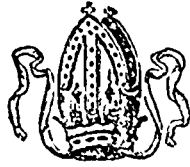


CANADIAN ECCLESIASTICAL GAZETTE.



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DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

A PASTORAL LETTER TO THE CLERGY AND LAITY OF THE DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

QUEBEC, 23rd December, 1852.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,—I have received communications from different quarters, at home and within this Province, expressing a desire that, as Senior Bishop of the North American British Episcopate, I should proceed to England to meet the Bishop of Sydney who, under pre-concerted arrangements with the Home authorities in Church and State, has arrived there from Australia,—the object of his visit being to confer with those authorities upon matters affecting the interests of the Colonial Church.

As there are many reasons, connected principally with the exercise of my episcopal duties, which make it extremely inconvenient that I should leave the Diocese at this particular conjuncture, I had hoped that the object in view might have been met by another arrangement which I conceive to be equally satisfactory,* but this not having been capable of execution without some delay, I have been urged to undertake the task and have felt it my duty to yield to the reasons thus pressed upon me.

The difficulties, peculiar in their character, which attach in different ways, to the administration of Ecclesiastical affairs in the Colonies and the desire felt, in common with other Colonial prelates, by the Bishops of these North American Dioceses, to procure the formal and legal co-operation of the Clergy and Laity in the management and regulation of such matters, have already been placed before you in the Minutes of the Episcopal Conference, held at Quebec in Sept. 1850. In the tenor of those Minutes, I have authority for saying that the whole of the North American Episcopate are agreed,—the two Bishops who, out of the seven, were unavoidably absent, having, subsequently to their reception of copies of the Minutes, put me in possession of their sentiments upon the subject.

It is with reference to those difficulties and, in particular, to the measure which I have just indicated as fitted, (it may be hoped,) to a great extent, to afford relief for them, that the consultations are to be held in which I have been invited to join. Without at all touching the question of the revival of Convocation at home, I am not aware of the existence of any opposition in the minds of Churchmen within this Diocese, clerical or lay, to the exercise of synodical action within the Colonial Church: I am very sure that the want of it is experimentally felt and generally acknowledged among us; and I cannot possibly fail to see that the proximity of the United States, in which the triennial Conventions of the whole Church and the annual Conventions of each Diocese, with every necessary allowance for the imperfection inherent in all human things, have been long seen to work efficiently and advantageously for the Church and to provide for many points at which we are at a loss, suggests to the thoughts of our Clergy and Laity, a feeling of claim for our

* The Bishop of Montreal having occasion, for other objects, to go home immediately after Easter, and having expressed his willingness to strain a point in order to go a little earlier, for the object here in question, I had hoped that his visit would have been in sufficient time.

being, with certain requisite adaptations, assimilated, in this particular point, to our neighbors.

It is this view of our case which I have exhibited to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, in answer to a Circular addressed, last summer, to the Colonial Bishops, upon the subject here in question. I have taken care, of course, to assure Sir J. Pakington of our sincere and settled desire (as appears in the Minutes of the Episcopal Conference) to preserve the Royal Supremacy intact.

Having had in my contemplation, as I have stated, an arrangement which included no necessity for my going home myself, and which left more time open to me for all which may suggest itself as necessary or proper in connection with the visit of one of the North American Bishops to England, I am now rather hurried in my preparations, and obliged to deal more abruptly with the subject than I could desire. There is no way left to me in which I can benefit by taking counsel with you, unless any of you who may individually feel prepared to express his views or to make useful recommendations upon the topics to which I have here adverted, should favour me by doing so by letter, which should be done at his earliest convenience, addressing me at the office of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 79 Pall Mall, London.

Should any gentlemen of the laity desire to take this course, the simplest mode perhaps of effecting the object will be, that they should put their respective Ministers in possession of what they desire to communicate, and that it should thus be passed on to my hands.

And now, my dear brethren, I commend myself and the work which I have in hand to your prayers to God through Jesus Christ; and assuring you that mine are never wanting for you, and invoking upon you at this holy season all blessing from above, with an advancement in holiness as season after season may, by the pleasure of God, return to you, I remain,

Your affectionate servant in the Gospel,

G. J. QUEBEC.

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	85	17	8

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