beyond the fact that where he has hitherto stood on all these

matters he still stands. This "spaniel dog" may question him about "responsible government," about control of the public revenues, about control of the clergy reserves; but he can still go home and "advise" the lieutenant-governor, and inspire policy, and dictate dispatches, and appropriate college grants and charters; let Mackenzie and his agitated cohorts of reform continue their uproar; has not he, Strachan, the substance of the thing in his hand? He tightened his clutch; but it was on water; in some bewildering fashion things were not as they had been; the assembly was full of democrats crying incessantly for responsible government; undoubtedly there had been a loss; the glorious vision of a dominant episcopal hierarchy, based on the grandest and most venerable Tory doctrine, had become obscured by the political atmosphere generated in the assembly. It was trying; painful. Strachan, having failed to discourage Mackenzie, having failed to discourage Ryerson, and perceiving at last, all too clearly, that "reform" would have disastrous consequences on the authority of the government, on the control of the Clergy Reserves, once again undermined his enemies: a campaign was begun to have the remainder of the Clergy Reserve lands transferred to the control of the British parliament, and taken out of Canadian politics altogether. Again the explanation was satisfactory. Strachan could "go behind the scenes and work the oracle" in England. If he could get the Clergy Reserve lands out of the control of this legislature altogether, much—very much—might still be saved.

This is the Third of a series of articles on Bishop Strachan. The Fourth and last article will appear in the November issue of the Book Section.

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