

The Church Times.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, MAY 19, 1855.

REASONABLE OBSERVATIONS.

THE Spring of this year is generally acknowledged to be a backward one. We have arrived at the middle of May, and the bud is barely formed on the tree, the tender plant is scarcely above the ground, and the weather, a compound of cold and rain, reminds one more of the close of the autumn than of a more genial season, and is not calculated to cheer the labour of the husbandman. There may be nothing in all this to alarm us for the prospects of the harvest; a few days of grateful warmth would reanimate and invigorate the earth and bring vegetation as far forward as in general at this time of the year: but it gives cause for anxiety when it is coupled with the knowledge that upon the favorable result of the next harvest, in all grain-producing countries, depends the proper sustenance of the people. If this truth were seriously considered, it ought to lead to some action corresponding to its grave importance, and it is to this subject that we would turn the reader's attention, in the absence of all preparation to meet such an alarming crisis. Wheat flour, the great staple of man's existence, was so scarce in this City a few weeks bygone, that it was with difficulty a daily supply of bread could be procured for its people; and although a few arrivals have in some degree amended this state of things, it is still held at a famine price, as is also every article of imported food. If then, these apprehensions of general scarcity are well founded, all minor matters sink into insignificance, when compared with the duty to endeavor to avert from us the evil; and it is not a moment too early to think and to act with reference to the possible contingency. If it should prevail in other countries, from the products of which in ordinary or plentiful seasons, we draw the surplus, these products will then be diverted from us and applied to their own use; or if as is probable, the state of affairs in Europe should cause a great demand, the price of these commodities as we may judge from our present circumstances, would be so much increased as to make our condition one of extreme misery. The proper remedy will be to depend more upon ourselves than has been the accustomed practice. Cultivation in this Province has been hitherto limited by the demand for its products; let then our Farmers plant and sow as though that demand would be treble or fourfold, and we venture to predict for them a ready disposal of all they can produce, at remunerating prices. They need not hesitate to employ all their energies and all their resources for this object. Grave complications of the European question warrant the belief that the war will long continue, nay we should not be surprised that an occasion may be found by our neighbours to satiate their ardent longings for the possession of Cuba, when it is probable we should soon find ourselves in the position of an actual belligerent. The Supreme Ruler of the Universe, has seen fit to visit the children of men with his displeasure, and the whole world lying in wickedness, feels more or less the effects of Divine wrath. We have been as yet most mercifully spared, as well from pestilence as from want. While therefore we acknowledge the righteousness of the punishment, and feel grateful for the mercy, it will become us if we cannot prevent, to leave no human means untried to make bearable a time of trouble, of which we have had much preparatory warning. If we do what we are able, and in mercy it may prove us, even then we shall not have laboured in vain, but will be in a condition to relieve the suffering in other countries, which may have arisen from the absence of, or the inability to use precautionary means to avert the calamity.

THE Day of Fast and Humiliation was religiously observed by a large portion of this community. The various places of public worship were open for Divine Service in some part of the day, and were well attended. Places of business were almost wholly closed, and work of all kinds, with but slight exception, was suspended. This decent outward observance was, however, peculiar to the City alone, and we understand the suburbs presented a scene of gaiety but little in accordance with the solemnity. We may hope, that the sincerity which prevailed, may be accepted as an act of contrition for the sins which have so manifestly provoked the Divine displeasure.

WE understand that the Memorial or Remonstrance sent by the Parish of St. George, to the Queen, against the constitution of Synods, has been returned in consequence of informality in the mode of forwarding it.

WE augur all the better of Church Synods from the opposition that is made to them, in which it can easily be seen that there is vastly more prejudice and fear of something dreadful, not predicated upon any circumstances connected with their constitution, than sound logical conclusions derived therefrom. In Melbourne, Australia, the chief opposition to them, is somewhat singular, proceeds from the Roman Catholic Bishop. Our readers will gather from what we publish below, the principal grounds of that opposition, and it is amusing to observe how nicely they are done away by the debate in the Canadian Parliament, which we are now publishing, and which shows, that the tendency of Synodical action is rather to sever the connection between Church and State than to establish it—rather to secure an independent Church than to make a dominant one.

Dr. Gould, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Melbourne, protests against the royal assent being given to the act passed in Victoria, allowing the Church of England to hold Synods in that colony. He has also taken steps to have the subject brought under the notice of the House of Commons [vide Mr. Duffy's question on Friday]. Dr. Gould objects to the bill on the following grounds:—

"First—Because the bill is at direct variance with the principles of religious freedom and equality which, with the royal sanction, prevail here, and there is every reason to apprehend that, should it become law, this young and flourishing colony would soon be agitated by the usual jealousies and angry feelings attendant on the establishment of a State Church, or even the semblance of one, such as the projectors and promoters of this bill seem to desire.

"Secondly—Because it is inexpedient and unnecessary, for the Church of England in Victoria is not fettered any more than other religious bodies in the colony; but, on the contrary, can, if she will, manage her affairs with as much freedom as they; and such being the case, this bill must necessarily be regarded as a grievance, of which all have fair and just cause to complain.

"Thirdly—Because even now the intelligence of the colony is awakened to its future privileges and benefits prejudicial to the rights of other religious bodies, which this bill seems to initiate for the Church of England here. I particularly direct attention to the seventeenth clause, which sanctions everything, by implication, which a dominant Church requires, such as the erection by law of parishes, &c.

WE are somewhat surprised to observe in an extract from the New York Churchman, contained in the Church Times of the 5th inst., the following, certainly not very Protestant remarks on attempts to alter or modify the Prayer Book.

"The report of the proceedings of Convocation in England, furnishes a really striking proof of the firm resolve of the more influential portion of the Bishops and Clergy of the Church to resist the attempt to deprive the Prayer Book of the assertion of these great Catholic verities, which are the evidences of its divine character, as they are of the principles of its Apostolic constitution."

If the more influential portion of the English Bishops and Clergy hold opinions in regard to the Book of Common Prayer of that Church, which tend to place it as we think the language of the above extract does, upon an equality with the oracles of Divine Truth, we have great fear that their future progress will not be in the right direction. Of one thing we feel assured, that such progress can no more be accompanied with the Divine blessing, than can the dogma of the "Immaculate conception" just announced with such impious formality at Rome. We bless God however that there are sound hearts and wise heads in the Church of England, with all its imperfections in our eyes, to whom the Truth of God is paramount to all other considerations, and who in the much needed revision of the Book of Common Prayer, would earnestly labour, and we trust succeed, in retaining only those excellent portions of it which are in strict accordance with the Canon of Scripture. A pious minister of that Church, in England, but who seems warmly and zealously attached to the Liturgy, writing on the present question of its revision observed—"we put the sacred oracles of faith, the written word of God upon the throne of supremacy; and we count it impiety and blasphemy even for one moment to compare the authority of our Book of Common Prayer with that of the inspired word of God."—*Christian Messenger*.

THE Editor of the Baptist *Christian Messenger*, has upon several occasions of late, gone out of his way to take exception to the Book of Common Prayer. This may be in accordance with Anabaptist tactics, although he must be aware that the opinions of a Baptist upon what concerns the Church, will carry no weight, except as unhappy illustrations of the unchristian asperity of religious division. But we fear that he reasons against his convictions. All his antecedents must teach him, that however highly English Churchmen value the Book of Common Prayer, they do hold the "Truth of God" as contained in the authorized translation of the Bible, to be paramount to all other considerations; and there is not any thing in the quotation he makes, (viewed

apart from a sectarian spirit of perversion) that can be said to controvert that opinion; and if there had been, we would not have published it willingly. Churchmen have never promised to place the Prayer Book upon an equality with the "oracles of Divine Truth," nor is it necessary they should do so, to assert for it a divine character, and it is evidently upon its being their reflex alone, that its claim to this character is assumed. As the work of holy men, drawn from the oracles of inspiration, it has stood the test of ages. It is sufficient for Churchmen that being based upon the Bible, and proved thereby from beginning to end, its superstructure cannot be assailed without involving the discomfiture of its enemies, or publishing their shame. Many vagaries have taken place in our time, both civil and ecclesiastical, (and when the correcting hands of Baptists have been tried upon the Volume of inspiration itself, we perhaps ought to allow them a latitude of expression on a book that does not belong to them,) but we do not expect that our Baptist contemporary will see the day when the doctrines of the Prayer Book will be changed to suit sectarian ideas of what may be divine truth, if what it now teaches be in opposition thereto. The *Christian Messenger* has chosen a strange time to agitate divisional feeling between Baptists and Churchmen; and would be much better employed in bringing them together upon any common ground of a religious or secular nature, which it is possible for them to occupy. With reference to the alterations sought to be made in the Book of Common Prayer, there is by no means a general feeling with reference to their propriety under any circumstances; but the Baptist Editor may rest assured that whenever any thing of the kind may take place, it will not be its doctrinal significance that will be impugned, although an attempt may be made to improve the adaptation of its services to the altered necessities of the people.

IT is stated that the General Mining Association have paid over to the Province the amount demanded in the Assembly, as the sum due for Royalty on slack coal. A question on the justice and propriety of which diverse opinions were entertained is thus set at rest.

NOMINATION DAY.—On Tuesday morning a little after 10 o'clock, A.M., the Sheriff of Halifax opened his Court at the City Court House, for the nomination of Candidates. John Esson, Esq., was nominated by A. McKinlay, Esq., seconded by Thos. King, Esq., as a Candidate for the County. W. Annand, Esq., was nominated by Andrew Smith, Esq., seconded by P. Power, Esq. Wm. Evans, Esq., was then nominated by Mr. John English, as a County Candidate, seconded by Mr. Henry Mignowitz. Benjamin Wier, Esq., was next nominated by Peter Morrissey, Esq., seconded by Mr. George Paw, as a Candidate for the Township. Henry Pryor, Esq., was then nominated by B. Salter, Esq., and seconded by Mr. John McCulloch. Mr. John Rubin was then nominated by Conrad West, Esq., and seconded by Francis Munroe, Esq. There are therefore three Candidates for the County—Esson, Annand, and Evans—and three for the Town—Wier, To'm, and Pryor. The Elections came off on Tuesday next, the 22d inst., the poll opening at 8 o'clock, A.M., and closing at 5 P.M.

THE Pupils of the National School, attended by their excellent Superintendent, visited the beautiful grounds of Mr. A. Downs, on May morning. They were kindly received, and after gratifying their curiosity, they presented Mr. Downs with an address, which was handsomely acknowledged. We regret to learn that Mr. Downs is about leaving this Province.—*Journal*.

MR. James M. Bazalgette, son of Colonel Bazalgette, formerly of Halifax, has been gazetted Paymaster to the 42nd Foot, Royal Highlanders, at present serving in the Crimea.

THE Packet brig *Boston* brought 1 officer and 28 men for the Foreign Legion. They disembarked on Tuesday morning, and after eating a good breakfast at the Calcedonia Hotel, marched to Melville Island.—*Chronicle*.

A large ship laden with Railroad iron arrived here on Tuesday evening last. Nova Scotia is happily prosecuting her Railways with every prospect of a successful issue.—*Ibid*.

THE streets of this city are at present in a very much improved condition, immense quantities of dirt having recently been carted out to the peninsula—look to it Messrs. Superintendents—that is the only efficient way to cure the evil under which we have so long laboured.—*Ibid*.

IT is gratifying to observe that large quantities of Bagdad stuffs are daily arriving at this port, from the United States, and it is to be hoped that an influx of these necessaries will bring down the price of provisions generally. Potatoes command 6s. per bushel.—*Ibid*.

THE Canadian estimates for the year 1855, are—Anticipated revenue, \$4,266,000; anticipated expenditure, \$4,252,500.—*Ibid*.