

the habitable portions of the globe, that all things are ready, and to bring in guests into this table from among the outcasts of the world. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Yes, blessed Lord, that is the lofty commission, and that the sustaining promise, which we have received from Thee; and we will not have any rest in our spirits till we of the Church of England have done our part, trusting to thyself to give the increase, in contributing to bring on the glorious consummation—how short, as yet, of its accomplishment!—when thou shalt "take to thyself all the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost part of the earth for thy possession," till "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea."

Within the British dominions in North America, and to a certain extent in our own Province of Canada, we know that the Church has done labour, and has labour to do, for a race reclaimed, or remaining to be reclaimed from the darkness of heathenism and the darkness of savage life. But labour where we will, and in whatever advanced condition of civilized society, never, never will it cease to form part of our task that we should turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. And we felicitate ourselves upon the enlargement of the Church at home from the fetters long fastened upon her without relaxation, as well as upon the greater liberty and more open privilege which have been conceded to us in this behalf in the colonies, we shall none of us, I trust, forget whether of the Clergy or the Laity, who take part in our Synods, that the ultimate objects of all ecclesiastical deliberations and proceedings, is the glory of God and the salvation of the souls of men. It has not, perhaps, been always exactly in such a tone as this that we have engaged in the exercise of our Synodical power. A sort of secular character—a character partaking of a political aspect has been shed—here and there over the movement. And correspondingly with this there may be a danger, I speak here more particularly with reference to us who are of the clergy,—of some prejudice done to our constancy in a state of spiritual preparation within the man and our active devotedness abroad to the good of souls, by means of an insensible absorption of the mind in familiarising itself with the forms and the machinery of business, providing for the readier transaction of affairs, cultivating the habit of skilful debate and planning improvements to be effected by ecclesiastical legislation—things which are all good, desirable, and useful in themselves, but which we must take care to make subsidiary only and subordinate to those grand objects which are in view, where the council assembled is a council which has in hand the affairs of the Kingdom of God—the Kingdom which is not of this world. The author of the History of Cardinal Mazarin referring to some remarks passed at the time, upon the comparative qualifications of certain French ecclesiastics as fitting subjects for advancement in the Church, takes occasion to point out, with seeming approbation that the Popes are well known to be chosen, not for being more eminent in piety and zeal, but for being more able politicians—more conversant with public business, and more practised in the administration of affairs of State; and that for one who is excluded from the Sovereign Pontificate because he labours under suspicion of irregularity in his moral principles and conduct, there are ten and more who are rejected for their want of acquaintance with matters of Government. Such a principle, we trust, will never be seen to pervade our own body, never be known to actuate our proceedings. Habits of method, clearness in

the arrangement and distribution, and readiness in the transaction of public business, fertility in resource, patience of attention and penetration in dealing with plausible appearances—all these, as already intimated, are qualities of most undervaluable value in dealing with such matters as are entrusted to the management of Synods: And if they are kept pure from any tendencies which may cause the salt to lose its savour,—far from seeking to depreciate or to repress them, we ought to recognise the help and benefit which they bring us, and thankfully to avail ourselves of the facility which they afford for expediting and successfully conducting our affairs. It is well for us in our collective capacity to remember the familiar charge of our Master—"Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

And here I would observe further, with reference to a point not wholly without affinity to the remarks just made, that, as I do venture to think, there is a great mistake committed by some eminently pious and zealous men who engage in the sacred work of extending the Gospel over the world, a great mistake when they seem to confine their object simply and exclusively to the change to be operated upon individual souls, and to repudiate all idea of enlarging the kingdom of Christ in any other sense than as this effect is conceived to be produced—to measure, in short, the whole work, in all its parts, by this standard alone. For granting most freely that we can never be too much in earnest, in deprecating a mere formal adoption of Christianity, a name in religion without the reality of love, a mere carcass without life; it must be conceded I think on the other hand, that with respect to the evidences of grace in individual subjects, we are apt sometimes to pronounce upon them, from tests which very insufficiently ascertain the case:—Men may be wrought upon, on the one side,—in fact it is a very common occurrence,—so as to exhibit what are accepted as decisive marks of conversion which may one day prove to have been fallacious; and the power of religion may have sunk deeper into the hearts of others of a retiring character and a reserved temperament, than we are ready to imagine or to allow. The great day alone will bring all to light. I believe that, in this very point of view, as well as in others, the saying of the Saviour will be signally verified that many who are first shall be last and the last first. It is a dangerous forgetfulness to lose sight of the maxim that we are to judge nothing before the time. But this is not all. For supposing, argumentatively, such a case as that the Ministry of the Church, from whatever cause, should be found, here or there, unsuccessful in the great work of turning sinners, whether Jew, Turk, pagan, or nominally christian, from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God,—are we to conclude from thence that nothing is done when a foundation is laid, among any body of people for a Scriptural and Apostolic system of Religion,—when the channels are opened, the machinery prepared, the provisions established for introducing and perpetuating a Church who, in the lowest estimate of her performance, will distribute the word and dispense the sacraments of Christ, with the sanctification of the seventh day; and by her very worship, by her ordinances, by the cycle of her observances, will familiarise her people with the great and saving truth of the Gospel of which these observances may, in their digested series, be well said to exhibit an epitome? If we can imagine such a case as that, all this can be done without any present return of fruit, or immediately satisfactory result in the spiritual condition of the worshippers,—upon which we ought never too hastily or without sure warrant to render our verdict—yet is nothing done when

all is in fair train for carrying on the grand purposes of the Christian Ministry, and the instruments are ready by which Christ may, in God's good time, if it really has not been already done, be brought effectually home to the hearts of men?

Among these instruments we indulge the hope and trust that our Synods now extensively introduced into the Colonial dependencies of the empire, will, in the active exercise of their functions, sustain an important and beneficial part. Surveying all the provision and all the apparatus of the church for executing the commission confided to her hands, we may contemplate, side by side, with the delineations of our text, those glowing words of the Psalmist, walk about Zion, and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof. Mark well her bulwarks, set up (or consider) her palaces, that ye may tell them that come after, (Ps. xlviii. 11, 12, prayer-book translation), and may adapt in the way of application to our Synods, the words of another animated Psalm where the distinguished privileges of Zion are portrayed, that there, as one of those special privileges, is the seat of Judgment (Ps. cxxii. 5.) We may look far back to the ancient church of God in the wilderness, and we see there Moses sitting to judge (Ex. xviii. 13.) the people—guiding their movements, regulating their proceedings, resolving their difficulties, reconciling their differences, governing and administering their affairs at large. Yet though he acted under a direct commission from on high, enjoying "celestial colloquy sublime," and was invested conspicuously by the hand of God, with wonder-working powers, we observe that he availed himself at once of the suggestion offered by his father-in-law for his relief. Jethro had just witnessed the oppressive weight of his labours as well as the inconvenience suffered by the people from his having to deal single-handed with them all; and recommended that, reserving for his own jurisdiction the disposal of the higher and harder causes, he would provide himself, out of all the people, with help. And the requisite qualifications of these proposed assistants are specified. They were to be able men, such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness. Moses loved his people: he prayed, upon one occasion, in a strain similar to the sentiment expressed many centuries afterwards, on behalf of the same people, by St. Paul, rather to be himself blotted out of the book of life, than that the threatened doom should come upon them. And we see in another instance, how far he was superior to any mere personal jealousy of power, such as would grieve to see others made participants of privileges vouchsafed to himself: Envious thou for my sake. Would to God all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them. Numbers 11, 20.

These words, we remember, were uttered upon the occasion of assembling by Divine command; the seventy elders, the same body, in the judgment of some divines, which had already been created, as just noted, upon the recommendations of his father-in-law. And the origin is here supposed to be found of the Sanhedrim, or great council of seventy, which subsisted so long as the nation had a home. The government and legislation of the State and the government and legislation of the church having been, under the system given to the Israelites, so intertwined and incorporated together as to constitute in a manner, one and the same thing,—this Sanhedrim may be considered as having been alike an ecclesiastical Synod and a feature in the political organization of the country.

The first council of the christian church of which