

To the Clergy and Laity of the Church of England in Canada:

MY DEAR BRETHREN,—Before seeking the change and rest which the kind thoughtfulness of the Provincial Synod has provided for me, I desire to lay before you briefly a statement of the financial position of the Missionary Diocese, which ten years ago was entrusted to my keeping.

I. So far from the General Mission Fund sufficing for our needs, there was a deficit of upwards of \$3,800 when the Treasurer made up his last annual report on June 30th. Into the causes of this deficit I need not now enter; I have indicated three in my incomplete report to the Metropolitan. Be this, however, as it may, the fact stares us in the face that nearly \$4,000 is necessary to meet the obligations of the year closing June 30th last. I will not disguise it from you that the anxieties arising from this fact have been one of the primary causes of my recent collapse. What is to be done about it? (1) I am physically and mentally disabled from lifting a finger at present towards its removal. (2) It could be wiped out by falling back on our small invested capital of \$10,000, but with a first breach made in this amount how long will it be before the remainder melts away?

II. The only solution I can discern is a special effort on the part of the Clergy and Laity, and to them I now earnestly appeal in my helplessness. Special gifts by individuals. Special offerings in congregations. Special donations from branches of the Woman's Auxiliary. Special offerings from Sunday Schools. Special appropriations by the Domestic Board. All these running into one common stream will soon replenish the Treasury and set your Missionary Diocese afloat again. In this connection I may say that I have appointed the Rev. Rural Dean Llwyd, of Huntsville, my Commissary in my absence. Contributions will be gratefully received and promptly acknowledged by him or by my Treasurer, D. Kemp, Esq., Synod Office, Toronto.

III. The Shingwauk and Wawnosh Homes are now passing through the most serious ordeal to which they have ever been subjected. Their position is most critical. (1) The Rev. E. F. Wilson has resigned as Principal, being about to remove his family to British Columbia. (2) As a necessary consequence of Mr. Wilson's resignation, all the English assistance hitherto given to the Homes, being, he informs me, given by personal friends to his personal work, will be diverted from these Homes and transferred to the Elkhorn Home in Manitoba, where his eldest son is Principal. (3) The gifts of clothes hitherto sent to these Homes will similarly be diverted into other new channels.

Seriously crippled as they will thus necessarily be, our Indian Homes must inevitably close their doors, unless their Canadian friends rally to their support as they have never done before. I therefore earnestly entreat both the Clergy and Laity to give them a very prominent place in their sympathies, and not only to continue, but if possible to increase their contributions. Many who have hitherto stood aloof will now, it is hoped, enroll their names among our supporters. Gifts of money and clothing should be carefully marked "For the Shingwauk and Wawnosh Homes." As I am desirous that all money contributions should appear in our Diocesan accounts, I would request that cheques, etc., may be sent either to the Commissary, Rev. Rural Dean Llwyd, Huntsville, or to the Treasurer, D. Kemp, Esq., Synod Office, Toronto, who will remit them periodically to the Rev. E. F. Wilson, who has consented to superintend the Homes till April 1st, when he will rejoin his family in British Columbia.

Again entreating your thoughtful care of my Diocese during my absence,

I remain, dear Brethren,

Yours faithfully,

E. ALGOMA.

CONSOLIDATION.

To the Editor of THE CHURCH GUARDIAN.

SIR.—The subject of the Consolidation of the Church in B.N.A. which engaged almost exclusively the attention of the Provincial Synod at its recent session, seems to me to be still surrounded by a certain degree of mistiness, due in some measure no doubt to the many contradictory expressions of opinion which fell from the various speakers on the intricate constitutional questions involved.

In view, therefore, of the serious responsibility resting upon the Diocesan Synods at the stage arrived at, and the necessity of acquiring clear views of the position now occupied, I venture to ask for some small space in your columns to present a few reflections which occur to me on this great question, of such serious import to the Church in Canada, in the hope that others may be induced to help in clearing the atmosphere.

I say it without fear of contradiction; many members of the Provincial Synod and the great majority of the members of the Diocesan Synods, want more light on this matter before they can make up their minds how they ought to deal with it.

I am not one of those who feel convinced that the present circumstances of the Church in Canada necessitate the adoption of the proposed scheme; but I am prepared to put my own private views to one side and loyally accept the decision of the Church as expressed by the majority. I am only anxious that the purpose the Church has in view may not miscarry through any misapprehension of the position.

The following then are some of the points on which I desire some explanation, so that when the whole question comes before my synod, I may myself give an intelligent vote and be able to help others also to do so.

If I understand the situation as laid down by the CHURCH GUARDIAN of the 28th ult., the General Synod will be constituted as such, with full power to legislate, so soon as the following conditions have been observed:

(a) All the Diocesan Synods of the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada must accept the scheme as approved by the Provincial Synod.

(b) All the Diocesan Synods embraced within the Provincial Synod must elect delegates in accordance with clause I. of the constitution proposed.

(c) The Province of Rupert's Land must accept the scheme as amended.

(d) The three Dioceses on the Pacific Coast must also accept the scheme as approved by our Provincial Synod.

(e) The scheme as amended must be adopted by the meeting in Toronto next September.

Now there can be no doubt that if all these conditions are fulfilled consolidation necessarily becomes *un fait accompli*; but does it follow that if any one of them is neglected the whole scheme is wrecked? If any one of the Dioceses in the Eastern Province refuses to accept the proposed scheme, and declines to elect delegates, does it follow that the meeting in Toronto will be summoned for naught? And if a diocese of this Province has this power of obstruction surely it must belong equally to the independent Dioceses on the Pacific. It is important to see whether this is the case or not for obvious reasons. The responsibility is a heavy one which each one of these twelve dioceses has to carry when it recognizes the fact that its "nay" relegates consolidation to the distant future.

(2) I apprehend that if the Synod is organized in Toronto next September and it sets to work to adopt a constitution, it will not be tied down in form to the scheme as approved by the Provincial Synod, but that in substance there can be no variation on those points dealt with. Provision however will necessarily be made for alteration and amendments to the constitution in the future. Will it be regarded as *ultra vires* on the part of the General Synod if such alterations and amendments are of a fundamental character? Or will it be necessary in the future that any

alteration of the constitution of the General Synod should receive the concurrence of the Provincial and Diocesan Synods in the same way as the provisions of the present scheme? If the General Synod can alter its own constitution, as appears to be the most reasonable view, then we have been wasting our time in vain efforts to safeguard the rights of the Provincial Synod. If on the contrary the Provincial and Diocesan Synods can veto any alterations, then the General Synod comes to occupy so dependent and restricted a position that as a legislative body it must soon fall into contempt.

(3) The provision in the amended scheme which suspends the operation of all coercive legislation till accepted by the Provincial or Diocesan Synod is open to the same reflection. If the enactments of the General Synod have no force in any particular Province or Diocese till approved by that Province or Diocese, its character as a body legislating for the whole Church in Canada, which is its special *raison d'être*, is destroyed, or at any rate very much impaired. One Province or one Diocese may accept its decrees but another may reject them. Different laws will obtain in different sections. There will be no greater unification of practice or discipline than at present. Take as an illustration the Canon on Divorce, introduced by Canon Partridge, and imagine that it were adopted by the General Synod, can we suppose, knowing the wide divergence of opinion on one particular point, that it would be accepted by every Province or every Diocese? It might possibly be accepted here, or there, but certainly not everywhere. Of course it is questionable whether the General Synod would adopt it at all. But that in so important a matter it should be possible for any small section of the Church in Canada to frustrate the decision arrived at by the representative body of the whole would not present an edifying spectacle. I see but little compensation for such an outcome in the possible benefits to be derived from consolidation.

(4) One other point I much touch upon. When the scheme comes before the Diocesan Synods for ratification let them bear this clearly in mind. That either the Provincial system must be abandoned or the General Synod will be a mere Parliament in the original meaning of the word—a debating society and nothing more. The advocates for the retention of Provincial Synods who are at the same time so eager for consolidation have to make their choice. During the many hours in which this difficulty was discussed in the Provincial Synod at Montreal, I heard no single utterance that in any true sense claimed to dispose of it. No one had the temerity to explain how two bodies, with co-ordinate powers, were going to legislate in the same manner, on the same subject, without conflict, except by such voluntary concessions on the part of one body as must go far to prove its existence unnecessary.

If the General Synod meets periodically—say every five years—and legislates on all the subjects proposed in the scheme, is it conceivable that any thing will be left for the Provincial Synods to take up of sufficient importance to justify the great trouble and expense of meeting. If Provincial Synods are to meet only for the purpose of assenting to the decrees of the General Synod they will soon die of inanition. And if the General Synod must submit to have its decrees overruled by the Provincial Synods, it is difficult to see how its decisions are to carry the weight which ought to belong to them. The result may be easily foreseen. The General Synod will gradually attain the preeminence which is due to that body representing all sections as distinct from the body representing but one. The Church will grow impatient of the incongruity which the present scheme presents—for which there is admittedly no precedent—and will refuse to suffer any small section to assert its independence in matters of general import. Provincial Synods will be abolished and the existing difficulty at the same time.

DELEGATE TO P. S.