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NOVA SCOTIA
Church Chronicle.

Vol. IV. HALIFAX, OCTOBER, 1868. No. 10

"Ad profectum sacrosanctæ matris ecclesiæ."

A WORD TO THE WISE.

THE late Dr. Mines in his well-known (and hitherto unanswered) "Presbyterian Clergyman looking for the Church," remarking on the wonderful interest exhibited by all other Christian denominations in all that goes on in the Church of England, is led by this fact to describe that Church as "the eye of the religious world." Hundreds of Romanists and Dissenters may every day abjure or change their religious belief, and no stir is made, no word is said, and it is only to the immediate spectators such facts—as a general rule—are known. But out of the many thousands of clergymen in our Church, let two or three go over to Romanism or Dissent, and at once great is the clamour of all who differ from us. We are, by all odds, the best-watched Church in the world. Touch the ball of the eye, and the whole body is disturbed: touch the Church of England, and a thrill agitates the whole body of Western Christendom. Any of the great lights in other persuasions may strike off from his usual orbit to-morrow, and no notice will be taken, but let one of our smallest luminaries in New Brunswick or Nova Zembla dart out of his proper system, and for a little time he shall be not only "the cyonasure of neighbouring eyes," but a star of the first magnitude to all outsiders.

Thus it is, that in pursuing the even tenor of our middle course between Rome and Geneva—between a cast-iron Superstition and ultimate Infidelity, we Churchmen—like Bunyan's Pilgrim passing through the dark valley—are continually assailed and sometimes discouraged by the clamours on each side, animadverting on our position. If, in the history of our Church, false prophets had invariably been stoned to death, great would have been the slaughter on each side of us,—our way would have been fenced by the bones of our detractors. Ever since the days of the Reformation, Rome has been prophesying our speedy engulfing in Infidelity, whilst Geneva has been as constantly predicting our absorption into the Papacy.

Considering the effect that this constant clamour produced among the many weak-kneed and half-hearted ones in our Church, it is truly marvellous that we managed to hold together at all. Whatever some of ourselves may think, outsiders know well that the Church of England possesses a distinctive system,—a system admitted by candid Romanists, like Newman, to be nearer the primitive model than their own. But the fear of surrounding clamour induces many of our teachers of religion to deprecate, ignore or deny the system, to endeavor to explain away the language of our formularies which teach it, and put their own private opinions in the place of that which, at the most solemn moment of their lives, they pledged themselves to obey. A flock whose pastor has thus