

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, SEPT. 29, 1855.

THE EPISCOPAL VETO

It may not be amiss at the present time, to offer a few remarks upon a subject which appears to be little understood, but to which much prominence has been given as an element of opposition in the formation of a Diocesan Assembly or Episcopal Synod. Those who oppose the veto wittingly, do it with an intention to ignore the Bishop in the government of the Church, which is totally inconsistent with the constitution of Episcopacy. We believe however that such persons are few in number; but that there are many led away by their representations, who with a better knowledge, would see no evil in the exercise by the Bishop of a legitimate authority in ecclesiastical government as well as discipline. In the Episcopal Church the Bishop is not only a distinct order from the clergy and laity, but chief of the three, and their overseer, and it does seem strange that in a convocation of the three orders for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, a limitation of his authority to only an equal voice with the others, can invest him with an absolute power. A glance at the development of the principle will show the weakness of such a mode of reasoning, and the unstable foundation upon which it is built.

It may be supposed, that at some future period, Diocesan Conventions will be in operation in all the American Provinces, and that a General Convention will then be desirable, in order to preserve and extend the unity of action of the Church. Now let us see how, what is improperly termed the Veto of the Bishop, works in these Conventions, which should form the rule of Church government.

We find then, that the General Conventions of the Church in the neighbouring Republic, by their constitution, upset the democratic theory of a Bishop being no Bishop in the Diocesan Convention.—There the assembled Bishops form a separate House, a co-ordinate branch of the Church Legislative, and what they have been obliged to concede to popular prejudice in their Dioceses, they rightfully assume when the whole Church is assembled. Can there be any question as to which is the more excellent way. Nothing further than this, as it appears to us, is required to show that the Bishop in a Diocesan Assembly or Synod, if he do not as an order possess an equal power with the others, is deprived of his proper authority in the ecclesiastical polity—that the unity of design in Church government is impaired—that in fact a wrong is committed, and a fundamental principle violated,—and we have not the least doubt, that in the United States, where this plea for Church Democracy originated, in a Church deriving a *metarchical* principle from its great King and Head, that it is the ultra democratic tendency of the people, and by no means the genius of the Church itself, that is answerable for the perpetration of so anomalous a condition of things.

We are no advocates for despotism in any shape, temporal or spiritual, and least of all the latter; but if there be such a thing in connexion with Episcopal government, it is when the Bishop, unfettered and uncontrolled, can of his own motive, work an injury to his clergy or his people, by his power to tyrannize over their offices, their wills, or their inclinations. Now, does a Colonial Bishop at present possess that power or not? And if he does, is he not more likely to exercise it unfettered as he is, than when the calm deliberations of the Clergy and Laity, in the governmental assembly of the Church, shall by a majority declare their approval of any measure to which it may be known that he has a personal objection? We think that there can be no question between the two cases; and that if the Veto is likely to do a mischief, (under the immediate power of the Bishop its exercise has hitherto been only for good,) it must be when uncontrolled by a Synodical majority. This then is the condition of every Diocese where Synods do not exist—and the sooner they are instituted all the more will a check be placed upon the arrogant exercise of the Episcopal veto; and no Bishop will be hardy enough except for reasons which must approve themselves to God and man, to venture an opposition to the expressed views of the Church, of which he is the guardian and head. Besides a general Convention would form a court of appeal against the despotic actions. As well might the Queen disallow an Act of the Legislature, introduced by her Ministers, and passed triumphantly through the Lords and Commons. What resolution our Diocesan Assembly may

come to upon this head, or whether they will at all discuss it during their approaching Session, is beyond our knowledge. If there is any thing that looks dangerous in the exercise of the veto in a Diocese, it is that one man forms the chief estate, and not as in the General Convention, a body of men. But that, which at the first glance may tend to alarm, does not upon second consideration, appear to be so bad. Some seem to think, that it would be a safeguard were the Bishop guided by a Council; but we are not sure that it would not be better to rely upon his own unassisted discretion. An improper veto exercised with approval of a Council, who might have much influence in the Diocesan Assembly, would be a more difficult thing to be got rid of. Nor need there be any apprehensions in the matter. The veto exists now—the Assembly will hear all the arguments ere they come to a conclusion upon the matter—and should they desire to limit its exercise, the opportunity will be afforded them. The question has been disposed of satisfactorily to all parties in Canada—why should not a similar unanimity prevail in Nova Scotia. In the Upper Canada Synod the Bishop possesses a limited veto. But whether limited or absolute, it is a power that in principle must be conceded—or the Church is Episcopal but in name, and the Bishop but a cipher in its government in reality.

FALL OF SEBASTOPOL.

THE important intelligence of the fall of the southern side of Sebastopol has been the all absorbing topic since the arrival of the Steamer, on Thursday morning. The first intimation of this great event was conveyed to the sleeping inhabitants, by the guns of the noble vessel which brought the intelligence, which in coming up the harbour at 5 a. m. rounded off the Queen's wharf, and fired a royal salute. Every one who heard this knew what it meant, and awoke his neighbour; and in a very short time the emotion which great events inspire, was visible in the agitated yet exultant countenances that thronged the streets and wended their way to the various depositories of the news. Here and there a knot of persons could not repress a loud hurrah, while others might be seen busily engaged in hoisting a flag in honor of the victory. Very soon these expressions of loyal feeling were witnessed in every direction, and such a display of ensigns, union jacks, and other emblems of British sovereignty, was never before witnessed in Halifax. Now commenced the alarm bells, and many thought that a fire had been kindled by the overheated emotion; but it was speedily known that this was the mode which our useful fire brigade had taken to give vent to their share of the general joy. The churches took up the peal, and continued it at intervals throughout the morning. There was a general school delivery, and the boys really seemed to feel as though they had contributed in some unaccountable manner to the allied successes. At 12 the guns of the citadel, (and also from the *Admiral* and *Espiegle*), thundered a royal salute, and the troops lining the ramparts fired a feu-de-joie, and gave three hearty cheers for the success of Her Majesty's arms. In the afternoon the Volunteer Artillery assembled on the Parade and fired a royal salute, and were afterwards addressed by Colonel Cogswell with the happiest effect, and with great applause from the concourse of spectators. Preparations were now made for a bonfire on the Parade, and the Fire Engine Men were busily engaged in decorating their engines for a torch light procession. Both these affairs came off with great *eclat*—the former reminding us of old times, and the latter of the progress of the City in public improvement. We had not time to glance across the harbour, but we dare say that our Dartmouth neighbours, all who did not cross to Halifax, were busily employed in lending their aid to the general rejoicing.

On Friday the display of Flags was continued, and in the evening there was a general illumination, which considering the shortness of the notice, was a credit to the city, displaying many tasteful devices, and considerable artistic skill in the various decorations. Dartmouth also was illuminated, and was a pleasing spectacle from this side the harbour. The *Admiral* also caused the Flag ship to be illuminated.

It has pleased God to bless the operations of the allies with a victory, which it may be hoped will hasten an honorable peace; a peace that shall preserve the quiet of the world for ages; and yet it is not to be concealed that this is but a preparatory step to curbing the daring ambition of a dangerous power. Nor must it be too much depended on, that the loss of the whole Crimea, (an event which would only make Russia the more able to concentrate her strength, and to prolong the struggle,) would end the war. On the subject however, of immediate conse-

quences, the *London Guardian* has the following appropriate remarks, with which for the present we conclude our notice of the glorious intelligence, which in spite of the great loss the allies have sustained, is killed and wounded, has caused universal rejoicing throughout every part of Her Majesty's dominions:—

"In estimating the strategical value of this great success, we regard it as an immense mistake to suppose that the Russian army must now be quite disorganized. There is no evidence of any such effect having been produced, and it is contrary to the experience which the world has had of the Russian character. It is quite in accordance with the tactics of the Russians to abandon, without stopping to be driven from it, an untenable position; but it is not their wont to be disheartened—much less disorganized—on such occasions. Should Prince Gortschakoff determine to remain where he is, instead of retiring at once upon Batai-Serai, or even Simpheropol, there is no reason to suppose that the garrison which has defended Sebastopol with such resolution, and has now retreated in such perfect order, will fight less well at Siverzais, or at Makenzie Heights, than it fought in the town which it has so long and so well protected. Borodino itself did not disorganize the host which retired from position to position before the great Napoleon. It is to be hoped that our Generals will be wiser than their critics at home—and will not fall into the error of despising their enemy. There is hard work still for the Crimean army to perform, if the war is to continue. It will be no child's play to carry that range of rugged heights, bristling with cannon, along which the army of Prince Gortschakoff are encamped, and which is a far more formidable position than our own of the other side of the Tchernaya. The fort of Siverzais may be a less tenable position than the works which we have taken, but we may be sure that it will not be less bravely defended. The same tenacity, the same stubborn resolution, is to be expected of the Russians, each time we meet them in arms. It is our business to be prepared for this, and not to make light of the dangers we have still to encounter, by picturing to ourselves a 'disorganization' in our enemy's hosts, of which we have no evidence, and which is in the highest degree improbable."

The joyful news of a great victory, while it gives universal satisfaction to the nation whose arms are thus blessed by the God of Sabaoth, is nevertheless not without its alloy in the deep sorrow of the relatives and friends of those who have died or been wounded in the conflict, and in the regret of all for departed worth and promising usefulness. Our own happy Province, now exulting in the conquest achieved, is not exempted in this respect. Among the slain in the last successful assault of the southern side of Sebastopol we regret to find the name of Major Welsford, 97th Regt., a Novascotian who had given promise of high military talents, which were united with a religious disposition and enthusiastic bravery. Our readers will recollect that we published an extract of a letter received by his friend the Rev. R. Elliott, of Pictou, a short time since, dated from the trenches before Sebastopol, giving some facts connected with the siege, breathing a christian spirit, and inspiring confidence as to its ultimate success, which however Divine Providence has not thought fit that he should live to witness. There are other names among the slain and wounded, which we believe Nova Scotia may claim with a melancholy satisfaction, as of her sons who have shed their blood for their country, among the rest Capt. Parker of the 77th, killed, and Lieut. Parker of the 17th, wounded.

COPPER COIN.—Copper coin for change is very much wanted in Halifax, and it would be well if those who ought to see to such things, took some method to supply the deficiency. Our very good Provincial copper coin has nearly all disappeared, and a large amount of spurious pence and half-pence has taken its place. Our neighbours of New Brunswick have lately obtained a supply of very neat copper coinage, which already has been imitated by the enterprising citizens of the United States, and unless our coppers have been transmuted into baser metal it is difficult to imagine what has become of them. Some measures should be taken not only to give us a good copper currency but to prevent the spurious importation, some thousand pounds of which are probably afloat in the Province.

Fergus O'Connor, who made some noise in his day by his advocacy of the working men's charter, and who latterly became insane, is dead, and was buried on the 10th inst. in the Kensal Green cemetery. A procession of working men with banners having democratic inscriptions, accompanied the procession.

A complimentary address to Her Majesty on the success of the allies in the Crimea, was passed by the City Council on Thursday 27th, and was transmitted by the Steamer which sailed on Friday morning.

* The good people of Wilnot we think might derive some consolation in their opposition to the institution of Synods—against the plea No. 5 and 6 of their Protest from these General Conventions of the Church.