

## Selections.

FROM "A CHANCE TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF FREDERICTON," BY JOHN, BISHOP OF FREDERICTON, 1856.

## THE SYNOD QUESTION.

"The mention which the Society at home have made of a legally established council of clergy and laity, leads me to say a few words on the somewhat vexed question of a synod or convention. I am quite prepared to admit the desirableness of any such assembly, unless it were adapted with the general consent of the Church; and I can imagine no bishop so regardless of his own peace, as to wish to force on a reluctant community what they were disposed to resist. But then the community should recollect the grave evils which already exist, and for which no remedy has hitherto been found. Our Church, though amply supplied with standards of doctrine, is ill-furnished with discipline, and this is sometimes exercised in an informal manner, not according to canons and laws made by common consent of the Church in which the discipline should be maintained, but by help of a body of men, or rather a committee selected by that body, living three thousand miles away; yet supposing this to not to exist, and its bonds are every year becoming more feeble, the power left in the bishop's hands to enforce discipline will be encumbered with many legal difficulties; and if not placed in the Bishop's hands, in whose hands will it be placed? Would the laity in each parish undertake this duty of judging and condemning their own pastors? They might undertake it, but they certainly are not authorized by any law of Scripture or of the Church to do so, and they could hardly be expected to discharge it with fairness and impartiality. Where can we find in the Acts of the Apostles or in the Epistles, an instance of a purely lay body constituting themselves a tribunal for hearing and deciding on spiritual causes, without reference to any other authority? To admit this were to admit that the whole constitution of the Church of England is unconstitutional. For if the laity in each parish may judge and dispose their pastors, the next step would surely be to ordain them, if indeed any such ordination could be required. Both these methods being therefore wholly irregular, it follows that some canonical and legitimate mode of proceeding to the mode of trial of offences of a grave nature, by whomsoever committed, should be established in the Church by the consent of all parties concerned, in person, or by their representatives. Equal justice should be meted out to all. An offending clerk ought not to defy justice by reason of his position, nor ought an offending layman to be overlooked, because most men think it meet to impose on the necks of the clergy a yoke which they are themselves unwilling to bear. Such offences, however, must be specified and limited. They must not be differences of opinion, tolerated by the general usage of the Church, but crimes known and recognised as such by the laws of God and man; gross neglect of duty, or public scandals and offences against the society to which we belong. They must also be proved after due notice, patient hearing, and proper opportunities of defence. The establishment of such a code of Church law would be one use of a Synod, legally constituted, but it is obvious that such legislation would require long and grave consideration, and must be surrounded with such safeguards for the liberty of individuals as wisdom and experience can suggest. Objections may be made to any step of the kind; but it is clear that without some regular discipline we fail in one point of discipline we fail in one point of resemblance between our own and the Apostolic Church, which ought, I need hardly say, to be our model in all matters whether of faith or practice.

"It cannot, for example, be right that any members of our communion should openly secede from it, and range themselves under other banners without notice from us; and if they should unhappily be ministers of the sanctuary, bound by the most solemn vows, and whose bad example may prove an injury to others, there is the more reason that our silence should not be construed into an approval of, or an indifference to their actions. It may perhaps be thought by some that Synods would be the mere reflection of the opinions of the bishop, who would exercise an undue influence over the members; yet as it is probable that no measure could be passed affecting the whole body, which did not receive the consent of each order in the Church, it is incredible that the bishop alone should have much power to effect changes of any magnitude. His power, whatever it might amount to, would be simply conservative, and opposed to alteration and

change, which would give time for consideration.—The best answer, however, to these objections is, that in the Church Society, no freedom of discussion, no independence of opinion, has been checked by the presence and veto of the bishop, and that no measures adverse to the liberties of the clergy or laity have ever been carried, as far as I know, by his influence. If, therefore, the constitution of the Synod should resemble that which is already in operation, what is there to fear? or why should this unworthy suspicion be entertained? Synodical assemblies would also be found useful in regulating the temporal affairs of the Church, and in devising such prudent measures as may promote its enlargement and prosperity. For various reasons it would not be prudent nor desirable to discuss doctrinal subjects in ordinary synodical assemblies. Apart from other considerations, this reason for the prohibition appears to be sufficient, that we are an integral, but a very small part of the Church of England, and that no alteration can take place in the formularies of that Church without the solemn consent of all the parties who originally framed those standards; and at the present time, it is not only not desirable to alter them, but I think not desirable for us to discuss their alteration."

Sir John McNeil (late Crimean Commissioner) at a banquet given in Edinburgh to the soldiers of the regiments stationed there, spoke thus of the services of Miss Nightingale, and of her works of charity:—

"Though I am unable to tell you who was responsible for leaving the sick in that wretched condition, I am able to tell you who rescued them from it—Florence Nightingale. (Prolonged applause.) Except the aid she received from the Times Fund, she provided at her own expense linen for the numerous patients, which could not have cost less than £2000 or £3000. (Applause.) She found the hospitals unprovided with any establishment for washing the linen, and with the aid of the ladies and the nurses made arrangements for that purpose, some of the ladies taking an active share in that menial labour. She found the hospitals without any trained cooks, and she established a private kitchen, in which food fitted for those who were most reduced was prepared, and I have no doubt contributed to save the life of many a brave man. Foreseeing that the accommodation was insufficient, she urged the repair of a large wing of the Barrack Hospital, which was so dilapidated as to be uninhabitable, and the repairs were commenced, but the workmen soon struck, because they were unpaid; and the officer who had charge of the work could not procure the requisite funds. She advanced them from her own means, and, curiously enough, the very day on which those repairs were completed a number of sick and wounded, sufficient to fill that wing, and for whom there was no other accommodation, arrived from the Crimea, and were placed there. But the wards were as empty as barns, and the hospital authorities declined to provide the requisite furniture. She purchased it at her own cost, and furnished the wards, but the amount has since been repaid. I mention those things, and I might tell you of many more, because many of you may not know, or may not remember them, and very few, I am sure, have ever heard or will ever hear of them from her. But it is needless to dwell further upon services to the sick and wounded which are known to the whole world—which have redounded to the honor of the nation—which have made her name dear to the army and to the country—and which secure to her a place in the history of our time as the worthy leader of one of the most remarkable movements which this war, in many respects memorable, has produced.

"I cannot, however, refrain from stating one or two facts credible to the soldiers of the British army which ought to be known. Miss Nightingale had, of course, occasion to be in the hospital wards at all hours, and she informed me that she never, on any occasion had heard even an oath from a soldier. (Applause.) And lest you should imagine this propriety of behaviour proceeded from deference and respect to her personally, I will read a very short extract from a letter written by a lady who is in another hospital. She says—'In bearing testimony, as I do most gratefully, to the extreme delicacy and respect with which I was treated by our soldiers, I am but echoing the sentiments of every lady who has been in the Eastern Hospitals.' In answer to my inquiry whether she had observed on the part of the soldiers much reluctance to leave the hospital and return to their duty in the Crimea, Miss Nightingale replied that she did not remember having been asked to write one letter to any soldier with a view to prolong his stay in hospital, but

she believed she had written five or six hundred for men who wished to inform their officers that they considered themselves fit for duty. Such is the character which the soldiers of the army in the East have established for themselves—in action—in camp during the worst times—and in hospital—I am confident that they will not throw away at home the high reputation they have acquired on foreign service. (Applause.) Every one who knows the public services of Florence Nightingale, but those only who have had the honour of meeting her can know the refinement and truly feminine delicacy of her mind and manner, or the unconsciousness of having done anything great or remarkable, that pervades her whole deportment and conversation. Far from dwelling upon the past, or taking any pride in the applause which has followed her unsought, the whole energies of her powerful, highly cultivated, and essentially practical intellect are already directed towards further and more permanent plans of usefulness. Truly pure, and thoroughly Protestant in her sentiments, her attachment to the Church of England is free from any tincture of sectarian bitterness. (Cheers.) She has not so read her Bible as to believe that it inculcates ill-will towards any class of God's creatures. Ready to extend her assistance to the sick and wounded of all persuasions without distinction, she has freely availed herself of the assistance of all. Holding fast her own principles with the firm composure of a strong mind and a settled conviction, she avoids alike the extremes of High Church and Low Church, and hears without resentment the extravagant and contradictory absurdities that are circulated in regard to her opinions. She appears to be too intent upon doing the good which it may be permitted her to do in the work she has chosen, to care for either the evil or the good that is spoken of her—otherwise than that it may affect her usefulness. It is not from us, and it is not here, that she seeks praise or reward. But it should be in accordance with her practice, if, in speaking of the services rendered to our sick and wounded, I omitted to direct your attention to the obligations which she and all of us owe to the ladies who shared her pious labours—and I may be permitted, without disparagement to others, to remind you that some of the most prominent were our own countrywomen."

## PALMSTINE.

"In Palestine, as in Greece, every traveller is struck with the smallness of the territory. He is surprised, even after all that he has heard, at passing in one long day from the capital of Judea to that of Samaria; or at seeing within eight hours three such spots as Hebron, Bethlehem, and Jerusalem. The breadth of the country from the Jordan to the sea is rarely more than fifty miles. Its length from Dan to Beersheba is about a hundred and eighty miles. The time is now gone by when the grandeur of a country is measured by its size, or the diminutive extent of an illustrious people can otherwise than enhance the magnitude of what they have done. The ancient taunt, however, and the facts which suggested it, may still illustrate the feeling which appears in their own records. The contrast between the littleness of Palestine and the vast extent of the empires which hung upon its northern and southern skirts, is rarely absent from the mind of the prophets and psalmists. It helps them to exalt their sense of the favor of God towards their land, by magnifying their little hills and dry torrent beds into an equality with the giant hills of Lebanon and Hermon, and the sea-like rivers of Mesopotamia. It also fosters the consciousness, that they were not always to be restrained within these earthly barriers:—'The place is too strait for me; give me place where I may dwell.' Nor is it only the smallness, but the narrowness of the territory, which is remarkable. From almost every high point in the country, its whole breadth is visible, from the long wall of the Moab hills on the east, to the Mediterranean sea on the west. Whatever may be the poverty or insignificance of the landscape, it is at once relieved by a glimpse of either of these two boundaries.

"Two voices are there—one is of the sea,  
One of the mountains,"—

and the close proximity of each—the deep purple shade of the one, and the glittering waters of the other,—makes it always possible for one or other of those two voices to be heard now, as they were by the psalmists of old. 'The strength of the mountains is His also—The sea is His, and He made it.'

"Thus, although the Israelites were shut off by the southern and eastern deserts from the surrounding nations, they yet were always able to look beyond themselves. They had no connection with either the east-