

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, JAN. 20, 1855.

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

ROMANISM has just perpetrated another gross absurdity. The pope and a number of bishops, have, like Nebuchadnezzar, of old, made a decree, and the one at Rome, will prove not a whit less fallible than the other was at Babylon, and both are equally idolatrous. Nebuchadnezzar's, however, was much more consonant to human reason. He was a mighty conqueror, and had subdued many nations, and had returned to his beautiful capital to enjoy in magnificence the fruits of his conquests, with a heart elated with pride more than human. His people were enriched, and they saw in him the fountain head of all earthly favour, the dispenser of life and death, an incarnation of absolute power, and with the shout of "O King, live for ever!" they prepared for the deification of the image he had set up. His pride and presumption, ended in his utter debasement, and we have record firm and true, that God for a long season asserted the honor of his glorious Name in the government of an impious kingdom. The Pope lives in an age when every one can read the Bible for himself, and knowledge is universal, and when despite the matchless presumption which attaches to the papal seat, even the instructed mass of his own followers are hardly disposed, to look to him any longer as a divinity. It was time therefore to prepare another idol, and for this purpose the whole papal world has of late years been excited to a pitch of ecstasy in behalf of the claims of the Virgin Mary to that distinction. By an infallible decree it has been declared that she was born without sin, and the faithful are commanded to trust to her intercession. As there is nothing certain recorded of the death of Mary, it would not be a greater difficulty to show that she had not suffered death, but had been translated to heaven. It is well that persecution for conscience sake is not a feature of the age, for in many parts of Populism, there exists the same inclination, as that felt by Nebuchadnezzar, to cast all who will not bow to its dogmas, into the "burning fiery furnace." In these reforming days, however, auto-da-fes are out of fashion, so the pope contents himself with proclaiming all who refuse their assent to be—heretics.

Holding the doctrines of the Reformation, we are in nowise affected by this declaration of the pope of Rome, except as it becomes our duty to protest against an additional error which is sought to be engrained by him upon our common Christianity. We recognise in the mother of the Saviour, a virgin conceived in sin, like "we are all the human family, who until she had reached the age of womanhood, had no intuition that the Almighty would regard her "low estate," and no revelation of the high destiny to which she was ordained. We see and admire, the development of her lovely character as a willing instrument in the hands of the Lord, arrogating no superior honour. Her modest ascription of praise, in that beautiful hymn which forms part of the Church's service, proves the humility of her disposition, and points to the only exaltation that she looked for from the world,—as if with a prescient mind, she foresaw, and condemned the idolatrous use that might be made of the relation in which she stood to the Saviour, when she uttered—"from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

It is amongst Romanists themselves, that opposition will be made to the infallibility of the Pope's dogma. Some of the best and wisest of their saints and doctors, have stoutly contended against admitting as their creed, that which never was sanctioned by revelation, which was contrary to human reason, and which only the disposition to idolatry or mariolatry, which the worship of Rome fosters, had called into existence. It is a sad thing that by application of the dogma, the Romish Church of these days pronounces all those great pillars of the faith to be heretics. There may have been no design to question their belief—or it might have been supposed, that in their immortal state they would be able to bear a hard name patiently. Their disciples, however, and the orders they have founded, remain to the present day, and these plead as much faith in the teaching of their masters, as in the Pope's decree; and the dogma, falling upon them with the weight of a club, may cause as much trouble in the papal system, as those ancient heretics Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, gave to the Babylonian monarchs. We shall close the parallel by the expression of a hope that the achism may work effectually. Our readers may be disposed to follow out the comparison, which is still very apt to be further made, by viewing this last attempt to impose upon Christianity a belief unwarranted by the Word of God, as another sign of that incipient

madness in the Man of Sin, which shall fill up the measure of his folly, and hasten the time when the Saviour, whom this degree enthralls, shall destroy him "with the brightness of His coming."

The R. M. Steamship Canada, arrived on Wednesday last, 11 days from Liverpool. The date from England are to the 4th January—from the Crimea to the 18th December.

The Foreign Enlistment Bill and the Militia Bill, the first empowering the Government to enlist Foreign soldiers; and the last to enable them to send the Militia out of the Kingdom, have passed in Parliament and received the Royal assent. Both the measures are to a certain extent unpopular—the first in a remarkable degree.

The Venerable Dr. Routh, for sixty-three years the President of Magdalen College, Oxford, and in the 100th year of his life, died at Oxford on Friday, Dec. 22, 1854. His remains were interred on Friday Dec. 20, with every mark of befitting respect.

The speech of the Emperor of the French, which is an admirable document, will be found in previous columns.

The result of the conference of the Ministers of England, France and Austria, at Vienna, was immediately made known to Prince Gortschakoff, the Russian envoy, who had been invited to attend it but declined. He had requested an interval of fourteen days, to communicate the conditions to St. Petersburg, which was allowed him, but held out no hope that the Emperor would be induced to accept them.

Several sorties had been made from Sebastopol upon the French and English lines, and repulsed with loss. It is asserted that the Generals of the allied forces had resolved to storm Sebastopol on Christmas day, but it is doubtful if the preparations would be complete. The latest details to the 18th represent the weather as much better, and that there is a great improvement in the appearance of the troops, and a marked diminution of the sick list. The French were helping the English to form a road between Balaklava and the Camp, and the best feeling existed between the two armies.

A telegraphic despatch dated Odessa, Dec. 25, says "A courier has just brought intelligence that General Liprandi's corps, powerfully reinforced, is attacking Balaklava." This does not deserve implicit confidence.

NOVASCOTIANS IN AUSTRALIA.—Not a few of our countrymen, tempted by glittering prospects, or led by a love of adventure, or a mingling of both, have wended their way to the land of gold, and made a desert creation. Among the rest we are glad to have to say,—for the reason that he gives a reliable account of the country, in its social as well as its natural aspect, and decidedly one of the best we have ever seen,—is a son of Colonel Butler, of Martock, Windsor. Mr. Butler is roughing it there, and what is better, likes that sort of life. It is such men, who, in contradistinction to the mere physical man, are the real pioneers of improvement; and it is one of the great benefits bestowed upon mankind in these latter days, that the amenities of skill and social refinement go on a voyage of discovery along with those powers of endurance, and bodily activity, and sublimity of invention, which make man under any circumstances the lord of creation. If the latter fit him to cope with the savage beasts of prey, and to overcome the strength and cunning of the still greater savage of his own species, the former provide him with sure weapons to subdue the minds of the untutored human beings with whom he may come into contact, and to lead them from heathen darkness, by the introduction of Christianity, into the light of heaven. This is the true mission to unexplored countries, at the present day, of every child of England. Mr. Butler's letter concludes with a postscript which we think we have a right to appropriate, as a pendant to these observations, inasmuch as the Church Times of Halifax, Nova Scotia, (a strange place to be found in the region of Botany Bay,) has given rise to it. He will be rejoiced to know that the Churchmen of Nova Scotia, in view of the present and prospective benefits, have taken King's College under their particular care, and that the Institution is now beyond all fear of failure. He says:—

"I am heartily rejoiced to see by the 'Church Times,' which has just arrived, the strenuous efforts which are being made by the immediate supporters of the old College, though it is melancholy to think how many withhold their aid on the plea that a few deficiencies exist in its system of Education. Surely such must perceive that they totally confirm the evil by its difference which they might easily remedy by cordial and united support. Should that happen, however, which I will not for a moment anticipate, I well know that when the present shall have become the past there will be a stain on the page of Nova-Scotian history, the chronicles the desertion and downfall of 'King's College University.'"

the steps of the channel, when the Rector of the Parish addressed first the Father, congratulating them upon the very satisfactory state of the school, and the diligence with which they discharged their duty, and then exhorted the children to be regular in their attendance, and to avail themselves of the opportunity offered them for obtaining the most important of all knowledge, with thankfulness to those who patiently laboured for their benefit. Books having been distributed among the children, which Mr. Townsend took pains to explain to them were not intended as rewards for doing so, but as tokens of approbation for diligence and general good conduct, they sang the Doxology, and retired to their seats in order. The sight was a very interesting one, not only to the parents of the children, but to many others who were unconnected with these young disciples.

I must not forget to mention the careful manner in which the Temple of the Lord was beautified. The interior construction of the Church is extremely well adapted for the purposes of Christmas decorations, an advantage which our young people made the most of. And last, but most important, the house of God was well filled with worshippers, many of whom after rejoicing in commemorating the birth of the Redeemer, remained to receive at His holy table the precious food of His body and blood.

Yours, &c.

A WORSHIPPER.

Amherst, Jan'y 11, 1855.

MY DEAR Miss RATCHFORD:

The congregation of the parish feel grateful to you for your kind efforts in conducting the musical services of our Church; and though they are assured you look for no other reward than the high privilege of aiding in promoting the glory of God in His holy worship, yet they desire to express their sense of your unremitting attention to that duty, by requesting your acceptance of the accompanying trifling gift in token of their gratitude, with their best wishes, to which I heartily beg to add my own, that you may see many returns of this Holy Festival, in the enjoyment of health and happiness, and I am,

My dear Miss Ratchford,

Your affectionate Pastor,

Geo. TOWNSEND.

Festival of the Nativity, 1854. Amherst.

MY DEAR SIR,

Permit me on behalf of Miss Ratchford to thank you most sincerely for your note of this day, and, through you, to convey to the Congregation of Christ's Church her grateful acknowledgments for their elegant and useful gift, which is rendered doubly valuable by the friendly feeling which prompted it.

It has been a source of much satisfaction to me that my daughter was selected for a duty which she has performed cheerfully, and of course without any idea of remuneration, and this testimonial of regard from the Parish is, I assure you, as unexpected as gratifying.

In my daughter's name I again beg to thank you and the Congregation, and, wishing you and them, one and all, many happy returns of this joyful day,

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

C. E. RATCHFORD.

Christmas Day, 1854.

Rev'd Geo. Townsend,

Rector of the Parish of Amherst,—Amherst.

FOR THE CHURCH TIMES.

THE Rev. Dr. Shreve takes this method to acknowledge, with many thanks, the receipt of the sum of Four Pounds, from the Members of the Church at the South East Passage, Dartmouth, by the hands of one of their Churchwardens, Mr. J. Ngur, accompanied with a request on their part, that he would receive it, as a small token of affection, and some remuneration for the increased expense incurred, from his frequent pastoral visits here among them, during an unprecedented period of sickness and death in their neighbourhood. The above is in addition to their proportion of the Salary, to be provided by the Parish for the Assistant Missionary, which amount was paid on the same day, and together affords some evidence of the lively interest that was taken in that Service, in the welfare and prosperity of the Church of their affections,—of the value they attach to, and their desire to secure to themselves and the cause, those heavenly benedictions, of which the Church of Christ is the channel. And even the abundant satisfaction be but trifling in amount, yet if they shall "have done what they could," they will not be unremembered nor unrecompensed,—and, above all, they will not be forgotten by Him who hath declared, that He loveth "a cheerful giver."

Dartmouth, Jan'y 17.

KING'S COLLEGE, HALIFAX, N.S.—The following additional Subscriptions from St. John, N.S. are thankfully acknowledged:

Rev. Dr. Gray,	£25	0	0
Rev. J. W. Babrow,	25	0	0
Rev. W. Scott,	25	0	0
Rev. G. Armstrong,	25	0	0

Jan'y 19, 1855.