

them all the windows and doors were ruined and spoiled. "It," exclaims Sir Henry "this is the state of the Church in the best-peopled diocese and best-governed county, and it is for your Majesty to consider in what case the rest is, where little or no reformation either of religion or manners hath yet been planted. So profane and headstrong are some parts of this your country, that the sacrament of Baptism is not used among them. Your Majesty may believe it, that upon the face of the earth, where Christ is professed, there is not a Church in so miserable a case."

Lord Deputy Chichester, in the reign of James the First, says, "The Churches I found all ruinous, and many utterly defaced—a spectacle grievous to the sight of all good Christians."

For years together Divine Service had not been used in any parish-church throughout Ulster, except in some city or principal town. For many years during the reign of Elizabeth, even the sees of Derry, Clogher, and Raphoe, were suffered to remain vacant.

Bishop Bedell, in 1630, not only found his episcopal residence levelled with the ground, but even his cathedral church (of Kilmore) perfectly destroyed. "The parish churches were all ruined, unroofed, and unoccupied. At that time the Church had been so impoverished by the number of improper benefices given to laymen, that in the whole province of Connaught, the vicarages being for the most part stipendiary, the vicars' pensions came but to forty shillings a-year, and in many places to only sixteen."

In the Earl of Strafford's Letters is a petition, addressed to King Charles I., from the Archbishops, Bishops, and the whole Clergy of Ireland, assembled in Convocation. "In all the Christian Kingdoms," says the petition, "there have not been reduced to such a state of contempt and beggary, as in this Kingdom, by the means of appropriations, commendations, and violent intrusions into their undoubted rights, in times of confusion; having their churches ruined, their habitations left desolate, their glebes concealed, and by an inevitable consequence, an inevitable necessity of a general non-residence, whereby the ordinary supply hath been left wholly destitute of all possible means to learn true piety to God."

"The effect of this numerous and successive spoliation being to the Church, 562 improper benefices were bestowed upon 1113 parishes wholly improper, making 12,000 and 10,000 parishes. The amount derived from tithes by laymen, is said to be £300,000 a-year. "The clergy," says Swift, "having been strip of the greatest part of their revenues, the glebes being generally lost, the tithes in the hands of laymen, the churches demolished, and the country depopulated; in order to preserve a face of Christianity, it was necessary to unite small vicarages, sufficient to make a tolerable maintenance for a minister."

"Even now," observes Primate Stewart (in 1819), "there are many unions of vicarages, consisting of from eight to ten parishes, which do not produce a clear ecclesiastical income of £200 per annum; nay, there are two large unions, which, having been augmented (from other sources), cannot exceed £100."

THE CHURCH.

COBourg, FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1844.

CONTENTS OF THE OUTSIDE.

First Page. Poem—Burial of the Dead. The Discipline and Unity of the Primitive Church. Educational System of Prussia. The Church of Ireland. Fourth Page. Last hours of a Minister's Wife.

The spirit of inquiry into the organization and principles of the Church which has, for some years, prevailed, and the results especially with which inquiry has been attended, have, as we have observed, produced much alarm and opposition on the part of those who dissent from her doctrines, or who regard her as a tool but a pleasure,—which their only regret is cannot be more frequently prosecuted,—the visit from house to house, the social lecture, the private admonition, solace to the mourner, consolation to the sick and dying. It is true they deeply feel the imperfectness with which all these duties are performed, and the distressful consciousness of these defects and infirmities is the cause of many a fervent and humble petition at the Throne of Grace; but, without meaning to assert it as a cause of glorying, we can affirm that such is the common tenor of their lives, and that to such labours are to be ascribed that more thriving and purer Churchmanship which is our daily comfort to behold.

The Clergy of the Church, in the prosecution of their diversified and harassing, yet cheerfully endured labours, can afford to pity the miserable slanders of a Mr. George Fred. Playter, or of any other individual, who undertakes to disparage those of whose lives and exertions he evidently knows nothing. It were well if this person, and those who think and speak as he does, would "look at home" before pronouncing the condemnation which he takes it upon himself to express against others, and by discovery of the vices and defects of his own religious system, adopt that which we must believe from ignorance as much as from any other cause, he ventures to traduce.

We call by an extract from a paper entitled the Anti-monopolist, that a project is on foot with some busy spirits in the Mother Country, to "reform the Reformation,"—in other words, to hew and carve the present machinery of the Church of England into a shape which will suit the views of all who do not subscribe to her system as at present constituted. The following are the objects primarily proposed, and which are strongly urged upon the consideration of all persons of "enlarged views":

"The objects of the Church Reformation Society will be, to call public attention to the present state of the Church of England, to produce a general feeling of ecclesiastical abuses either cause or increase all other social evils; and that the removal of them would facilitate all other desirable reforms; to hold meetings and to deliver lectures in all the towns of the empire; to cultivate the feelings of Christian brotherhood towards all other Protestant churches and denominations; and to invite their co-operation; to circulate tracts; to furnish information to the public press; and, as soon as sufficient funds shall have been provided, to establish a weekly periodical, under the title of 'The Church Reform Gazette,' to collect, through various channels, information respecting the amount of Ecclesiastical property, with its use and abuse in each locality; to report all cases of bigotry and superstition, and of intolerant and uncharitable proceedings towards Dissenters; to trace the evils of the Church, and its wealth and power, and to its intimate union with the State; to point out the worldly spirit, the selfishness, the covetousness, and ambition which its worldly titles and preferments have introduced amongst the clergy; to ascertain the number of intelligent persons in Great Britain and Ireland who are favourable to the bold, efficient measure of Church Reform; to furnish an opportunity for the correspondence and co-operation of all friends of true religion; by forming local Associations in connexion with the Parent Society; and finally to address memorials to the Clergy and people of England, and to forward petitions to Her Majesty and to both Houses of Parliament, in behalf of the glorious work of the second Reformation."

"These most patriotic individuals go upon the principle, we suppose, that a great evil must have a great cure; that with a corruption so gigantic as that pertaining to the reformed Church of the realm, gentle remedies would be but a waste of time and skill; that nothing can prune a tree with so many needless branches and excrescences, but the axe at the root. The following will, in some degree, shew what is intended by these philanthropic and disinterested persons:—

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lately, has been begotten, is hardly reconcilable,—according even to the logic of Non-Confessionists,—with supineness and inefficiency in the Clergy. We apprehend, on the contrary, that no comparison can fairly be instituted between their labours, in the aggregate, and those which are rendered by the Ministers of Dissent. We feel well assured that facts will sustain us in our affirmation, that the Clergy of the Established Church as a body,—for there may, and will be exceptions,—study more, preach more, visit more, and in every other respect labour more, than do at least the preachers of that body amongst whom we believe to be classed the author of the base pamphlet whose title we have noticed. There is, we firmly believe, no comparison in the amount of labour respectively rendered by each; and as for recompense, we would just refer to a communication published in The Church of March 28, 1840, and signed "J. Flaughan," to shew on which side it is yielded most bountifully. It will appear from that communication, that the Ministers of the Methodist persuasion receive per annum, on the average, about fifty per cent. more than do the Clergy of the Established Church in this Province. Whatever, indeed, may be the grounds of complaint against the Clergy of the Church in these Colonies, it is not the extravagance of the manner in which their services are recompensed,—the luxurious living in which they are permitted to indulge,—the pomp and elegance of their exterior adornments, which can be alleged against them. It is well if they can maintain a decent position in the society by which they are surrounded, and maintain the common comforts, without aspiring to the elegancies of life: it is well, and they are content, if they can feed and clothe their little ones in a plain and unostentatious way, and afford them that suitable education which will qualify them hereafter for usefulness in the world.

"The slender means allotted to them, they can shew any thing like a becoming hospitality, and especially if they can join with a fitting liberality in enterprises of benevolence around them,—if, while they assiduously urge the duty of alms-giving and all pious offerings, they are, by the good Providence of God, enabled to shew a consistent example in this respect, and prove, by their own allotments from their humble stipends, that they are willing to spend, as well as to be spent, in the cause of Christ and his Church.

And as for the recreations of life, or those pastimes of society,—which whether they may, or may not, be engaged in with an undefiled conscience, we shall not now pause to discuss,—we know of not a few amongst the Clergy, and we doubt not the remark is applicable nearly to all, who have neither time nor relief for such occupations; who, as far as the gossip and the amusements of what is termed social life are concerned, are keepers at home, and not there wasting their hours in a dreary repose, but labouring, with the best assiduity they can, to equip themselves for their heavenly Master's work,—literally rising early, and late taking rest, and eating the bread of carefulness, that they may fulfil their allotted task of duty, and be ready for every department of their sacred office to which their services may be called. We know, too, of not a few who ride, or walk, or drive thousands of miles in the year in the fulfillment of their various duties; and who regard not as a toil but a pleasure,—which their only regret is cannot be more frequently prosecuted,—the visit from house to house, the social lecture, the private admonition, solace to the mourner, consolation to the sick and dying. It is true they deeply feel the imperfectness with which all these duties are performed, and the distressful consciousness of these defects and infirmities is the cause of many a fervent and humble petition at the Throne of Grace; but, without meaning to assert it as a cause of glorying, we can affirm that such is the common tenor of their lives, and that to such labours are to be ascribed that more thriving and purer Churchmanship which is our daily comfort to behold.

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the nation should only be half reformed; and while the physical wants of the many destitute are to be provided for, by sequestering the lands and possessions of the rich for general distribution, or by ruining the agriculturist in order to obtain the chance of cheap bread for the manufacturer, why should not the many needy separatists from the communion of the Church be provided for by the confiscation of her endowments, and their equitable distribution amongst all who assume the calling of teacher or preacher? And as various Associations of human devising and modern construction, are made to supersede the machinery of the Church, and bring about results which, it is affirmed, the proper influence of religion cannot effect, what incongruity can there be in the assumption by a modern Reformation Society of the power to excommunicate Clergymen from their religious duties, and relieve them from the responsibility of their ordination vows,—to put them in the position, in short, of mere laymen, and to legalize their acting "as if they had never been ordained?"

In the march of this morality, we should soon discover a progressive demand for the abolition of other bonds and obligations: the social compact, and all that keeps it in harmony and peace, would by and come to be dissolved: need would be the argument for private robbery as much as for public plunder; and Socialist licentiousness would follow close in the track of this ecclesiastical agrarianism.

We request attention to the article on our first page on Education in Prussia; which, as is well known, has usually been held up as a model, in this respect, to all other countries. But the article in question asserts us that, without the foundation of religion, no system of education that can be devised, will effect above all things, what is desired,—a reformation of the national morals. Such education may prove an auxiliary in the common business of life, and that only in partial instances; but without the great ground-work of religious truth, it must prove a failure as respects the national welfare and the general prosperity.

A leading defect in the lately adopted system of Prussian education is precisely that which renders the Prussian model so objectionable; and the facts detailed in the article we have referred to, bear us out in the remarks we lately offered upon that subject, in connection with the Training School at Stanley Grove in England.

We have not thus far learned whether the rumour of a late very obnoxious appointment to the Superintendency of Education in this Province has actually been confirmed: should it turn out to be any thing more than rumour, we may return again to the subject.

We mentioned lately that the Rev. W. H. Ripley had consented to act as Secretary to the "Church Society" at Toronto, in consequence of the lamented resignation of John Kent Esq. We understand that Mr. Ripley will be assisted in these duties by Thomas Champion Esq., the very zealous and efficient Depository of the Society; and it is hardly necessary to add, that both these gentlemen,—as is the late Secretary,—render their important services in this behalf gratuitously.

We have inadvertently omitted to mention, that the Index to Volumes 5 and 6 of this Journal have been for some time printed, and may be had on application to the different Clergy and Agents, or to the Messrs. Rowell, at Toronto.

Our readers will be glad to perceive the indications of an early Spring, in the Steam Boat advertisements given in another column. We most cordially wish a prosperous season to the enterprising gentlemen who have provided, on so magnificent a scale, for the public accommodation of these inland waters.

Communication.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

To the Editor of The Church. Sir,—Will you permit me, through the medium of your valuable paper, to offer a suggestion to the Superintendent of the "Sunday School Society for Ireland." I saw that in a circular recently issued, it had been recommended, that each child in the schools in union with the Society, should be invited to subscribe a penny a year, in order to assist in defraying its exhausted fund. The children of £265 16s. 8d., exclusive of £46 5s. for the teachers.—The plan was immediately adopted by several Superintendents, and the results were very encouraging; scarcely a child refusing, while numbers brought more than the requested penny, and pleaded hard for its acceptance. If this plan was attended with such success in Ireland, where the peasantry are so very poor, might we not suppose it would be much easier to introduce it into the Sunday Schools in this Province? I feel persuaded, that if all those engaged in the pleasing, but responsible duty of Sunday School instruction, would but take the trial, in a firm dependence upon God's assistance, the result would soon convince them of its practicability. In some cases, I should think, the payments might be advantageously made half-yearly, or even quarterly, and the Teachers might be invited to contribute towards it. The sums thus collected, might be given to our excellent "Church Society," and it is difficult to say how much good may be done at such a trifling expense to each individual. This is not all; the children might thus learn to consider it, and to be proud of their privilege, to give their mite to the cause of God.

And should not parents—those especially to whom God has given many of the comforts and elegancies of this life—these lessons to their children? I can truly say, that I shall always feel deeply indebted to any excellent father, for the pains he took, to train up his children in habits of systematic charity. We never received our weekly pocket money, without putting aside a seventh part charitable purposes. I regret to say, however, that those who have laid it aside, have found by painful experience, that "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." May God enable them to see their error, and to turn to the good path also. L. H. Toronto 13th, 1844.

[We are much obliged to the writer of this communication, and think the plan suggested a very desirable one, and at the same time very practicable.—Ed.]

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

CANADA.

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NIAGARA DISTRICT BRANCH OF THE CHURCH SOCIETY OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO, Presented and adopted at a General Meeting of the Branch Association, held at St. Catharines, Wednesday, January 8th, 1844.

In presenting the Second Annual Report of the Niagara District Branch of the Church Society of the Diocese of Toronto, the District Committee desire to express their devout acknowledgments to "the Author of every good and perfect gift," for his blessings vouchsafed to their labours during the past year, and to say, in fervent prayers, that every Member of the Church Society, in assisting according to his ability, to "water others," may himself be most abundantly "watered." The amount of monies collected within this District during the present year is considerably less than that reported at the last Annual Meeting. But, in various circumstances, some of which were to be anticipated, and others arising from the unprecedented stagnation of trade, which has prevailed over the whole continent, be taken into consideration—your Committee can see no reason whatever for discouragement; though they recognize therein cause for greater exertion on the part of every Member of the Society, and an urgent reason for inciting upon our fellow Churchmen the duty of esteeming ourselves all as members of one body in Christ, and therefore called upon by a sense of the privileges, which as members of that body, we enjoy, to extend, to the utmost of our ability, the same precious privileges to those of our fellow members who are now destitute of them.

Your Committee, in accordance with the Constitution of the Church Society, have held quarterly meetings of its members in four different parishes in the District, during the past year; and have devoted much time and attention to the various subjects that required their action. At the meeting held in April, suggestions were made to the Central Board of the Church Society for some alterations in the Constitution of that Society; which al-

terations were accordingly made at the general meeting held at Toronto, in June last, and the other quarterly meetings, a memorial to the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, soliciting the early appointment of a travelling missionary to the destitute townships and settlements in this populous District, was adopted; and your Committee at the same meeting, passed a resolution, pledging one-fourth of the monies raised by the District Branch, for the purpose of establishing a fund for that highly important object. Your Committee, through their chairman, have received a very favourable answer to their memorial, in which the Lord Bishop promises the appointment of a travelling missionary after the next spring session.

In accordance with resolutions adopted at the formation of their several parochial associations, highly interesting public meetings were held, with the assistance of the neighbouring Clergy, in the parishes of Louth, Stamford, and Thorold, for the purpose of assisting the parochial committee in sustaining the interest hitherto felt in our valuable Society.

A very interesting parochial meeting, for the same purpose, was held in the parish of Grimby. One-fourth of the contributions for general purposes is to be transmitted, in accordance with the Constitution of the Church Society, to the Treasurer of that Society at Toronto, in order to assist in establishing a fund for the general purposes contemplated in the establishment of the Niagara District Branch of the Church Society, and the few remaining Indians of our country, the support of pious young men who are candidates for the ministry, and who have not the means of pursuing their studies without assistance; the support of the widows and orphan children, who have spent their strength and laid down their lives in their Master's service within the Diocese; and other objects, equally excellent, and commanding themselves with equal force to the consciences and hearts of Canadian Churchmen. And when they extend the great and noble work of the Society, which is the salary of our travelling missionaries, and the contributions of the members of the most important District in the Diocese are all devoted to this fund, without any deduction whatever for parochial purposes,—that they are included in the same Parent Society for the establishment of the excellent "Church Society," which our Sunday Schools, our Parish Libraries, and our families, can now be supplied at cost and charges with not only the Bibles, Prayer Books, and Tracts, but also with many valuable works, admirably suited to the instruction of our rising generation of Churchmen, which could not be had, before the establishment of that useful institution, but by ordering them at a heavy expense from the great and noble work of the Society, which is the salary of our travelling missionaries, and the contributions of the members of the most important District in the Diocese are all devoted to this fund, without any 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