

CLERGY RESERVES IN CANADA.

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it will have the effect of leaving many of the poorer parts of this country miserably supplied with the means of grace, and in very few parts of it will the ministers of religion be able to obtain anything like a certain or adequate support; and that by repealing the Act of the Imperial Legislature, declared in the strongest manner to be a final settlement, all confidence will be destroyed in the stability and security of any Acts of the British Parliament in future.

Your memorialists do therefore earnestly beseech Your Majesty to refuse assent to the address of the House of Assembly, and to preserve in all its integrity the settlement already made of the Clergy Reserves for the support of that religion which exalteth a nation.

Signed in name and by appointment of the Presbytery,

J. MALCOLM SMITH, M.A.,

Moderator of Presbytery, *Pro. tem.*

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MEMORANDUM.

THE Memorial of the Presbytery of Kingston having been forwarded to the Governor-General with a view to its being transmitted to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies for presentation, it is submitted that the following explanatory remarks should accompany the same.

There is a studious attempt throughout the Memorial to persuade the British public, who must necessarily be but little acquainted with the state of public opinion in Canada, that the dissatisfaction which has been felt with the Imperial Clergy Reserve Act has been on the part of that portion of the population professing the Roman Catholic faith. It is difficult to understand how any parties so well acquainted with facts as the Presbytery of Kingston could venture on such a statement. The Clergy Reserve question has never been agitated in that part of Lower Canada inhabited by the French Canadians who constitute the great bulk of the Roman Catholic population.

It so happens that in Upper Canada, where, for the last twenty years, the Clergy Reserve question has been a fruitful subject of discord, as has been admitted by successive Governors, there is but one Roman Catholic member of the Provincial Parliament. It is, moreover, perfectly well known that the agitation against the present settlement of the Clergy Reserves has been conducted by Evangelical Protestants, both ministers and laymen, including lay members of the churches of England and Scotland. These are facts which cannot be disputed in Canada. It is true that the Roman Catholic members of the House, or a majority of them, have felt it their duty to aid the great majority of the people of Upper Canada in obtaining a more satisfactory settlement of a question in which the latter feel the deepest interest.

The Memorial under consideration affirms that the Address praying the repeal of the Imperial Act was, "in its leading principles, carried by a very slender majority in the House of Assembly." The "leading principle" of the Address was the repeal of the Imperial Act, or an affirmation that the present settlement is an unsatisfactory one. It will be found by reference to the votes and proceedings in the House, that an amendment was introduced by the Hon. Mr. Cayley, that it is "inexpedient to disturb or unsettle" the existing law. Here there is a test of the opinion of the House regarding the "leading principle." The division was 16 to 52. The 16 were all members of the Churches of England and Scotland. Of the majority of 52, 26 are certainly Protestants, including members of the Church of England, Presbyterians, Methodists, and other denominations: 26 are Roman Catholics. The "slender majority" referred to in the Memorial will be found to have been that by which the 29th resolution was carried. On analysing that division it will be found that the "slender majority" was caused, 1st, By the secession of certain French Canadian and Roman Catholic members, who could not concur in one part of the resolutions; 2ndly, By the secession of certain other members who would not consent to recognise the claims of existing incumbents. The representation that the slender majority was obtained by Roman Catholic votes will be found to be incorrect, in point of fact, as the Roman Catholic votes were equally divided, and the resolution was carried by a Protestant majority, though a slender one, for the reasons already stated. It is scarcely necessary to notice that part of the Memorial which alleges as a grievance to Protestants that the House of Assembly which has passed the Address has granted acts of incorporation to numerous bodies of Roman Catholics, "entitling them to hold fixed property." The Parliament of Canada has shown every desire to afford facilities to all denominations of Christians to hold property purchased with their own means for the support of religion, or the maintenance of educational and charitable institutions. It is certainly not inconsistent with this policy to object to the endowment with the property of the public of one or more favoured denominations of Christians.

It is alleged in the Memorial that "the object" of the Address is the diversion of the Clergy Reserves from the support of religion altogether to that of secular education from which religion is industriously excluded. This statement is incorrect in two particulars; 1st, The Address does not affirm the expediency of diverting the Clergy Reserves from religious to