

29 Sept. 1869.

## PASTORAL LETTER

OF

**His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto,**

ON HIS PROCEEDING TO THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN.



**JOHN JOSEPH LYNCH, by the Grace of God and by  
the Authority of the Holy Apostolic See, Bishop  
of Toronto, Assistant at the Pontifical  
Throne, &c., &c.**

*To the beloved Clergy, Religious Communities, and Faithful of our Diocese,  
health and benediction from our Lord.*

In obedience to the call of Our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, Vicar of Christ, Head of the Church, and successor to St. Peter, we are about to proceed to Rome to take part in the General Council consisting of the Bishops of the Catholic world, to whom in connection with the Pope, Christ has given charge to govern the whole Church,—“Wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you, Bishops to rule the Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood.” (Acts xv, 28.) The Church of God is composed of all baptised persons, whether actually or in desire—not of unbaptized, persons—for St. Paul says, “What have I to do with those without the fold.” Hence the Council is to legislate for those who apparently do not belong to our fold, who, though receiving the gospel in general, reject many of its most saving ordinances. The Church is also composed of teachers and disciples. “Go teach all nations,” was addressed to the Apostles and their successors: they are the teachers and the nations are the disciples to be taught. A general council of the Bishops of the Church is an assembly of divinely appointed teachers who meet together in the name of Christ under His headship and inspired by His Holy Spirit, to review the situation of the Church, to correct abuses, to point out errors and to declare the truth that is in