

pray that the Divine Spirit may preside at our present deliberations, and over-rule them for good.

So much has been said about the Rectories in an unfriendly spirit, and so little in their defence, that very few persons possess any correct knowledge respecting them, while numbers conceive them to be a monstrous evil, which ought as soon as possible to be abated.

This being the case, a few remarks on their origin, number, and present value, may not on the present occasion be unseasonable. For were it generally known that lands equal in quantity to the whole of the endowments attached to the Rectories might have been purchased for a trifling amount, even so late as 1818, and that they confer on their Incumbents no power beyond what a lease for life gives to its holder, we might reasonably hope that the prejudices and hostility against them would soon pass away, or become too feeble to produce a renewed agitation.

The number of Rectories established by Lord Selton towards the close of 1835 and beginning of 1836, was 57, but of these only 44 were completed before His Lordship's departure: these were endowed with lands amounting in all to 17,368 acres, giving an average of about 400 acres to each Rectory. Thirteen remained incomplete. The necessary documents were indeed prepared, but the Governor's signature was, for some cause, not affixed to them.

A considerable portion of the land which forms the endowment of the Rectories was set aside at the first settlement of Upper Canada, during the time of General Haldimand, Lord Dorchester, and General Simcoe, and the remainder was made up of Clergy Reserves. At that early period the waste land of the Crown had acquired no money value, and while bestowed gratis on all applicants they continued at a mere nominal price. In 1798 only ninepence per acre was offered for School