

THE RECENT PROVINCIAL SYNOD.

The London (England) *Guardian* devotes several columns to an account of the proceedings of the Church of England Provincial Synod lately held in Montreal, and speaks of it in its editorial columns as follows :—

While the United States are hopelessly disunited, and Mexico in a condition of intolerable anarchy, it is cheering to hear from the American continent one note at least of more harmonious sound. The vast provinces of Canada have so far organised their ecclesiastical administration as to be able to hold a Synod under the presidency of their own Metropolitan, with representatives, lay and clerical, from every part of their wide territory. Living men can remember the day when a single Bishop, with five clergymen under him constituted the entire ecclesiastical order of the province. It has now five dioceses, with 350 clergy officiating in them. Small enough, it is true, such a muster-roll seems to be : the soldiers of the Cross in so wide a field might well bear a ten fold increase. Yet it is much to have attained this increase at all in a brief period—in a period, too, of infancy, when the obstacles to progress are more formidable, and when calamities are apt to take a more serious effect on the growth. The infancy of the Canadian Church is over now; and she may well look for the more vigorous advance of which her ripened age gives promise.

To ourselves the Synod of Montreal has even a deeper interest than it derives from its influence on the future of the Canadian Church. It is the first regularly constituted Provincial Synod in our colonies, at which representatives of the clergy and laity have met the Bishops to deliberate on questions affecting the welfare of the Church. In more than one province of the Southern Hemisphere the Bishops have assembled to take counsel : in Canada first the addition of a Lower House has recalled the precedents of the Convocation of Canterbury and enabled the Metropolitan to speak with the full authority, and in the name, of all orders and degrees of Churchmen. To some minds indeed, it will appear a serious misfortune that the precedents of Canterbury and York were not more closely followed by the exclusion of laymen. We cannot share their disappointment, nor admit the justice of their complaint. In one form or other the laity will have a share in deciding all questions of importance to the body of which they constitute the largest part : if they can get no other share, they will compensate themselves by obstructing or nullifying the proceedings of the ecclesiastical order from which they are shut out. It is far better that they should have a legitimate sphere of influence, and speak by representatives lawfully chosen. If this method had no other advantage it must at least insure some sense of responsibility in the counsellors on whom a delegated authority has been conferred. On this side of the Atlantic we sometimes pay for the absence of lay synods-men by having to submit to influences alien altogether, not to the Church only, but to decent social order and civilized liberty. Nor can we, in truth, admit