

PROVINCIAL SYNOD.  
DIOCESE OF MONTREAL.

SECOND DAY—AFTERNOON.

[EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE].

After Recess, Mr. Strachan Bethune, of Montreal, moved, seconded by Chief Justice Allan, of Fredericton, an Amendment to the first Article of the Constitution, so as to omit certain words with reference to the Church of England and Ireland which is not since disestablishment of the Irish Church a correct title for the Church. The motion was carried.

Rev. Rural Dean Belt, of Newcastle, Ont., moved, seconded by Rev. W. J. Mackenzie, M. A., of Brantford, Ont., That a committee be formed to draft a canon of discipline for the Laity. This motion provoked a very great deal of discussion. The mover said that this was a matter affecting the well-being and the good name of the Church and its influence abroad. He had no particular case in view, but he thought a canon should be brought into force to meet such difficulties as a man living in habitual drunkenness, or in a state of immorality, or a person taking advantage of his position in the Church to hold a schismatic meeting, etc. He heard of laymen holding Services in opposition to the clergy, and refusing the admonitions of the Bishop, and he thought it would be for the welfare of the Church to pass a canon to meet such cases, and in doing so, they would make their Church far more influential.

Very Rev. Dean Baldwin, of Montreal, objected to a cast iron rule, and thought we had machinery enough to deal with cases of this kind.

Mr. A. H. Campbell, of Toronto, raised a point of order, that the Provincial Synod could not deal with the question of discipline, as the sole power to do so belonged to the Diocesan Synod.

The Prolocutor over-ruled the point, and the discussion proceeded.

Rev. Dr. Carry, of Port Perry, Ont., made, as he usually does, when he feels strongly, a very vigorous speech in support of the motion. He said that one of the greatest reproaches against the Church was, that there was a lack of discipline, and it had created a strong feeling against the Church. He had been called upon to bury persons who had died in delirium tremens, and even infidels, and what protection had he? He had himself refused to bury a man who had neglected to attend to his religious duty, and who had not been inside of a Church for many years, and it had created quite a stir in his parish, but he thought he had done quite right. But how was a young clergyman to be expected to stand his ground in such cases; he was almost sure to fall, and he therefore thought they should pass such a canon, and rigidly enforce it, as would be a standing warning to their laity.

After a motion as an amendment by Mr. A. H. Campbell, embodying his point of order taken previously, which the Prolocutor had not entertained, the Rev. Canon Brigstocke, of St. John, N. B., moved in amendment to the amendment,

That the House of Bishops be requested to appoint a committee to act with a committee of this House to be appointed by the Prolocutor, to consider the advisability of a canon for the discipline of the laity.

He said that this question was of the greatest importance, and they should proceed very cautiously. He thought that before touching upon the discipline of the laity, they should ask the opinion of the House of Bishops upon such a difficult subject, and if even the matter was allowed to stand over for three years more no possible harm could result from it.

Mr. George Elliott, Niagara, agreed with the Rev. Canon Brigstocke that it would be advisable to get the opinion of the House of Bishops before proceeding further with the matter. He saw no reason why the Church of England should not enact a canon for the preservation of the purity of her members, and he felt that the effect of the enactment would be to extend the power of the Church.

Dean Baldwin said they were not compelled to give the Lord's Supper to a vicious liver, and if this was the case, he did not see why they needed this canon.

Rev. J. P. Lewis, Toronto, claimed that such a canon was imperatively required, and urged that other bodies exercised discipline, and why should not the Church adopt a comprehensive canon on the subject.

Rev. F. R. Murray, Halifax, contended that it was better to leave things as they are, as the rubric gave the clergyman every authority to act, and often the gospel of love and not the censure of the Church would bring a man to his right mind.

Mr. S. Bethune, Q. C., said his diocese took the rubric as its authority, and adopted a canon based upon it. He strongly advocated such a course.

Canon Brigstocke's amendment was carried almost unanimously.

The next subject of importance discussed was with reference to the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, brought forward by the Rev. O. P. Ford, of Toronto, who moved the following resolution, seconded by Rev. Canon Bogert, of Ottawa, "That a joint committee of both Houses be appointed to prepare and report a Canon dealing with the case of persons who shall contract or shall have contracted marriages within the prohibited degrees, if they consider it advisable and lawful for this Synod to enact such canon."

The mover and seconder each urged that as the Church of England, agreeably to the constant practice of the Church Catholic from the earliest ages, declared such marriages to be contrary to God's Word, and as by the recent passage of an Act of Dominion Parliament, such marriages were made legal, it became the duty of the Synod to make effectual the canon passed at last session, declaring such marriages opposed to the Church's laws, by adopting the proposed canon now asked for.

Mr. F. W. Thomas, of Montreal, was convinced that public opinion was tending towards the abolition of such a law, and to allow of the marriage of the deceased wife's sister. He would suggest that the question should be deferred for six months, and he thought by that time they would all come to the conclusion that the question was not one for them to discuss, but that it should be left for the legislatures of the country and the people at large. Again and again they saw persons whom they held in the highest respect, marrying within the prohibited degrees, and in enacting such a canon as proposed they would be passing condemnation on these persons, which would be highly improper. If the Church of England was unable to temper public opinion in this direction, it showed that there must be something wanting.

Mr. E. J. Hodgson of Charlottetown said that it had been asked why they should pass this canon, because the law of the land says otherwise, but he would say that it happened to be because the law of the land and the law of God were opposed to one another, and he had yet to learn that the Church of God was to bow down to any Act of Parliament, no matter how high. The last speaker had said they should temper public opinion, but when their Blessed Redeemer was on earth He and the apostles failed to temper the opinion of Jerusalem, and He was crucified because he set his face against the public opinion of Jerusalem. They would be cowards if they did not do what their consciences told them was right, and when people did wrong the Church should deal with them as they ought to be dealt with. It has been said that respectable people had done this but there was something higher than respectability, there was the law of God and that must not fall down before respectability. They should do their duty in this matter, and not allow the sacred cloak of religion to be thrown around those who committed this sin.

Mr. G. R. Parken of Fredericton said that the Church of Canada had taken a firm stand on this question, and the Metropolitan had declared his intention of disciplining any clergyman who should

disobey the canon of Synod in this regard. It had been stated that public opinion in England would eventually carry the measure through the House of Lords, but that day would see the beginning of the conflict between Church and State, and the question for the Church of England would then be whether it would go with the popular tide or resist.

Rev. G. M. Armstrong hoped the question would be discussed calmly and with a due regard for the opinions of those who did not regard such marriages as sinful. There was a great difference between sin and schism.

Rev. G. C. Mackenzie sympathized with the opinions of Rev. Mr. Armstrong.

Other speakers followed, among whom Chief Justice Allan, who, while not positively expressing an opinion, was inclined to believe that to exercise discipline upon a man and woman for doing what the law of the land permitted them to do, would subject the clergyman to pains and penalties. This view was vehemently opposed by many, both lay and clerical, who contended that the Church was in the position of a voluntary society, and those who joined her ranks, did so voluntarily, and so became subject to the rules and regulations provided so long as they maintained their connection with her. And just as the Masonic Society exercised discipline upon its members, and was held blameless of violating the civil law, so the courts would ask simply, whether the Church had gone beyond its own laws in any case which might arise.

Six o'clock having arrived, the Synod adjourned.

THIRD DAY—FRIDAY.

The Synod inaugurated a work to-day which is cheering to the heart of every well disposed Churchman inasmuch as it must mark a new era in the history of the Church in Canada. We allude to the setting apart of a day for the discussion of the missionary work and missionary needs of the Church, and for the appointment of a committee to frame a Constitution for a great general Missionary Society which shall recognize and embrace every member of the Church as a missionary worker, or as bound by the Baptismal vow to work for the extension of Christ's Kingdom on earth. The new departure was fittingly introduced by the presence and hearty reception of a delegation from the Church in the North-West who had come to urge the claims of that great section of our common country upon the attention of their brother Churchmen of the older dioceses.

The House met as usual after prayers in St. George's Church. The Prolocutor took the chair at ten o'clock, and after routine announced the reception of the deputation from the sister province of Rupert's Land, and requested Canon Carmichael to inform the House of Bishops that the deputation was about to enter.

The House of Bishops entered and occupied seats on the platform.

The deputation comprised the Rev. O. Fortin, of Holy Trinity, and the Rev. E. S. W. Pentreath, of Christ Church, both of Winnipeg.

The Prolocutor welcomed them in the name of the House in words at once graceful, dignified and kind, by which and in other ways more than once during the session he proved himself to be in every way equal to the frequent emergencies which cannot fail to arise in so important and representative a body.

After the Prolocutor's kindly words, Mr. Fortin was first invited to address the two Houses, and in an extremely well-conceived and eloquent speech, presented the claims of the North-West in general, and the Diocese of Rupert's Land in particular, to the liberality and warm-hearted consideration of the Church in older Canada. He said the present was the day of small things in the West, but the opportunity was great. As they saw the tide of immigration, the opportunities of planting the Church in small villages that will be large towns to-morrow, and listened to the cry of the settlers on the prairies, "Come over and help us," they felt that some day what was now small would become great. When they looked at this and then