

THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, AUGUST 21st, 1879.

AN EXPENSIVE LUXURY.

THE congregations connected with the Canadian branch of the Reformed Episcopal Church recently held a conference at Ottawa with a view to organizing a Canadian Synod, and electing a Bishop to preside over its interests. Clergymen and delegates were present from most of the congregations in the four Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick; but although unanimous as to the desirableness of having a Canadian Synod, the convention thought it inexpedient to proceed to the election of a Bishop, as the cost of maintaining such a dignitary would be \$10,000 a year! So, at least, it was asserted by one of the delegates, and the statement passed unchallenged. That, indeed, is a very moderate figure for the honour of having a "Right Reverend Father in God," duly consecrated by the imposition of holy hands in the direct line of apostolic succession, of the importance of which Reformed Episcopal churchmen seem to be as profoundly impressed as any of their unreformed brethren. Not to name the income of any of the English Episcopate, we see it mentioned in some of our exchanges, that quite an outcry has recently been raised against the incomes of several of the Missionary Bishops, which in some instances reach a sum equal to five or six times the amount said to be required in the case we have just referred to. However, extravagant or not, it is too big a sum for a young and struggling Church to raise, and the advantage, real or supposed, of having such a functionary has, for the present, to be foregone.

We should deeply commiserate the condition of our brethren thus left comparatively unshepherded, but for the fact that there is an easier, much less expensive, and, at the same time, more Scriptural way of compassing their object than the one they have been contemplating. According to the Congregational method, which we take the liberty of commending to their attention, every church has a Bishop of its own, who, although not able to trace his Episcopal pedigree back to the apostles, through the Anglo-Roman line, is nevertheless more truly a Bishop of the Apostolic type than a Diocesan who has no congregation of his own to oversee. The episcopacy of the New Testament, as all ecclesiastical historians of any note now agree, was not Diocesan, but Independent. Titus, by Apostolic direction, "ordained elders in every city:" (Titus i. 5) and by a comparison of the 6th to the 9th verses with the 5th in the passage just quoted, and of the 28th verse with the 17th in the xxth chapter of the Acts, it will be seen that "elders" and "bishops,"

or "overseers," filled one and the same office in the early Christian churches. In other words, Diocesan episcopacy, like the Methodist itinerancy, is not "according to the pattern showed to us in the mount," but is a human contrivance which ought never to have been substituted for the Divine plan. The Lord has indeed recognized and blessed all Christian churches, under whatever forms organized, according to their faithfulness and zeal in setting forth His Gospel. But how much greater their success might have been, had the original simple form of organization been retained as He gave it to His apostles, who can tell? We believe the Divine plan to be better than the human, and that it would have proved itself much better adapted to the end He had in view in giving it to us, and therefore we feel constrained to urge upon all our brethren the desirableness and duty of getting back as near as possible to the New Testament model of the Christian Church.

THE LORD'S DAY.

IS Ontario to have its Sabbath surreptitiously taken away? Is nothing to be done, no voice to be raised against the present assault upon God's day of holy rest? Why is Hamilton silent? Are all the Christians of Toronto dumb-founded? Think of it. Sunday service trains are advertised and run between Dundas and Hamilton, and between Hamilton and Burlington Beach. Steamers also are to ply between these places, if they have not begun. Pleasure boats leave the wharves of Toronto on Sabbath for Burlington Beach and elsewhere. But no action has been taken save in the case we referred to three weeks ago in Dundas, when the complaint was dismissed on the ground that *carrying companies may under the Lord's Day Act convey travellers for pleasure or business or from any other motive, on the Sabbath.* This decision has never been noticed or called in question by the press, and it would seem to be acquiesced in as a correct interpretation of law. Add to this that the "Globe" is opening its columns to a discussion as to the obligation of the Sabbath, in which one correspondent calls in question its application to Christians, assails the Old Testament scriptures by impugning their authenticity, historic value, and truth, and saying that they may be thrown aside by the present generation of Gentiles, assails dogmatic theology, and in the name of liberty claims the right of any man to seek his pleasure on the Lord's day. Is the Christian community prepared to submit to all this? If not, it is time to speak out and to act. Unless decisive steps are speedily taken by either enforcing the law, if we have one applicable to these evils, or by obtaining the necessary legislation, our Sabbath will be gone—a thing of the past. Not only pleasure but business will be generally prosecuted on the Lord's day and Christians will either have to break the Sabbath

or give up their situations. This is no time to sit still. Inaction means irreparable loss. The following speaks for itself:

"Manager Hickson, of the Grand Trunk Railway, has pronounced against Sunday excursions. He says: 'I have no sympathy with these Sunday excursions, and I am thoroughly convinced it will be to the advantage of both the public and the railway companies themselves not to introduce the system into Canada.'"

THE ONLY SUCCESSION.

THE discussion upon apostolic succession, which has been raised by the crossing of swords between the Bishop and the Archbishop, is not of much interest in itself. It attracts a certain class of minds to which we may apply the term "Sacerdotal," and it is more or less connected with such matters as the confessional, the elevation of the host, baptismal regeneration, or the authority of the Church. To those who accept the Word of God as the only rule of faith, and discard priestliness in its every form, apostolic succession is nothing but a figment of the imagination. These maintain that the apostles could have no successors. They remember the distinguishing features of the apostolate, that one must have been with the Lord and been able to witness to his resurrection. They acknowledge the claim of Paul to rank as an apostle, because after the ascension he had miraculously seen the Lord, and had listened to His voice. The conclusion is inevitable that the apostleship ceased, when the last of the twelve had gone to his reward.

The very notion of apostolic succession is begotten of the world. There cannot in the nature of the case be any hereditary line either with ministers of religion or Christians generally. Royalty may lay claim to an unbroken descent from some illustrious warrior, though even here many links in the chain may be found to be imperfect. The scion of a noble house may proudly trace his lineage, through the centuries, to him who, by some deed of prowess or some good fortune, became its founder. But there is nothing corresponding to this in the Christian life. In this regard we are without father and mother. We cannot boast of our patent of nobility. Nor can we indulge the pleasing dream of being succeeded by heirs according to the flesh. It is true that Christians are frequently blessed with the glad spectacle of their children becoming the genuine followers of Christ. But how frequently is the opposite to be seen, parents being broken-hearted because of the prodigality of their offspring.

No. Every man, every woman must stand alone. The Saviour has one saying that is applicable to all, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It will not avail even in the case of an Archbishop that he can boast of the Papal blessing, if his heart has not been touched by the Spirit of God. The only true ordination is that of which the Apostle Paul speaks when