

# Dominion Churchman.

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## ELECTION OF A BISHOP OF TORONTO.

UNDER this heading appears a remarkable article in the *Guardian* of April 2nd. It is in many respects extremely well written and is calculated to give some correct impressions of the late Episcopal election in this city. We cannot, however, agree with all that is said upon the subject, any more than we have been able to agree with some of the same writer's former communications to our English contemporary. We cannot, for instance, agree with him in representing the election of the Archdeacon as a triumph for the so-called "Evangelical party." Archdeacon Sweatman was to have been nominated by both parties, and we shall be very much disappointed if he should turn out to be anything else than the Bishop of the whole Diocese, without respect of "party" or "school." The "indictment" referred to was in reality a *family quarrel*—the clergy, as a body, and the Church party not being concerned in it. Nor is the writer correct in stating that the Church Association has crippled the Mission Fund of the Diocese. It has certainly done nothing of the kind. Why the missionaries were not paid in full has never been explained. The Mission Board got into debt in this Diocese, as in most other Dioceses in Canada, it was not till the debt was reduced about one half that the missionaries were told they could not be paid in full.

We wish to give our readers the more important portions of the article to which we allude. The writer says:—

"On the death of Bishop Bethune, the eyes of the whole Canadian Church naturally turned towards Archdeacon Whitaker, Provost of Trinity College, Toronto, as his successor. There is no question that in point of theological learning, general ability, oratorical power, and all that is noble and refined in Christian character, he stands at the head of all our Canadian clergy. 'The Provost,' as we still continue to call him in Canada, though he has been for some years Archdeacon of York, is, what very few of the clergy anywhere, certainly in Canada, are or can be—he is a theologian. And this, added to a singularly attractive and beautiful power of extempore speech, and to the still more beautiful modesty, humility and holiness of his life, makes him to be, among those capable of appreciating such excellences, held in the highest reverence. And yet, as will be seen, four-fifths of the clergy and forty-six out of 100 of the parishes of the diocese, after the most persistent efforts, and a struggle maintained with a constancy which does them infinite honor, could not secure his election as their Bishop. To explain this portentous phenomenon, how it is that the most able and most eminent clergyman of the Canadian Church is excluded from her Episcopate, I must enter somewhat at length into the history of the troubles of this diocese.

"Toronto, under the late Bishop Strachan, an old-fashioned High Churchman, with a determined will which nothing could withstand, was always a High Church diocese. On the secularisation of King's College, Toronto, which was his own creation, the noble old Bishop undertook, and with incredible labor carried through, the founding of a new Church University, the now wealthy and prosperous Trinity College, Toronto. He had the happiness to secure as its first Provost, the Rev. George Whitaker. In 1858 the Diocese of Huron was formed, and in 1860 its Bishop, Dr. Cronyn, a very pronounced adherent of the Evangelical school, publicly attacked the teaching of the Provost as Romanising in its character and tendency. These charges were at once met and refuted by the Provost, so far as their vagueness permitted them to be refuted, to the entire satisfaction of the College Corporation. Unhappily for the peace of the Church, the Bishop of Huron thereupon "wrote a book" intended to crush the Provost, reiterating his former charges and bringing new ones. This the Provost answered in a pamphlet of great power, a model of theological controversy for its admirable temper, in which he completely refuted all the Bishop's charges, and showed himself to be, to every person with any knowledge of religious controversy, not only not a Romanizer, but a churchman of the most moderate school. The Provost's pamphlet, however, though there was not in it one reproachful word towards his accuser, had the effect of exhibiting to the whole Canadian Church how slenderly qualified Bishop Cronyn was for the task he had undertaken. The matter did not rest here. An appeal was carried to the House of Bishops; and they, while letting down their Episcopal brother as gently as possible, unanimously maintained the soundness of the Provost's teaching. In short it was a most humiliating defeat, and one which it was not in human nature for the friends of Bishop Cronyn or the Low Church party to forego. Certain it is that, ever since, the Provost has been pursued with the most unrelenting virulence, and no opportunity lost of destroying his influence and undermining the confidence of the Church and country in the college of which he is the head. In 1873 the Low Church party of Toronto, professing themselves aggrieved at their own exclusion from all offices of influence and trust in the Church, at the threatened extinction of "Evangelical" teaching through the exclusiveness of Trinity College, instituted a "Church Association" after the English model, and proceeded to issue, first, an *Address to the Laity*, and subsequently, at intervals, during the next three years, fourteen Occasional Papers. One result it had; it led to the teaching they referred to being at once openly condemned and repudiated among others by the Bishop and the Provost. But the evil was here: the impression left by these papers was that all High Churchmen in the diocese, and especially all the men educated in Trinity College, who form a large proportion of the clergy of the diocese, circulated erroneous books and agreed with them. Trinity College, which of course means the Provost, is first and last the object of attack in the Occasional Papers. The Provost's repudiation was of no avail. Trinity College men, they reiterated, used objectionable books, and their principles they could only have learnt from the Provost. Bishop Bethune interfered to put down the association.

He issued a Pastoral at the outset, proclaiming the soundness of his clergy and the freedom of his diocese from ritual excesses, and severely condemning the writings of the association. He charged against it in subsequent years. So far from repressing the association, this only gave them fresh courage, and in several of their papers they calmly demolish the Bishop. Finally, the clergy, exasperated beyond endurance, resolved—by whose advice I know not—formally to indite all the leading clerical members of the association before the Church courts, under the 73rd Canon, as "depravers of the government and discipline of the Church." This step was simple infatuation, and ended, as it could only end, in a signal triumph for the Low Church leaders, besides rallying to them sympathy from all sides as persecuted men. The membership of the association rose immediately from less than 800 to 1,500. But the association did not content themselves with publishing papers; in 1874 they resolved to open a Divinity School of their own in Toronto for the training of candidates for the ministry in "Evangelical principles," justifying so extreme a step—one of open defiance to the Bishop and synod of the diocese—by alleging that "the few young men in our midst at present offering for the ministry are being trained up in ritualistic and High Church views, and with strong anti-Reformation and anti-Protestant sentiments." This, as applied to Trinity College, was distinctly untrue, the Provost having some time before this published a series of most able and learned papers against the principles and practices of the ritualists, and having publicly repudiated all sympathy with those who defamed the Reformation. That, however, was of small consequence, the answer to it being the same as given in a Toronto newspaper the week before this election, in a most cruel and dastardly letter, written, it is said, by a leading member of the association, that "the Provost was well known to be a Protestant Jesuit of the first water." Their school was opened at first by Dean Grasett and two other of the local clergy giving lessons in the evening to one or two young tradesmen and clerks; but soon the services of a Principal were secured, and the school has now been at work and open for more than two years. All this was done in the face of a distinct warning from the Bishop that he could not recognize their school nor ordain their candidates. Of course all this involved the expenditure of considerable funds which, however, were liberally subscribed. The fruits of the school so far are sufficiently characteristic of the spirit in which it originated. Two of these fruits are worthy of mention. The first and only man who as yet has gone out from it has sought and obtained ordination lately in the *Reformed Episcopal Church*. The other case is a scandalous act of insubordination almost incredible. The Bishop having refused to appoint to a vacant parish a young clergyman from another diocese, the nominee of the association, and having appointed a respectable clergyman of the diocese, the churchwardens, instigated by the association, refused the clergyman admission into the Church. He, while taking steps to obtain legal possession of his benefice, conducted the services under the Bishop's license in a hall. Will it be believed that the association actually sent down one of the students of their Divinity School to hold an opposition service for the malcontents in another hall?