

his work all the prestige of his great abilities and high name, but also followed by the good wishes and the fervent prayers of the friends of Christian missions; that no evil counsels on the spot might over precipitate him into a hasty and ill-advised collision with the Tao-ping leaders at Nanking; but that, exercising a large forbearance and wise tolerance towards a body of native half-enlightened pagan reformers groping their way through almost unprecedented disadvantages towards a purer system of religious truth, our special envoy to China might avoid the danger of an armed joint intervention with French propagandists of the Papacy, against the Tao-ping leaders at Nanking. In conclusion, the right speaker expressed his confidence in the leadings of Providence in reference to the spread of Christianity in China, and dwelt upon some of the present results of missions in China, as seen in the reverence shown to a Protestant version of the Bible, in the Tao-ping edicts, as an evidence that we are on the threshold of great events in the East, and the kingdom of Christ will finally be established in that long-bought land.

Provincial Legislature.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

THURSDAY, April 24.

The bill declaratory of and in amendment of chap. 50, Revised Statutes, of the Church of England, was read a second time.

Hon. Mr. Rudolf presented a petition from his Lordship the Bishop of Nova Scotia, and another from the Ven. the Archdeacon, praying the house not to assent to the said bill.

These petitions were then read by the clerk.

The petition from the Bishop states that the petitioner, in his office as Bishop of Nova Scotia, has the oversight of all the ministers and congregations of the United Church of England and Ireland within the Province of Nova Scotia, and is charged with the maintenance of the order and discipline thereof. The petitioner states that the bill which he petitions against interferes with and is subversive of the said order and discipline, so far as regards the relation of a rector to his parishioners, and that the rectors of St. Paul's have exercised the right to take the chair at all meetings of the parishioners for more than a hundred years, and that the parishioners of St. Paul's are by no means unanimous in the wish to deprive the Rector of this right, a large and influential minority having opposed any alteration of the existing practice, at two full meetings last year. The petitioner remarks that there is no intention to propose the introduction of a new order Monday last. The petitioner remarks that there is no doubt about the law, confirmed as it is by the practice of a century in this province; and that in the very rare instances in which the Rector's right has been questioned in England, the decision has been invariably and absolutely in his favor. Petitioner states that this right of the Rector is part of the constitution of the Church of England, as well as of the common law, as declared by the judges; and that the provincial parliament has not hitherto in any way interfered with this right, and that it has been recognised by the legislatures of Canada and New Brunswick. Petitioner further states that it would be a dangerous precedent to allow a few persons in Halifax to interfere with the rules of a society extending throughout the whole province, without the knowledge or sanction of the members of that society generally, more especially as this society is but a branch of a larger society in England, of which the laws and customs are equally binding on all its members here, where not contrary to the laws of the province. The petitioner concludes by praying that the house will refuse to pass the bill referred to, unless amended by adding a clause giving the right only in case of the absence of the rector, so as to be in accordance with the law and practice heretofore received and adopted in this province.

The petition of the Archdeacon states that the petitioner and his predecessors have exercised the privilege referred to in the Bill for over a hundred years, (the former having been Rector for over thirty two years), and concludes by praying that the privileges may not be taken away.

Hon. Mr. Bell.—I still think that the people of the Church of England should have something to say in the management of their secular affairs, and should not, in this respect, be under the control of the clergy, however respectable and worthy of respect the latter may be. I do not wish factiously to oppose any of the sentiments or statements contained in these petitions; still, on the broad principle that we should regulate in accordance with the well understood wishes of the people. I think that the parishioners of St. Paul's, who have wished this bill to be introduced, should have an opportunity of expressing their views before the bill is dismissed.

Hon. Dr. Grigor.—It is possible that there may be a counter petition presented from the members of that very church. It would be as well, therefore, to delay any action on the bill for a day or two. The bill refers to the Province generally, but I believe it is intended to apply only to the parish of St. Paul's. If the congregation of that church really desire the right which is declared in the bill, I think it should not be denied them.

Hon. Mr. Rudolf.—The objections to the passing of that Bill are so forcibly set forth in the petitions that

it is hardly necessary for me to enumerate them. This bill has been introduced, together with a resolution passed the other day at a meeting of the churchwardens, vestry, and parishioners of St. Paul's. Such a question as this was never raised before. The bill will affect the whole province, and I do not think it is right to pass such a measure hastily, and without giving churches an opportunity of expressing their views against it. The Rector by sitting in the chair does not interfere with the action of the parishioners. We should endeavor to put down strife in the church, and we should not therefore encourage this bill. I move that the further consideration of the bill be deferred to this day three months, unless a clause is added to it to say, "that in the event of the Rector not being present, then the meeting is to elect its own chairman."

Hon. Mr. Custer seconded the motion to defer.

Hon. Mr. McCully.—Although we have heard a great many strong reasons why the bill should not pass, still I am quite sure that the learned prolate who has presented one of those petitions would be very sorry that any action should be taken in the matter, in consequence of any influence being brought to bear here. It should be allowed to lie on the table until the hon. gentleman having charge of it moves upon it.

Hon. Mr. Rudolf.—Hon. gentlemen speak of both parties. Who is the other party here? Is it not the party at whose suggestion the bill was introduced?—The whole Province of Nova Scotia is to be affected by this bill.

Hon. Mr. McCully.—I will never consent that a bill should be thrown out before we know what it is.—This bill was introduced into this house on Tuesday, and on Wednesday we are asked to throw it out, so as not to allow members an opportunity of ascertaining what it really is. It there is any question in the world in which I have not an interest, this is one. But I think it is not respectful to the hon. gentleman who introduced the bill, nor to the parties who asked him to introduce it, to throw it out in this unceremonious manner. I put it to my hon. friend (hon. Mr. Rudolf) if the humblest man in the church—a mere door-keeper—were to have a bill introduced here, would he not give him an opportunity to make out his case. But the hon. gentleman, to-day, seems determined, if possible, to put a stop to all discussion on this bill. He says that this is a most important measure, touching the interests of all Nova Scotia, and yet we are to throw it out immediately.

Hon. Dr. Grigor quite agreed with the observations of the hon. and learned member.

Hon. Mr. Harris.—I take a different view of this matter from all who have before spoken upon it. The Church of England was established here when the country was first settled, and its ministers were paid by the British government, and many of them are or engaged support their own ministers entirely. I think they should be governed by the principles which were established when the Church was first founded in this province. We should not disturb the established rights of any of these parties.

Hon. Mr. McCully.—That is not the question. There are a number of other important bills which have been lying here for some weeks; and yet this bill of twenty-four hours growth must be summarily ejected. If we were of business. Nothing before us but the bill, there might be some reason for this course; but I will venture to say that there never was an instance in which a bill was so summarily treated in this house since it was a house. Unless some serious and extraordinary influence had been brought to bear here, I think the would be found a majority to put down such a proceeding. It is true a majority can do anything, and by can turn out the bill if they are so determined, but will be very much surprised if the hon. gentleman presses his motion. He may perhaps ask me some for what I am now asking him.

Hon. President.—This bill relates to a matter with which this house should not interfere. It relates to a question which has already been subjected to legal minds. I have no desire to interfere with the internal arrangements of any denomination. I take it for granted that it is for the Rector to preside over the church meetings. The bill contains but a single clause, and as to deprive the rector of the parish of St. Paul's of privileges which he and his predecessors have enjoyed for a hundred years.

Hon. Mr. Bell.—As a little desira to interfere with any Church as a member who has just spoken, but when a question brought up relating to the privileges of this house, that we should contend for them, I am unwilling as any one to speak on a favor of the clergy, and while I pay all due respect to worthy chaplains, (the Archdeacon and Rector Paul's,) still, where a question involves the rights of the house, I feel it my duty to vindicate there. I beg leave to oppose the doctrine that because custom has been in existence for a hundred, five hundred, or even a thousand years, that therefore it is never practised. To what do we owe all our? Is it not because we have broken down a long been practised and sought to be continued thousands of years. We must not forever hold practices.

"Some self-copied there are, we know,

Who are ever long and always will be so."

But I am not only, sir, and if I am wrong I will apologise. I was going to say I censure—the principle because a system has been long practised, that must be right.

Hon. President.—I have abstained from generally abstained from any bills relating to the

Church of England. I should feel humbled were I a member of the Church of England to see such a bill as this introduced. When I heard the remark about mysterious influences, after the practice of one hundred years has settled the law on this point, it seemed to me somewhat strange. The bill, in effect, says, "Be it enacted by the Lieutenant Governor, Council, and Assembly, that the Rector of St. Paul's, who has exercised certain privileges for a hundred years, be legislated out of these privileges."

Hon. Mr. Archibald.—I stated here the other day that the practice of the Free Church was to have a minister presiding over their meetings. The bill containing this provision was altered so as to give the right to the meeting to appoint any one to be chairman. I think it is strange that the arguments should be all on one side on one day, and all on the other side the next day.

Hon. Mr. McKeen thought the people who paid the clergyman should have some voice in the management of the affairs of the Church.

Hon. President.—They are not deprived of their voice. Are gentlemen ready for the question?

Hon. Mr. McCully.—No. I move that the house go into committee on bills. I am sorry to be obliged to make this motion, and I also regret to hear it stated that because a law has been law, therefore it should forever continue so; and I still more regret to hear the President say that he never voted on any bill relating to the Church of England? Do we not know that no question was so fully discussed in this country as the undue influence which the Church of England at one time possessed? and I ask the hon. President whether he and the whole Catholic community did not sympathise with those who contended against the exclusive rights which were enjoyed and claimed by the Church of England. What peculiar privileges have the members of the Church of England at this day, different from mine or any other member's denomination? Why are bills passed here every day legislating on my church, if the Church of England is not to be subjected to the same control. There is not a Catholic or a Church of England member to whom I would refuse the boon I am now asking if it were asked of me, and I don't believe there is any Catholic member who would refuse it to me. I cannot understand why this question is pressed upon us to-day. It shall not be known to-day how I intend to vote on this bill. But I ask before the people of this country if it is to be permitted that a bill placed on the table of this house on Wednesday is to be thrown out on Thursday, while the table is groaning with older bills. One feels that there must be some influence brought to bear here in order to produce this action. There is not a member sitting at this board to-day who will deny that this is the case. I say it, and I care not what prelate, priest, or minister I offend, that a man belonging to the most despised sect in Nova Scotia has as much right to be heard as a prelate or the greatest lord. Had this privilege been asked by a prelate

before me, I should not have refused it. I am not very well learned in Church law, and I will not say but that if the arguments are not in some way, I shall be inclined to vote against the bill; but I hope we shall get at the question fairly, and that a majority will be formed against giving it the go by in this manner. Then if we throw the bill out we can state to the parties who introduced it, "we heard all you had to say, and we thought the bill could not be passed."

Hon. Mr. Rudolf.—You can understand the whole bill in five minutes. The petitions contain all the information you can get upon the subject. The hon. and learned member talked about influence brought to bear. There may be some secret influence used on the hon. gentleman who opposes the motion to defer.

Hon. Dr. Grigor.—I must say that this is as good an example of the mismanagement of a bill as I have ever seen. The undue zeal of the member who introduced it has really hindered its progress. In my profession it is a common thing to over dress a wound, and in that case fever and other bad consequences arise from it. We have been led into an expression of the highest sentiments respecting the rights on which we have adjudicated. I do not think the Church of England exercises any undue influence here. There has been no undue or mysterious influence exercised as far as I am aware. I was much interested in the remarks of the President, and his sympathy with the Church of England. In the quadrille there is what is called the *vis-a-vis* and the *dos-a-dos*. At one moment we have the parties facing one another, and at another moment with their backs to each other. This is the first time, I believe, that the President has voted with anything like cordiality with the Church of England. There is a fine liberal spirit existing now between his denomination and the Church of England. The millennium is certainly approaching, and we have striking evidence of its appearance. I think, however, it would be as well to leave the bill in the hands of the hon. gentleman who introduced it here.

Hon. President.—I have usually abstained from voting on matters affecting the Church of England. On one or two occasions when such questions came up, I voted with the late bishop against some of his own parishioners.

Hon. Dr. Grigor.—I ask the hon. gentleman if his friends were not interested in the movement against the prominent position at one time held by the Church of England. I allude to the Church and State influence by which the bishop held a seat in this house.

Hon. President.—I was not in the house when this question was discussed.

Hon. Mr. McNab.—For many considerations I think that the bill should lie on the table. I do not give any opinion on it, but I think it is only courteous that one should be allowed time to examine it.

Hon. Mr. Rudolf.—What is to be gained by its lying on the table?