

Dominion Churchman.

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 1876.

SYNOD OF THE OLD CATHOLICS.

The third Synod of the Old Catholics has been held in Bonn. One hundred and eight delegates from Old Catholic communities were present, thirty-one of whom were priests. Dr. Von Schulte, as usual, presented the usual annual report, which announced no very great advance. The tendency of the age is towards extremes; and had the movement been more decidedly revolutionary, it would no doubt have been able to count a far greater number of adherents. But then in that case, it would not have been necessary to start a new religious association. The Protestant sects of Germany and France are extreme enough and Infidel enough to answer any imaginable purpose of that kind; and all that would need be done would be secession from Rome, and union with one or other of them. But Old Catholicism evidently aims at reaching the truth, even though it should be found in ignoring base passions and vulgar prejudice, and in adopting a perfectly moderate course. The consequence of which is that, an increase of 4,400 souls since the last Synod was all that could be reported as to progress in numbers. Nine new priests, however, have joined their communion. And altogether since the consecration of the Bishop, the number of the clergy has doubled, and there are now sixty at work. There are thirty-five communities in Prussia, forty-four in Baden, five in Hesse, two in Birkenfeld, thirty-one in Bavaria, and one in Wurtemberg. The whole number of persons belonging to it is 17,208; in Bavaria, 10,110; in Hesse, 1,042; in Oldenburg, 249, and in Wurtemberg, 229.

One of the principal subjects brought forward appears to have been the celibacy question, about which there had been considerable agitation. Many opinions were expressed about it; but the belief that the present state of things had better not be altered seems to have prevailed to such an extent that every motion to change it was rejected by ninety-five against eight votes. The decision is considered remarkable, as an indication of the self-denial of both clergy and laity, as well as of their moderation; and as showing a readiness to sacrifice, for a time, their personal views and wishes, in order to promote the good of the whole body. It appears that the principal motive for continuing the present state of things, was a desire to prevent the organization from becoming a mere refuge for those who might desire to change their mode of life. Even prominent laymen who are known to hold strong views against compulsory celibacy, advocated the continuance of the present custom on the ground of expediency. The Synodical Council, however, was empowered to grant this concession, that if a priest

should resign his office, and then marry an Old Catholic clergyman might give the blessing of the church in addition to the other ceremony.

It was decided that processions are no longer in accordance with the spirit of the age, and that therefore, no new ones should be introduced, and that any proposals to change those already in use, should be taken into consideration.

The ritual which has been prepared since the last Synod is sanctioned for use in all parishes; although, in special cases, other formularies, extracted from Wessenberg's ritual, may be used. The Synodical Council are instructed that the use of the national tongue in the office of the Mass is advisable; and a new book for the Epistles and Gospels is to be prepared.

On the first of June, Bishop Reinkens ordained two students at Bonn, to the priesthood. The loss to the Old Catholic body, of Dr. Hasenklever, who died suddenly in the early part of this month, is very important. He was one of the most active promoters of the cause, and was a member of the Synodical Council. His acquirements were great and varied; as a physician, a musician, and a linguist, his abilities were more than are ordinarily to be met with. He was at one time deputy in the Reichstag.

THE SYNOD OF NIAGARA.

We have received a communication in reference to this Synod, the substance of which we give under the head of correspondence, and which calls for some remark. We cannot agree with one of the positions assumed by the writer, that when the gospel is faithfully proclaimed, success is sure to follow, and that the members of the church will always do their duty in supporting their clergyman, and in meeting the other requirements of a financial character that may present themselves. "Who hath believed our report?" is a lament which numbers of the most faithful pastors of Christ's flock have had occasion to utter, ever since the day when the Saviour "came unto His own, and His own received Him not;" and since the day when He charged His disciples that where their proclamation was rejected, they were to wipe the dust from their feet, as a testimony against those who had refused to listen to their message. Surely we may not say that St. Paul did not faithfully preach the gospel in the instances in which his teaching was rejected, and when he was in perils by his own countrymen, by the heathen, and especially among false brethren. Nor was the principle expressed by our correspondent so certain to be acted upon, but that the apostle found it necessary to lay down some special directions about the financial demands of the Church in the payment of the clergy. And human nature has precisely the

same characteristic features now that it had when men refused to believe on the Son of God, and when they rejected the testimony of His apostles. Faithful statements of the truth are still as unpalatable as ever, even to members of the Christian Church, when spiritual growth is not cultivated, and when the heart goes back again to the world.

The other part of our correspondent's letter appears to be founded upon a misconception of the object of Diocesan Synods. The purpose of a Diocesan Synod is purely of a business character. It has no power to meddle with the standards of the Church, to decide on theological tenets, or to alter our services. The discussion of subjects, to which our correspondent alludes, would be best carried on in a Diocesan Conference or a Church Congress, such as that held in Quebec, of which we give an account on another page. At such a meeting, matters of a practical spiritual nature, that belong to the inner life of the Christian, and to the efficiency of the Church's work among us, would be more suitable. And therefore, as soon as the respective Dioceses of the Dominion have got into thorough and regular working order, we trust the proposal of the Bishop of Toronto and his Archdeacon, to have, in alternate years, a Diocesan Conference, instead of a Synod every year, will be generally adopted. Of course, there will always be some who are anxious to be perpetually tinkering at the constitution, whether in church or state, and who seem best pleased when everything is kept in a constant state of agitation; yet these are few in number, and are quite exceptional. The majority would rather *let well alone*; and when our machinery comes to be in good working order, would like to give it a fair chance of producing satisfactory results.

THE CHINESE IN THE WEST.

For some time we have been familiar with accounts of trouble on the western coast of this continent, arising from the vast numbers of Chinese constantly flocking thither, and especially to California. It is probable, however, that very few of our readers are aware of the nature or the extent of the inconvenience; both of which very far surpass anything that we should have been led to expect. Had not this been the case, we should have been inclined to think the colonists' treatment of them exceedingly harsh. Recent accounts, however, present the evil in a more definite form, so that we are better able than we were some time ago to form an estimate of it. It appears that in California out of a population of 800,000, no less than 200,000 are Chinese. San Francisco, with 250,000 inhabitants, has a still larger proportion of them. The colonists themselves for the first time appear to have been aroused to a sense of the danger of being absolutely overwhelmed