

18457

EGERTON RYERSON AND THE
TORONTO CITY CIRCUIT.

"It is an evil when the Ministers of Religion deviate from their purely religious functions, to take part in the strife and broils of political parties."—Extract of a Despatch from Sir Charles Metcalfe to the Colonial Secretary.

In looking through the columns of the *Christian Guardian*, of the 25th March, I see a piece headed "These Four Men." After showing up many of the sins of which they have been accused, the Editor says, "besides which, they have even passed a resolution excluding from the Toronto pulpit an eminent member of the Conference; thus aiming to rob the Conference and this Minister of their legitimate rights." The proceedings of that evening, to which the Editor alludes, would not have appeared before the public had it not been for the manner in which the organ of the Conference has sustained this "eminent Minister." The following extracts from, and comments upon a pamphlet published by that "eminent member of the Conference" were read in a meeting of Stewards and Leaders, held on the evening of the 22nd January last, in the basement-story of Adelaide Street Chapel, after which the resolutions which follow were put and carried unanimously:—

Whereas in a pamphlet, entitled "Sir Charles Metcalfe defended against the attacks of his late Counsellors, by Egerton Ryerson," is found the following language and misrepresentations, "The huntsman gives a portion of his prey even to his dog, as well as applauds him for his services: the late Counsellors seemed to have considered smiles and words quite good enough for Methodist dogs." With regard to the first part, we ask, is it language fit for a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to make use of, even if it were true, which we contend it is not?

Second.—Mr. Ryerson said, "Whilst a sprinkling of Wesleyan Methodist Magistrates had been granted in some places, an extraordinary exclusion—I will not say gross partiality, has occurred in other places. I have been advised, on good authority, of the following facts in Victoria District:—Mr. Baldwin was twice a candidate there. In the first instance he was entertained and zealously supported by a Wesleyan Methodist Magistrate: that Magistrate declined doing either in the second instance. Shortly after the second Election, a new Commission of the Peace was issued, and the name of the Wesleyan Methodist Magistrate referred to was omitted, and not a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church was appointed." With regard to the second part, we contend that it is untrue, therefore a gross misrepresentation, calculated to, and did deceive the Methodist community; for it is generally understood, that when the Commission issued for the Victoria District, Mr. Baldwin did not belong to the Administration, but was a Member for the County; if so, he was wickedly accused of a thing over which he had no control. Mr. Ryerson also said, that not a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church had been appointed. It is generally understood, however, that there were a greater number appointed to the Magistracy at that time who were either members or constant hearers of the Wesleyan Methodists than of any other denomination of Christians.

Third.—Mr. Ryerson said, of Lord Metcalfe, "he has spent his forty years' public life in a Colony, and has, therefore, all the habits and feelings of a Colonist. He has spent all that time, not in the atmosphere of an exclusive ecclesiastical hierarchy, but in a country where equal civil and religious rights are recognised; and has, therefore, all the habits and feelings of religious equality—an adaptation of experience and views for the government of Canada not possessed by any other statesman of his rank in the British Empire." With regard to the third part, it is well known, that the East Indies (the British Colony to which Mr. Ryerson alludes, as enjoying so much civil and religious liberty) is governed by a Governor and Council, without a House of Assembly or Legislative Council; therefore Sir Charles Metcalfe, having lived forty years in, and having been Governor of a British Colony not having a Representative Constitution, how could he be the most fit person to govern the British North American Colonies, where we have three branches, first, Governor and Council; second, Legislative Council; and, thirdly, a House of Assembly; every branch of which is designed to be a check on the other two. The Scriptures, speaking of some who did "evil that good may come," declares their condemnation (damnation) to be just.

1st. Be it therefore resolved, that if Mr. Ryerson wrote the above extracts, (with many others in the aforesaid pamphlet equally deceptive,) for the purpose of gaining advantages either for the Wesleyan Methodist Church, of which he is a Minister, or for himself as an individual, or for both, it is the opinion of the members of this meeting that he has brought himself under the above Scripture censure.

2nd. Be it further resolved, that the members of this meeting fully concur in the sentiment of the Rev. Henry Wilkinson, the President of the Conference, who stated, (when speaking, on a certain occasion, of the Rev. Egerton Ryerson's political course,) that, in his opinion, he had disgraced himself, both religiously and politically. Therefore, such being the case, we, Official Members of this Society, enter our solemn protest against his being invited or allowed to take any part as a Speaker or Teacher of Religion in this Church, or any of the branches connected therewith.