

would steer the Church through all existing controversies" were good-humouredly excused on the ground that they had "all the confidence of inexperience aided by lack of imagination." More pointed, perhaps, was his remark on the "The Lord was not in the fire:"—

"Religious passion carried to the highest point of enthusiasm is a great agency in human life; but religious passion may easily be too inconsiderate, too truculent, too entirely wanting in tenderness and in charity, to be in any sense divine. Christendom has also been ablaze again and again with fires; and these fires are not extinct in our own day and country, of which it may certainly be said that the Lord is not in them."

That last selection we commend to the consideration of all who would try to keep the Church in order by using drastic methods.

THE CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE LAW DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.

We call the attention of our readers to the following report of an influential meeting held in connection with the Provincial Synod of the Church in Canada. We are convinced that there is wide spread ignorance in the country concerning the principles of Christian Marriage, and we confidently anticipate that the Christian Marriage Law Defence Association which has been inaugurated in Montreal will succeed in educating our people in this important matter. The fee for membership has wisely, we think, been put very low in order that all the adult members of the Church may be able to enrol themselves as members of the Association, and take a practical interest in its working. The recent unhappy legislation at Ottawa renders some such action absolutely necessary. We cannot sit still with folded hands when the interests at stake are no less than the universal undoubted law of the Church, and the principles which lie at the foundation of family life.

We would earnestly recommend the clergy and our readers generally to send their names and subscriptions at once to L. H. Davidson, D. C. L., 194 St. James' Street, Montreal.

THE MARRIAGE LAW.

A meeting was held yesterday in St. George's school room for the purpose of considering the best means of upholding the principles of the Christian Marriage Law. After the Rev. Professor Roe had been elected to the chair, the following resolutions were passed unanimously:—

1. Proposed by Rev. J. D. H. Browne, seconded by Rev. R. C. Caswall,—That a Christian Marriage Law Defence Association for the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada be formed to uphold the law of the Church as stated in Canon XVI of the Provincial Synod.

2. Proposed by Judge Wilkinson, seconded by Rev. G. G. Roberts,—that an Executive Committee be now formed for carrying out the above object.

In accordance with the above resolution the following Executive Committee was formed:—The Rev. Professor Roe, the Rev. Canon Davidson, the Rev. Canon Dart, the Rev. J. W. Burke, the Rev. A. C. Nesbitt, the Rev. T. E. Dowling, the Rev. John Foster, the Ven. Archdeacon Lauder, the Ven. Archdeacon Jones, the Ven. Archdeacon Dixon, the Rev. J. D. H. Browne, E. J. Hodgson, Esq., Q. C., R. T. Walkem, Esq., Q. C., L. H. Davidson, Esq., Sutherland Macklem, Esq., the Rev. A. Broughall, the Hon. Judge Wilkinson, the Rev. J. B. Hinks, the Rev. J. A. Kaulbach, the Rev. D. C. Moore, Rev. R. F. Murray, Rev. T. M. Davenport, Rev. G. G. Roberts.

Mr. L. H. Davidson consented to act as Hon.

Secretary and Treasurer. To defray the necessary working expenses there is a fee for membership of 25 cents per annum. It is understood that one of the modes of working of the Association will be the distribution of literature bearing upon the subject.

The Most Rev. the Metropolitan of the Province of Canada is the patron of the Association.

THE METROPOLITAN'S CHARGE.

PROVINCIAL SYNOD, 1883.

Right Reverend, Reverend and Dear Brethren, and Dear Brethren of the Laity:

As three years have passed quickly away since we last met in Synod, and each year calls more loudly upon us to "work while it is day," and that day short, so uncertain, full of terrible responsibility, you will pardon me, I trust, for setting before you this urgent question: What is to be the future of the ecclesiastical Province of the Canadian Church? I call it the Canadian Church, not for one moment forgetting that dear Church of England, in whose sheltering arms the earliest years of many of us were spent, but chiefly to call to your remembrance that no love for the old country, no union and communion with the Church of England in the Catholic faith can absolve us from a sacred and solemn trust for the good of Canada, for which we must give account when our privileges, our duties and our works shall be weighed in the balances of God's merciful but even-handed justice.

In years long past, the first consideration seemed to be with most minds, what will England do for us? Now we have to face the just as serious question, what are we going to do for Canada? Here is our native land or our adopted country. Here will multitudes of our children settle, and become good or bad members of a great community. Whilst then we follow the footsteps of our fathers in honoring the throne, shall we not do our best to secure inviolate the privileges and blessings of the Church to our descendants? Shall we tamely see a wealthy congregationalism usurping the noble heritage of the Catholic Church, while multitudes who were once with us find no place in our churches, no interest in our hearts, and nursed by no tender mother's care within our fold, quietly, and to us imperceptibly, slip away from us?

For those who leave us because they were never told why they should remain with us, often become our bitterest foes, and learn to curse the very name of the mother who bare them but continually forgot them.

You see at once that I speak not of our legal but of our spiritual position. Highly as we must esteem the might and majesty of law, the bulwark of our liberty, proceeding out of the throne of God most High, it is a higher honor to be trustees of the Church of Christ. "This one institution," says the Bishop of Durham, "is older than the English monarchy, than the English nation, the English law, the English literature. It is the same now in its essential character as it ever will be to the end of time. It is subject to vicissitudes, many and various; it has its triumphs and its defeats; it has its seasons of error, sloth and degradation, as well as its seasons of enterprise, spirituality and zeal; for it is administered by human agents. But throughout there has been a sustaining power not of earth; a life which no antagonism of foe, and no recklessness of friend can extinguish, ever reviving, ever reasserting itself, ever breaking out in fresh developments." How earnestly should we strive that, as far as in us lies, not even a crumb of a heritage so precious should be lost! Our position in Canada to-day is a trying one. We live in the midst of a very whirlpool of diversities of belief, of bodies all vehemently asserting their position in the Church of Christ, one large and important section claiming to be the only representatives of the Catholic Church on earth, others denying this claim, but divided into various sects and parties, yet full of energy, proving the strength of their convictions by the fire of their zeal, honorably desirous to raise and maintain their position by institutions of learning and by all the other appliances to which modern enterprise and ingenuity use to increase its numbers and make itself a power felt and recognized in the body politic. We should do ill to overlook, we should do worse if we attempt to despise such efforts of Christian sentiment and earnestness. Even when we deem it misdirected it is important for us to remember the peculiarity of our position. In some points we closely touch our neighbours, even whilst we seem most to differ from them. In others, whilst we seem to agree, we are forced to admit essential differences. For example, we entirely agree with our Roman Catholic brethren in all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity as set forth in the three great creeds, and asserted by the four first. (Bishop Jewel says, the six first) General Councils; we have no difference with them as to infant baptism, or the primitive origin of liturgies; many of our collects unaltered, or only slightly altered, are taken from sources which they honor alike with ourselves; had they been content to add no new articles of faith, and above all not to invent a new and impassable wall of partition between us, we might have dwelt in unity in one house; but as long as their additions to the primitive faith remain, union is impossible. And yet when any of them are disposed by conviction to join us, we do not make the way straighter than it is already. We neither re-ordain their priests nor re-confirm their catechumens, and we can only call on such to

renounce those errors which no primitive council enjoined and no primitive father taught. Thus we can say that union is at present impracticable, but not absolutely and forever impossible; impracticable while they continue in their comparatively new career, but not impossible if they would listen to the words of Jeremiah:—"Stand ye in the ways and ask for the old paths, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Turning to the other side, we might suppose that those who believe in the fundamentals of the Christian faith, and have fellow feeling for Roman doctrine, would have little to find fault with in the Church of England. But here we are met by very considerable differences, both in doctrine and discipline. The system taught in the Westminster confession varies widely from our seventeenth Article, which is thought by some to approach more nearly to Calvinistic doctrine than any other part of our prayer books. And what the Church unequivocally asserts, that "it is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostle's time there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church, bishops, priests and deacons," our neighbors peremptorily deny holding an apostolic succession of presbyters, but rejecting the rule and government of them by bishops. Yet so important a part of discipline do we deem this to be, that whenever any of them desire to join our ministry, we re-ordain them, which we do not to Roman Catholics; the exceptions of this discipline of ours (if any) being so extremely few and so clearly done out of policy, rather than of church discipline, in times of extraordinary confusion, that the exception proves the rule.

A still greater hindrance to union is found in a large and important body of Christians, who not only neglect, but absolutely deny baptism to infants, which, according to our service, the words of our Lord manifestly enjoin, and which the customs of the church universally maintained and practised for fifteen hundred years. And we are the more encouraged in our own view by the fact that a very large proportion of those who are called by the name Baptists are never baptized at all, and die without baptism.

There is again another body which would appear, if we only consulted the writings of their great founder, to approach us very nearly, and to be almost members of the Church of England. What could apparently be more decisive on this point than his repeated declarations, up to the day of his death that he would live and die in the communion of the Church of England, and would neither separate himself nor allow any of his preachers to be separated from it. Other counsels however, prevailed after his death, and we are fully justified, under present circumstances, in considering them as a Presbyterian body, making frequent use of such parts of our Church services as appear to them to be edifying. But the discipline of the Church of England applies the same strict rule to them as well as to others, and re-ordains them before they can be allowed to take part in our ministry; and to so great an extent has this rule been acted on in our sister church in the United States that it has been stated (as far as I know—without contradiction) that a very large part—it is said nearly two-thirds—of the bishops and priests of the Episcopal Church in the United States have joined it from a conviction that their orders were invalid, and their position in consequence untenable.

In this enumeration of undeniable facts (so I deem them) you will agree with me, I hope, that I have cast no reflection on the personal piety of a single member of these vast communions. God forbid that I should presume to undervalue true piety wherever it is to be found, or refuse to recognize thankfully the gracious gifts of the Holy Spirit of God. Amidst the melancholy spectacle of a disunited Christendom it is good never to forget this truth, that Elijah's ministry was sent to the ten revolted tribes and that God had seven thousand chosen ones where his prophet knew not one. Why, then, have I presumed to lay these facts before you? Simply for this reason, that if we ignore them we should do scant justice to the position which we occupy, and shall injure rather than advance the future prospects of our Church in this Ecclesiastical Province. The first inference I venture to draw from these facts is, that it is impracticable and unwise to attempt to force unions with any of the religious bodies around us, or to surrender any of the religious truths committed to our trust which serve as a connecting link with the primitive ages of the Church. Many such attempts have been made by persons of great eminence in their day, but they have hitherto proved failures, and it is obvious that any attempt at union which would weaken our title to be a true branch of the old Church of England would not only tend to shake the conviction of members within our own body of our lawful succession, but would render our Church less attractive to those outside her pale, who from time to time entertain grave doubts of the solidity of their own position in the body to which they at present belong.

Some, it is true, in every country since the Reformation, have sought refuge in the Church of Rome, from a despairing feeling on the question of union, or from a hope that where infallible teaching was promised all painful doubts in their minds must be for ever set at rest. But, as history plainly teaches us that even infallibles do not always agree, we come to the conclusion that it is foolish to sacrifice our undoubted privileges and blessings and begin the Christian life again as if we had been heathens, it is more than foolish—it is absolutely sinful. One such an illustrious name is indeed in every man's thoughts, but as an example to deter, rather than to induce us to follow it. For, as has been well observed by an old and long tried friend, familiar with the whole course of life of that eminent man who left us, "the only great work that he accomplished was the revival of the Church of England. His work in the Church of Rome has