

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 1857.

THE HOLY WEEK.

THE usual Services for the Week before Easter were held morning and evening during each day, in the Parish Church of St. Paul's, while the two other Churches of St. George's and St. Luke's were also opened for Morning Prayer on every day in the week. At the Evening Service in St. Paul's, a Lecture was delivered on the subject of "The Cross of Christ"—viewed in various aspects, founded on corresponding passages of Scripture, as a suitable theme for meditation at the anniversary commemoration of the great atoning sacrifice of the Death of Christ. The following is a list of the Preachers, with the subjects and texts, for each Evening in the Holy Week:

- Sunday.* The Attraction of the Cross. John xii. 32. Rev. E. Maturin.
Monday. The Endurance of the Cross. Matt. xvi. 24. Rev. R. H. Bullock.
Tuesday. The Power of the Cross. 1 Cor. i. 18. Rev. E. Gilpin, jun.
Wednesday. The Office of the Cross. Gal. v. 11. Rev. T. Crisp.
Thursday. The Glory of the Cross. Gal. vi. 14. Rev. J. C. Coobran.
Good Friday. The Death of the Cross. Phil. ii. 8. The Lord Bishop.
Easter Even. Peace by the Cross. Col. i. 19-22. Rev. W. Bullock.

The Services were well attended throughout the week, and especially on the Evening of Good Friday. The Lord Bishop also preached in St. Paul's on the Morning of Easter Sunday, from Rev. i. 18. The Holy Communion was administered in that Church both on Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The number of Communicants was much the same as in former years; but in Salem Chapel, where an almost entirely new congregation has been formed within the last 18 months, upwards of 60 persons remained to partake of the heavenly Feast, thus affording additional evidence of the benefits derived from the opening of a Free Chapel for extending the means of grace, and preaching the Gospel to the poor without money and without price.

THE ST. PAUL'S PARISH BILL.

We observe that a Bill has been introduced into the Legislative Council, pursuant to a Resolution passed at the Easter Meeting of St. Paul's Parish in Halifax, to enable the Parishioners at any Parish meeting, to elect their own Chairman. The necessity for this procedure, which would take from the Rector a right which he holds by virtue of his office, and which is coeval with the establishment of the Church of England itself, is by no means evident. It has been argued that it has only become a right by prescription, and that Colonists have no prescriptive rights, and therefore that here the Rectors cannot take the chair upon that plea, and that Churchmen can deal with the question as they please. Now setting aside the impolicy of thus renouncing the homogeneity (so to speak) of the British empire, and a belief, which is the glory of every true Briton, to wit, that he carries his rights and privileges with him to whatever part of the world, being British soil, upon which he may set his foot,—this is a mode of reasoning which if it had any ground of truth, would affect every constitutional principle which regulates our colonial position, and by which we are governed. We are more inclined to hold, and to contend, that if by virtue of his office, the Rector in England takes the chair at all parish meetings, under sanction of the common law, there can be not the least doubt that his right is transferred along with him to this or any other colony. This of course does not interfere with the power of the Colonial Legislatures to pass laws applicable to their condition, upon proper representation of their necessity. No case however has been made out to show that a change would be beneficial here. It is an interference with an acknowledged right, and many reasons might be urged in proof that a change in this respect instead of being for the better would be for the worse.

Had such a Bill as that now before the Legislature, been sought by the unanimous voice of the Parishioners of St. Paul's, and its operation confined to their own boundary, it would not then have been just unless it were called for by some sufficient cause. But it is not the unanimous view, even of that Parish—not do we believe that such a measure is desired by any other Parish in the Diocese. There is in it therefore an attempt at dictation on the part of St. Paul's, which is not by any

means a model Parish in the wisdom of its proceedings, which we are sure will not generally be submitted to. The Parish of St. Paul's can have no pretensions to legislate for the whole Church, and has no right to attempt to impose the advantages or disadvantages of such a law without the general consent. We know it will be said that the Bill leaves an option with the Parishioners, who may or may not under its provisions place the Rector in the chair; but, practically, it excludes him from the meeting altogether; for no Rector will attend when he finds that although the majority may wish to have him in the chair, two or three persons opposed to him may place some one else in competition with him, and raise an unpleasant feeling at the beginning of every meeting. And if, on the other hand, the majority is against him, he is virtually declared to have lost the confidence of his Parishioners, and to be unfit to occupy the position of Rector. His only alternative, therefore, will be to absent himself, and the good and profitable custom of Rector and Parishioners meeting together to discuss and settle their affairs will be abandoned, and the business will be transacted as it was in St. Paul's Parish, last Monday, without any opening prayers for the Divine blessing upon the proceedings. But whatever may have been the intention of the framers of the Bill, there can be no doubt that all who dissent from its principle were to have but little opportunity afforded them of passing an opinion upon its merits. It was read a first time on Wednesday, and ordered for a second reading on Thursday—a rather hot kind of haste,—and the evidence of an excess of zeal for the success of the measure, which Churchmen in the country parishes, whatever may be their views upon the subject, will not be inclined to admire.

In the first attempt to oppose the Rector's taking the chair, his legal right was questioned, and precedents were sought to show that it was not insisted upon in England. But the opponents failed to prove their assertions in any one instance, and if they had succeeded their position would not have been strengthened; for if it could be proved that a dozen Rectors had relinquished their right, such cases would not affect the rights of others, since the English Judges have decided positively, and without exception, in favor of the Rector's absolute right to take the chair *ex officio* at every meeting of the Parishioners.

For its confirmation here, precisely the same arguments may be used. It is also fortified very recently, by the legal opinions of the present Attorney General of Nova Scotia, and of S. P. Fairbanks, Esq., who framed the Church Act, which does not interfere with it, who certainly would not have given such opinions, if that Act went to deprive the Rectors, of any right they had previously held. Indeed the very proceeding of the majority in St. Paul's Parish, in which they seek by a new enactment to invalidate the right of the Rectors, goes far to prove, that they are afraid to leave the solution of the question to a strictly legal decision. In going beyond their province to accomplish their ends, they have gone a step too far. They condemn Synods, and at the same time arrogate to themselves powers which properly belong to the general assembly of the Church. If any alteration in the law of the Church is necessary, it is that body that will recommend it; and the Legislature, in the same way as they would be guided by the resolutions of the Presbyterian Synods, the Wesleyan Conference, or the Baptist Association, will give effect to their views, in so far as they may come within the scope of their powers. To suppose that a Parish majority can speak with the voice of the whole Church is simply absurd; and although the components of the two Legislative Bodies may be a motley religious group, there will be good sense enough among them to refrain from deciding upon any measure for a general purpose, which shall come before them with such slender and insufficient authority.

It is worthy of note that the chief supporters of this Bill affecting the interests of Churchmen exclusively, are the Honble. Hugh Bell and Honble. J. McCully. The latter is always ready to lead any assault upon the Church of England, and his zealous advocacy of the Bill is sufficient to condemn it in the eyes of every one who is acquainted with his disposition towards our Church.

We understand that the Bishop and the Rector have both presented Petitions against this extraordinary Bill, the former on behalf of Churchmen throughout the Province who have not been consulted, and the latter against the violation of his own rights.

The following is the Bill introduced to the Legislature:

A Bill entitled, An Act declaratory of and in amendment of chapter 50 of the Revised Statutes of the Church of England.

Be it enacted and declared by the Governor, Council and Assembly as follows:

At such of the Annual and other meetings of the Parishioners, the Parishioners present thereat shall be at liberty to elect their chairman, who shall preside at such meeting.

A new Church paper has been started in Toronto, Canada West, entitled "The Canada Church Chronicle." It is a small sheet, but experience leads us to say, that with all the drawbacks inseparable from such an enterprise, it is as large as ought to be afforded for the price. The course which the Paper will steer, in these troublous times, is thus marked in one of the Editorials of the first No. entitled "Our Principles."

"We shall here honestly and truthfully affirm, that we, who may be considered responsible for the publication of this journal, are utterly opposed to extremes on either side in the Church. We repudiate the laxity of opinion which would place upon an equal footing, as respects Church membership and privilege, all and any who term themselves Protestants; and we wholly dissent from those who would introduce into the Church of England opinions adverse to her formularies, or practices at variance with the dignified simplicity of her ritual. We cling to the order and directions of our Prayer Book, as they are plainly stated, as much as we do to the doctrines inculcated both in it and in the Thirty-nine Articles. We are as much averse as any can be, to the puerile follies in ecclesiastical decoration and the foppish eccentricities in the manner of worship, with which some weak and morbid spirits in these latter days have disfigured the majestic and characteristic beauty of the Church. Yet, on the other hand, while we deny, as strongly as any can, that salvation depends upon a routine of services and communions, we contend for their necessity as instituted channels and means of grace."

ST. PAUL'S EASTER MEETING.

The Easter Meeting of St. Paul's Parish was held on Easter Monday, at the National School. The attendance of Parishioners was about the same as in previous years. On motion of the Hon. Enos Collins, P. C. Hill, Esq., senior churchwarden, was called to the Chair. A letter was read from the Venble. the Archdeacon, alleging his reasons for not being present, and hoping that a good result would follow their labours.

The Vestry Clerk read the minutes of the last Easter meeting. A statement of Accounts and Expenditures of the Parish during the past year, was presented by the Chairman and handed round. It appears that the expenditures somewhat exceed the income, which is entirely owing to the balance of the liabilities lying over from the previous year. Upon the year immediately passed, the sheet exhibited a balance in favor of the Parish of about £20—and to meet the balance against the Parish on the general account, there were some £30 of Pew rents uncollected, which it was expected would be immediately paid. The statement gave much satisfaction.

A letter from the Archdeacon to the Curates, pointing out the altered position in which the Clergy of the Parish now stand with reference to the Synod, in consequence of the Bishop's Circular—and the Curates' replies,—were read. The substance of these Letters may be thus stated. The Bishop's Circular having declared that it was not the intention to enforce the decrees of the Synod (as such) in unrepresented Parishes—the Clergy of St. Paul's, recognizing the ecclesiastical authority of the Bishop, to whom they owe canonical obedience in all things lawful and honest, whether he act with or without the advice of a Synod, do not feel themselves bound and have no wish to introduce any canons, rules or regulations of that body into that Parish against the consent of the Parishioners.

A Resolution expressive of the satisfaction of the meeting with the replies of the Curates, was passed unanimously.

The salaries of the Clergy were then passed unanimously, as heretofore—and other routine business transacted.

P. C. Hill, Esq. and J. W. Ritchie, Esq. were chosen Churchwardens for the ensuing year. The Vestry for the ensuing year were also chosen.

After some discussion, in which the benefit of a division of the Parish was insisted on, and in which it was stated that the sum of £1000 would be required to make the necessary repairs in St. Paul's, the Rectory and at St. Luke's—a resolution appointing a Committee to collect subscriptions from the Parishioners for those objects, was passed unanimously.

A discussion took place upon the right of the Rector to take the Chair at Parish Meetings, and a resolution was carried by a large majority, appointing a Committee to frame a Bill to be introduced into the Legislature, giving to the Parishioners at all such meetings the right to appoint their own Chairman.

The meeting adjourned, after singing the Doxology "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" at the suggestion of Jas. Croighton, Esq.

The above is merely an outline, although we believe it will be found substantially correct, so far as it goes. A fuller report may be expected.

EXTRAORDINARY SPEED.—A correspondent at Chester writes that a parcel we sent to him by Stage on Feb. 9, reached there on Good Friday 10th April. We are really sorry for his disappointment, knowing it to be injurious, and believe that under the circumstances, he has a good remedy against the Stage Proprietors for the full value of the contents of the parcel.

TELEGRAPH DESPATCH.

[To the Merchants' Exchange Meeting Room.]

The Collins Steamship —, arrived at New York on Wednesday. Liverpool dates to 1st April.

Cotton Market quiet. Breadstuffs have slightly advanced since last quotations. Consols for Nancy 83 3/4. The Elections are favourable to the Government. No other news of interest.