

last month, the intelligence had not reached that country of the change in the Ministry at home, and the views of the late Ministry upon the subject in question are known to have been declared in a manner which superseded the necessity of any endeavours to avert the now threatened confiscation of Church property.

In the situation to which, in the Providence of God, I have been called, the guardianship of the temporal interests of the Church within the limits of my jurisdiction must be considered as comprehended in the duties imposed upon me; and having been brought home by other objects of importance to the Church, I am in a manner put forward by circumstances as the representative in this country of Church interests in Canada at this crisis,—a crisis so pregnant with alarming consequences that I shall be pardoned, I trust, if I speak freely what I feel.

I have, however, in the successive attacks which have been made upon the Church property in Canada, been again and again engaged in the endeavour to repel those attacks; and I may venture, perhaps, to refer your Grace to the more recent of certain representations and remonstrances submitted by myself to Her Majesty's Government, which are among the documents contained in your office. I refer in part to a letter which I addressed to your Grace's predecessor, Sir J. Pakington, on the 22nd of October, 1852,\* in which the subject of the Clergy Reserves is incidentally touched upon, but more particularly to the copies which accompanied my letter, of two documents relating to that subject,—the first being the petition of the Bishop, clergy and laity of the diocese of Quebec, transmitted for presentation to the Imperial Parliament about the end of 1851,—and the other, a memorial which I addressed to his Excellency Lord Elgin, shortly before I had occasion to address myself to Sir John. Those two documents will be found, in my apprehension, to exhibit in a sufficiently condensed compass the main points and the real merits of the case.

It is not at any great length, therefore, that I purpose now to obtrude my observations upon your Grace; but, under your permission, I shall proceed to give forth, without disguise, the depth of my own convictions upon certain features of this solemn subject, in which the interests of our holy religion are, for all perpetuity, involved.

First, then, I find it impossible to regard the secularization of the Clergy Reserves as otherwise than stamped with a sacrilegious character. I do not see how it can be denied to be the alienation of a property given to God. And it is well worthy of remembrance that in Republican America the endowments of the Church of England have been held sacred; they were preserved to her, in one noted instance, through the very convulsions of that revolution which separated the Colonies from the Mother Country (and the circumstance was the more marked because the Church was exposed to particular odium on account of the characteristic loyalty of her members); they were restored to her in another instance, by the decision of the courts of the United States, after a long space of years, in which they had been taken possession of and held as townlands, in the absence, at the time, of any episcopalian claimants of the property. (I speak here of the Church of England as continued in the American Church.) These facts are not unobserved in Canada; nor is it possible to suppose that they are without their influence upon the affection of some of the colonists towards the British Government, when the confiscation of their Church property is threatened under actual British rule.

2. It appears to me at least deserving of inquiry, and it is an inquiry of the most serious character possible which thus presents itself, whether the Royal sanction could be given to the projected measure of confiscation, without violating the coronation oath. If, as I apprehend to be the correct view of the case, and as is assumed in the use, within the Colonies, of the

forms of ordination, the Colonial Bishops and Clergy, made by the Royal Letters Patent, to belong to the Archbishop of Province of Canterbury, are Bishops and Clergy of the realm of England, then it is not necessary to say that they are protected by that oath against any invasion or infringement of their existing rights, privileges, and endowments, of whatever kind.

3. The disposal of this question involves the question of the maintenance of public faith. The Act 3 and 4 Vic. cap. 78, was regarded and held by all parties, and was accepted by the parties interested, as a final settlement of the long agitated questions respecting the Reserves,—a settlement, it is also to be remembered, which was *anterior* to the establishment of responsible Government within the Colony. It has been distinctly recognized as final in the formal language of the Provincial Legislature; and if the conclusive arrangements of that Act can now be disturbed, and its provisions can be *overset*, it would be difficult to shew how any rights or interests in the Province can be safe.

My Lord Duke, these are of themselves considerations which, if I am not guilty of presumption in saying so, call for the exercise of the maxim, "Be just, and fear not;" and if the Government of this great country had long ago had the firmness to apply this principle to the question, all injurious disturbance in connexion with the Clergy Reserves would have been saved. Respect would be felt for it, if such firmness was exercised now. Most certainly the surrender of control over the Clergy Reserves to a party now raising agitation in Canada will not prove to be the pacification of the Colony; and that it never can be too late to do that which is called for by the rule of right, and that consequences are not to be argued upon when this rule is once clear, is what no person will more promptly acknowledge than your Grace.

The matter being once rested upon foundations such as these, it seems almost to be a work of *supererogation* to reiterate additional arguments, however correct and forcible in themselves, which have at different times been urged upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and which will be found stated in the documents to which I have above referred. I will only trespass upon your Grace by noticing two further points, which I number as continuing the series of the considerations already in part here submitted.

4. The nature of this endowment is not such as to be properly productive of any odium or discontent. It carries with it no burden imposed upon any class of religionists within the country. It operates in no vexatious manner. It presents no obstruction to the improvement and advancement of the country, the utmost facilities being given, and the most favourable terms afforded, in throwing the lands into the market for the creation of the necessary fund.

5. Lastly I would observe that whereas it is anticipated, in different quarters, that the party in the Colony now intent upon the confiscation of the Church property, and engaged in embroiling the country for the attainment of their object, may be counted upon, in the event of their gaining the principle for which they contend, to deal not ungenerously in the actual disposal of their prize, and to manifest some mindful sense of the ample generosity of the Home Government towards themselves,—the fact stands before the world, and cannot be put out of sight, that the members of the Local Government now in power, who have identified their policy with the aims of the party in question, are pledged, to a man, in their places in the Provincial Parliament, to the secularization of the Reserves, if placed within their control.

I will not, my Lord Duke, abandon the hope that Her Majesty's Government will pause before committing itself to this threatened sacrifice of a sacred patrimony,—and not, by the side of the magnificently endowed and largely favoured Church of Rome in the Colony, consent to have the Church of the Sovereign and of the Empire thrust down to a position which will compel her to come before this country, in order to

\* Page 20 of Papers relative to the "Clergy Reserves," presented to Parliament by Her Majesty's command, 14th February, 1853.