

Are you doomed to no other motion than that which is retrograde? God's order is that of progress and advancement. His word enjoins us to rise from one degree of usefulness to another. It is our privilege, as it is our duty, to abound in good works; to redeem the time because the days are evil; and, "whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do all to the glory of God." The whole universe of obedient beings, are going forward with their glorious Head. The path of eternity opens before them with new objects, and renewed powers, of light, beneficence, and love. The descending scale is trodden only by the disobedient. They sink deeper and deeper into everlasting darkness; and the moral distance between them and the children of light, is eternally increasing. Covet, then, earnestly the best, the most useful life. Let a heavenly ambition animate your breast. Seek for glory and honour, as well as immortality, Rom. ii. 7. Refuse the fleeting pleasures of an hour, the favour of a worldly company, for the joys that never fade, and the approbation of the King of heaven.

Though the lot be thus abused in heathen and Christian countries, yet we must remember that its right and proper use has obtained the sanction of the God of truth. When, therefore, the true Christian has recourse to it in a spirit of faith, and when circumstances absolutely require it, he may assure his conscience that he is not out of the path of duty. But he must also bear in mind, how difficult it is to determine the times and seasons. We are all apt to be misled by secret motives and partialities. Instead of a choice entirely free, there is too generally a leaning towards one side. The majority of Christians, therefore, will find the use of the lot rather a snare than a help to them, in their progress through life. Almost unconsciously to ourselves, we may be desirous to have recourse to the lot, only to escape from our own proper responsibility. This is a dangerous state of mind. It directly tempts the Most High. He discerns the lurking thought, and will not sanction it with his blessing. He has given us Reason as a monitor, the Word of Truth as a lamp, and has promised the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and guide. Why, then, should we close our ear to unerring instruction? It may be permitted to those who are "strong in faith," and perplexed in extremity of contradicting circumstances, to have recourse, with humble earnest prayer, to the lot, as their only remaining door of deliverance from difficulty and dilemma; but Scripture furnishes a safer, and a better rule; and accompanies it with a gracious promise from the Lord, when it gives this injunction, "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Prov. iii. 6.—From "Christ on the Cross," by the Rev. John Stevenson, Perpetual Curate of Cury and Gunwalloe, Cornwall.

The Berean.

QUEBEC, THURSDAY, JULY 17, 1845.

We have found time and space, to give to our readers in this number an Abstract of the Common School Act, as it now lies before the public to make the best of, until experience of its working shall have pointed out amendments for which, no doubt, there will be sufficient room left. A portion of the Act (that referring to Dissident Schools) we purpose to insert and remark upon in our next. Though we attach great importance to that part of the Act, we do not entertain any wish that Dissident Schools should be established, until grave objections to the Schools under the Commissioners arise, especially such as would interfere with the freedom of Scriptural instruction to the children. It will appear, on a glance at the provisions of the Act, that the internal management of the Schools, and the selection and appointment of Teachers rest entirely with the Commissioners; the Commissioners, where an election has taken place, were chosen by the people. We should, then, be quite content to learn that in general the Schools established by these functionaries are satisfactory to parents who take an intelligent and religious view of what is for their children's good. But it may, perhaps, help towards making the Schools so, if it be well understood that there is a remedy for Dissidents to have recourse to, if their just wishes are disregarded.

Dr. Meilleur, the Superintendent of Schools for Lower Canada, addressed a letter to School Commissioners, &c. under date 8th May, to which we intend to direct some of our attention in our future remarks upon this important branch of public service.

We have recently had addressed to us a series of papers published in the small West India island of St. Christopher (shortly called St. Kitts). We opened them with various conjectures as to what might be the topics which chiefly engage the attention of the inhabitants of that part of Her Majesty's dominions. To our no small surprise we found nearly one half of the *Saint Christopher Advertiser* filled with correspondence, resolutions, and leading articles relating to innovations in the manner of performing the services of the Church by what the editor irreverently calls "Puseyite Clergymen." How earnest the people of St. Kitts are in the matter, may be concluded from the introduction to the Leader in the number which contains a call for a Public Meeting, addressed to the inhabitants by the Vestry of St. George's parish, Basseterre: "We feel pride in reflecting that this Colony is destined to furnish a bright example to every other in which the insolent fanaticism of Puseyism shall venture to rear its head. We have already said, the time for controversy is past—the hour of action comes!" A few particulars of events there will lead us to cast a glance at things which happened recently in the mother-country.

The Archdeacon of St. Kitts—also Rector of St. George's parish—is complained of as

having introduced, especially since his return from a late visit to England, a variety of unusual practices which have given great offence to his parishioners, and have caused Vestry-Meetings to be held, Resolutions to be passed and published, and Correspondence to be carried on, while the Archdeacon stoutly denies the right of the Vestry to deal with such matters at all, and pays no manner of attention to their remonstrances. The Lieutenant Governor of the Island made a separate representation of his own to the Archdeacon, which this Dignitary resents so much as to ascribe to it the effect of "closing the door to any thing like a friendly and cordial accommodation between himself and the opposing portion of the laity of his parish." The Archdeacon declares his resolve thus: "In no point whatever will I at all yield, until I find myself compellable to submit in the due course of Ecclesiastical law and judgment."

Our information on the subject is not such as to warrant us to pronounce a direct opinion upon the character of the innovations complained of by the parishioners. But it must be admitted that the close of the Clergyman's letter just now quoted is expressive of a disposition widely different from that which the Archbishop of Canterbury recommends it to his Clergy to cultivate in these matters, and which the Archdeacon's Diocesan, the Bishop of Antigua, by Circular, adopts as the one he also wishes to be cherished within his spiritual jurisdiction. Alterations have evidently been introduced with any thing but "general acquiescence" on the part of the parishioners; and the Archdeacon, instead of meeting the opposing portion of the Laity in a spirit of conciliation, seizes upon the error—if such it be—committed by Her Majesty's representative in remonstrating with him on the subject, and on account of it refuses yielding to any thing he may not be compelled to in the course of Ecclesiastical law and judgment. This determination is ill in accordance with his Diocesan's expressed anxiety "that the feelings of parishioners, formed under practices of long continuance, should not be abruptly assailed, and that even their prejudices should be rather softened than harshly combated." How much need there was for the Bishop's issuing such a recommendation, appears from the authoritative direction which we find in His Lordship's letter, that *Credence Tables* should be "forthwith discontinued." Since, from this injunction, it appears that a piece of Romish church-furniture, so utterly unauthorized by the Church of England as the Credence-Table, had actually been introduced in some portion of the parishes under Bishop Davis's supervision, it is not uncharitable to conclude that complaints of other romanizing innovations are not preferred without good reason. In this one instance, the innovators will be found "compellable" to return to a course consistent with their allegiance to the Church which has called them to the ministry; it is not much to be wondered at, however it may have to be regretted, if an indignant laity think of some mode of compulsion to correct other romanizing propensities, supplementary to ecclesiastical law and judgment, if these be found not to reach the grievances.

Our main object in taking this notice of proceedings, the scene of which lies at a great distance from us; is to advert more fully, as we shortly did once before, to the unwonted language which the Laity begin to hold towards their Clergy. The *St. Kitts' Editor* draws this conclusion from the conciliating letters of the Archbishop of the Province and the Bishop of the Diocese: "The broad question of innovation, generally, is most properly made to depend upon the will of the congregation." In another place he says: "There exist two recognised appellate jurisdictions, with whom rests the *ultima ratio* of this question—namely, the law, and the congregations composed of lay-members of the Church." Now these are interpretations which the two Prelates would scarcely consider as legitimate; still less would the rash innovators who have above all others been the asserters of clerical pre-eminence. Yet it is by them that the spirit has been stirred up among the Laity in England which has placed the innovating clergy in the situation of having to negotiate about conditions of peace; and the same result is likely to follow the same unwarranted procedure in the remotest corners of Her Majesty's possessions. We cut an article out of a Devonshire paper, some months ago, but laid it aside because we did not feel disposed to extend our remarks on the unhappy result of the one-sided attempts at uniformity, lately made in the mother-country. We now lay it before our readers:

"At a meeting of some of the parishioners, held by adjournment on Monday the 20th January, F. Drane, Esq., in the chair, for the purpose of receiving the report of a deputation appointed to wait on the Rev. Mr. Coleridge, the vicar of the parish, with a view to obtain the restoration of those forms of Divine Worship which prevailed in the parish church, previous to the introduction of several changes at Christmas, 1842; the deputation having reported the result of their interview with Mr. Coleridge, the chairman laid before the meeting, a communication which he had that morning received from the rev. gentleman, as follows:—"I would have visited things to have remained where they are for the present, till a final settlement could have been come to, by lawful authority, respecting the points at issue between us, but since this may not be, in the earnest desire of peace with my parishioners, a peace, which once broken will be hardly repaired, I offer them in the morning service of the church, 1st.—That the time for the departure of the non-communicants, shall be after the sermon, instead of after the offertory. 2nd.—That I will close my sermon with 'the Grace of our Lord, &c.,' which is usually given in churches where there is a communion. 3rd.—That if it were thought desirable, I would use an abridged form of the bidding prayer, with the Lord's prayer, before the sermon. In the afternoon I will preach in the gown, and I trust that my doing so will show, that the use of the surplice in the morning, is not done as a mark or symbol of a party to which I do not belong, but in conformity to what I believe to be the law of the church." Upon which it was resolved, that this meeting, in the anxious desire to preserve peace and unity in the parish, agree to receive the propositions made by Mr. Coleridge in the spirit in which they are offered, pending the final legal settlement of the questions at issue, and that with respect to the use of the surplice during the morning sermon, though in no way approving of the practice, yet they are satisfied with the assurance given by Mr. Coleridge to Mr. Drane that he will take an opportunity of explaining to the congregation from the pulpit, that he does not so wear it, as a symbol of a party

to which he does not belong; but simply in conformity with what he conscientiously believes to be the law of the church. Resolved.—that Mr. Drane be requested to present a copy of this resolution to Mr. Coleridge. It was further resolved, with the kind assent of the Rev. G. M. Coleridge to this resolution, to circulate copies of the foregoing minutes throughout the parish, for the correct information of the parishioners."

If we did not assure our readers that the scene lies in a regularly constituted English parish, they might be led to suppose that this extract describes the proceedings of a body of Trustees to some dissenting meeting-house, taking their minister to task, and bringing him to terms lest they turn him out and take in another more tractable. "I offer," says the innovating Mr. Coleridge, 1st, that one thing shall be done, 2nd, that I will do another thing; and that if it were desirable (according to the mind of the Laity) I would do a 3rd thing;—then the meeting "agree" to receive their minister's propositions, and they circulate the terms of agreement throughout the parish, to allay the "angry, irritable spirit" as Archdeacon Samuel Wilberforce calls it (see Berean, No. 41) which had arisen among the laity. Much has been said about Low Church Clergymen (our readers know that we do not adopt the appellation, nor do we its opposite) and their coming down from the high ground which the clerical order ought to occupy; but where did ever Low Churchmen descend lower than the Clergyman did in the transaction just now related?

We have called the attempts at uniformity lately made in the mother-country "one-sided." There were two practices (taking the most prominent bone of contention) between which the choice lay: wearing the black gown in preaching, which was the old accustomed usage—wearing the surplice, which was the innovation and was generally looked upon as a badge of party. The proposed mode of making matters uniform was, the adoption of the surplice by all the Clergy in preaching. Now this we call one-sided: it gave the victory to that portion of the Clergy who had introduced preaching in the surplice. It was said, with profound simplicity, that this would remove all appearance of party—so it might be said that all appearance of party adverse to British connection would be removed in Ireland, if it were enjoined upon every one to wear the rebel-buttock. We would deal in exceeding tenderness with every one that sincerely pleads conscience as requiring his adherence to a certain practice. But what kind of conscience is that which cannot rest till it imports from Rome some table from which to take bread and wine, and put them upon the Communion-table then when the rubric requires it, while it feels quite happy in calling that an Altar which the rubric uniformly calls a Communion-table? In other words, what kind of Church-principle is that which strains at every deviation from obsolete rubrical requirement, while it swallows the most perilous departure from the protests contained in the Church Articles?

We think the temper, into which the Laity have been irritated, perilous in the extreme; and we look anxiously for the safety-valve by which undue heat, when it arises, may be legitimately drawn off. The Vestry of St. George's, Basseterre, thought they were the legitimate channel through which the Laity could seek redress of grievances—whether fancied or real, that is to be found out in the constitutional course. Their competency is denied. Then a public meeting is resorted to—a most un-ecclesiastical kind of proceeding: yet they have had no other pointed out to them. At Ware, in England, the Laity established public worship separate from that of the Church to which they professed allegiance; and so by the implied threat and manifest risk of final defection they applied a resistance, successful in the end, to the changes which were distasteful to them. No man can consider this a sound state of things; yet acquiescence in the romanizing innovations would not be safe any more than this irregular resistance. Appeals to Bishops are but ineffectual when the Clergy are of such a temper as to deny every concession to which they are not compellable by law. We are then afresh led to wish that the Church might recover legislative power in such a way as to remove from the Laity all temptation to make their influence bear upon Church-measures by popular demonstration; and that such legislative power were exercised in a revision of the rubric and restoration of uniformity in public worship.

As we have been led into these remarks through accounts of an unfavourable state of things in the West India island of St. Christopher, we will do ourselves the great pleasure of mentioning that, in the papers before us, honourable mention is made of the extensive Diocese of Jamaica, with its nearly a hundred Clergymen, as being unvisited by those novelties which have disturbed the peace of other portions of the Church. Jamaica has laboured under the disadvantage of a change in its supervision—the succession of Bishop Spencer, after the death of the late Dr. Lipscombe. We question not, but the influence of the present Diocesan is favourable to the cause of order and simple adherence to the doctrines and usages of a reformed Church; but we will venture to surmise that the labours of the Church Missionary Society in the island of Jamaica have not been without great influence towards that end. The infusion of a body—though small—of right-minded Clergymen, selected by that Society's clerical supporters throughout the mother-country, tried under the influence of its College at Islington, and approved by its simple-hearted Committee may have given a foothold to the genuine principles of our reformed Church, in that Diocese, which gives to the present Bishop powerful aid in encouraging that peaceful and steady prosecution of labours for the advancement of pure and undefiled religion in which we readily believe it is His Lordship's desire to see his Clergy earnestly and undividedly engaged. We wonder, not at Bishop Spencer's earnestness in calling upon that Society to continue and to extend their labours in the Diocese under his supervision.

(CIRCULAR.)

CLARE HALL, ANTIGUA, March 28th, 1844.
Rev. and Dear Brethren,—There are at this time, some points in respect to the celebration of Divine Services, and the discharge of your ministerial duties, to which I deem it necessary to call your attention. You have been long

aware, from my frequent personal communications with you, how anxious I have been, in the return to a stricter conformity with those Rubrics which have in a measure fallen into disusage, that the feelings of your Parishioners, formed under practices of long continuance, should not be abruptly assailed, and that even their prejudices should be rather softened than harshly combated. On this general subject, I cannot more effectually carry out my views, than by bringing under your consideration, a passage of a late letter to the Clergy and laity of his Province, by the Lord Archbishop. His Grace thus expresses himself,—"In Churches where alterations have been introduced with general acquiescence, let things remain as they are; in those, which retain the less accurate usage, let no risk of division be incurred by any attempt at change, till some final arrangements can be made with the sanction of the proper authorities."

I now pass on to other matters, wherein I feel myself justified in conveying more specific instructions. I advert first, to the use of Credence Tables. As I find on a full consideration of the matter, that they are not required or sanctioned by any Law, Canon, or Constitution of our Church, I have to beg that in every case in which they have been introduced, they be forthwith discontinued, and some seemly mode adopted for placing on the Table, at the proper time, the Bread and Wine, when there is to be a communion.

I next call your attention to the proceeding to the Sermon without the intervention of a prayer. I am fully aware that a prayer before Sermon is not prescribed by the letter of the Rubric, but it may be presumed with the colour of reason, that the prayer before Sermon, followed by the Lord's prayer, is as important an adjunct to the Sermon, as the text, for while the one is eminently calculated to keep the preacher exclusively to some doctrine or precept of inspiration, the other is graciously fitted to bring down God's blessing on preaching and hearing the Word. But though on this point the Rubric is in letter silent, the 55th Canon speaks very expressly. To this Canon therefore I refer you, and in respect to the Morning Sermon, have to enjoin your compliance. When a Sermon is preached after the Evening Prayer, which I am glad to know is usual in this Diocese, I have to recommend the use of a collect, and the Lord's prayer, before such Sermon, as has been urged by the Lord Bishop of Exeter, under the sanction as his Lordship states, of His Grace the Archbishop. On this subject, I cannot find, from any authority to which I have been able to have access, that the prayer before Sermon has ever been discontinued, till lately, in a few instances, since the renovation of our Church.

I lastly call your attention to the subject of the marriage of parties, who have entered into cohabitation-contract, before religious teachers of dissenting bodies, before the passing any separatists' marriage Act, within the Colony. Here I need only to recall your attention to my official letter of September the 8th, 1843, and I beg your faithful compliance with it, unless in cases where the law would compel you to take a different course. I enclose a copy of the letter in question.

I am, Rev. and dear Brethren,
Your faithful serv't & Brother,
DANIEL GATEWARD ANTIGUA.

The official letter referred to in the last paragraph of the above Circular contains the following as the Bishop's advice with regard to the solemnization of marriage in cases where the joining together of the parties was not binding according to the formerly existing law:

"The course pursued by the Clergy of this Island is as follows—to be ready to solemnize Marriage between parties who have been 'joined' by religious teachers—other than the Ministers of the Church—but not to unite together one of such parties to another, than the individual with whom the first contract was made, till the special case is submitted to the assembled Clergy, at their quarterly meeting, when rigid inquiry is made into the ground of separation, and then to decline attending to the application, unless it can be most clearly shown that one of the parties has vitiated the contract, by living in sinful separation and cohabitation; so that the injured party, even though a legal Marriage had existed, might in due course of law have obtained a divorce; and then, and not until then, do the Clergy, availing themselves of the absence of a legal bond, consent to proceed, judging that under such circumstances, the morals of the community would be better consulted by proceeding to solemnization of legal Marriage, than by declining."

THE WAY TO EXTEND THE CHURCH.—The Bishop of Georgia thus neatly and justly indicates the mode by which the extension of the Church is best promoted, and its prosperity and usefulness most certainly advanced: "Wherever we see our Church rapidly expanding herself, it is in Dioceses where long and arduous missionary duty has been previously performed. The Church must be exhibited before it can be appreciated; must be known, before it can be understood; must prove itself to be Scriptural and Evangelical, before it will be embraced, and all these things require time, piety, prudence, long-suffering on the part of the Clergy. Nothing is to be gained by violent controversy, or angry abuse of others. 'In quietness and confidence, is our strength.' Let the Church be seen in her beauty and scriptural holiness, and she will need no apologists and no champions. The Lord will be her Saviour and her Redeemer, and under His guidance 'a little one shall become a thousand and a small one a strong nation.'"—*Profr. Churchman.*

ABSTRACT OF THE COMMON SCHOOL ACT FOR LOWER CANADA.

I. Preamble.
II. Each Parish, Township, or Place, immediately before the passing of this Act entitled to elect or to participate in the election of a District Councillor, shall be held to be a Parish or Township for the purposes of this Act; so also each Parish, Township, or Village which shall hereafter be recognised as such.
III. & XI. In case of failure to elect School Officers, including Commissioners, to carry this Act into effect, they shall be appointed by the Governor at the instance of the Superintendent of Schools, says Section III: but Section XI, says that School Commissioners, and also a

Secretary-Treasurer, in case of such failure, shall be appointed by the Superintendent of Schools *ex officio*, upon an order from the Governor.

IV. IX. X. XII. Forthwith after the passing of this Act, a general meeting to be held for the election of School Commissioners;—thereafter the general annual meeting for such election shall be held on the first Monday in July in each year;—if it has not been held, then within 15 days after the time when it ought to have been, the School Commissioners, for the last year, the School Visitors, the acting Churchwardens, Elder, Class Leader or Trustee of the several religious denominations, and the Clergyman or Minister of the most numerous congregation may meet and submit to the Superintendent of Schools the names of the proper number of persons as School Commissioners, for the approval of the Superintendent of Schools. The Commissioners in office at the passing of this Act, shall continue to act until they be replaced by others.

V. VI. VIII. XIII. XIV. The number of Commissioners to be as many as there are School Districts in the Township or Parish, but to be not less than 5, nor more than 9; and in Parishes or Townships where no School Districts have been established, 5 Commissioners to be elected.—One-third of the number to go out of office every year; not to be re-elected during 4 years next, unless by their own consent. No Commissioner to be a Teacher in his District. The Chairman to report to the Superintendent within 8 days after the election. Vacancies to be filled up by the electors at meetings specially called.

XV. XVI. Commissioners to elect a Chairman and a Secretary-Treasurer who is to give security: in Townships or Parishes where two-thirds of the population shall belong to one religious persuasion, the Curé or residing Minister of that persuasion shall be *ex-officio* one of the Commissioners.—Questions to be decided by plurality of votes; Chairman not entitled to vote except in cases of equality of votes, then to give casting vote.

XVII. to XX. Commissioners to form and alter School Districts, none of them, except one in each Township, to have less than 20 children between the ages of 5 and 16 years;—take possession of lands and school-houses acquired or erected by or given to the School Trustees or Commissioners or the Royal Institution—to hold property and apply the same, keep it in order, build school-houses; the rate to be levied for building a Model-School not to exceed £150, and for building a common School £75,—to engage and remove School-Masters and Mistresses—keep accounts and registers, and report to Superintendent yearly before the 1st of July—to levy by assessment and rate or by voluntary subscriptions in each Parish or Township a sum equal to that allowed for the same out of the Common-School Fund—to allow if they think proper, a sum not exceeding £20 yearly, for the support of a Model School at the most thickly settled place, over and above the share which comes to such school; the remainder to be distributed in equal shares among the School Districts, reckoning the Model School as one,—to fix monthly fees for children attending schools, not exceeding 1s. 3d. per month; may ask higher fees in the Model School; also may exempt indigent persons from paying such fees. Defaulters in paying school-rate to be prosecuted.

XXI. XXII. XXIV. refer to money unexpended and property to be held by Commissioners.
We find no Section XXIII. in the Act.
XXV. provides, That the *Fabrique* of any Parish, and the School Commissioners thereof, may by mutual agreement in due form made, unite for one or more years the *Fabrique* Schools in operation, with the Schools to be kept under this Act; and any *Fabrique* contributing not less than £12 10s. for the year, towards the support of any School under the management of School Commissioners, shall thereby acquire a right to the Curé and Churchwarden in office to be Commissioners, if they were not so before; but no *Fabrique* shall so unite its School to those managed by Commissioners of another faith, except under an express and formal agreement with the School Commissioners of such other faith.
XXVI. XXVIII. refer to dissentient Schools; we shall copy these at length, with remarks upon them, in our next number.
XXVII. To entitle a School to its share of the Common School Fund, it must have been under the management of the Commissioners, must have been in operation during at least 8 calendar months of the year, and been attended by at least 15 children—returns certified, and assessment levied as previously provided.
XXIX. A Girls' School may be established besides that for boys.

XXX. XXXIII. The Secretary-Treasurer is to have 2½ per cent on all moneys by him received—the Superintendent of Schools £500 salary per annum, besides £175. for a Clerk and office expenses.
XXXI. XXXII. Schools to be visited at least once every year by the Visitors, who are to be: 1st the resident Clergymen, of whatever denomination; 2nd the Judges; 3rd the Members of the Legislature; 4th the Justices of the Peace; 5th the Mayor or Warden; 6th the Colonels, Lt. Colonels, Majors, and Senior Captain of Militia; the Superintendent to be Visitor General. No Priest, Minister, or Ecclesiastic shall be entitled to visit any School belonging to any inhabitants not of his own persuasion, except with the consent of the Commissioners or Trustees of such School.
XXXIV. details the duties of the Superintendent; with regard to the management of Schools, his functions are confined to "recommendations and advices." He has to prepare and distribute the necessary forms, to examine and control the accounts, and to report to the Legislature annually.
XXXV. to XXXVIII. refer to the manner of assessment for the purposes of the Act.
XXXIX. to XLIV. The cities of Quebec and Montreal shall be respectively considered as one Parish each; not necessary to divide them into Districts; each School to be considered as a District, may be attended by children from any part of the District. The Corporation shall appoint 12 School Commissioners, 6 of them R. Catholic, 6 Protestant; to form two distinct Corporations, the one for the R. Catholics, and the other for the Protestants; one half of each to be renewed annually. No