

Huron, addressed to his Synod, are unusually refreshing and useful. The paragraph containing the passage to which we refer, cannot be too often repeated: "To you, my brethren of the Laity, I must also address a few friendly words of counsel and exhortation. Never, perhaps, was there a time when, as a rule, the Laity have taken a deeper interest in the Church, and exercised a wider influence in all its concerns. Your very presence here to-day is an evidence of this. But I would earnestly entreat you fully to appreciate the purpose for which you are invited to take part in this important Council of the Church. We are aware that there are those who take *very low views* of this matter, and who entertain most erroneous opinions upon the subject. They imagine a kind of antagonism between the Clergy and Laity. They deem you are to keep a suspicious eye upon those who minister to you in the Lord; they would bid you, above all, be careful, as Laity, to see that the rights and privileges of your order are maintained. I need not remind most of you, my brethren, of the fallacy of such views as to your position and your course of action. Many of you who have sat in council with us here, year after year, and to whom we have been indebted for faithful advice, clear judgment, and generous co-operation and support in all our Church work, have a better appreciation of your position and duty as members of this Synod. You know well there should be no antagonism between the ministry and the members of the Church of Christ, but a loving interdependence, a generous sympathy, and a hearty co-operation." It were to be wished that the members of our Toronto Synod, who are in the habit, year after year, of carrying on a factious agitation in support of what they ignorantly call "their rights," would pay some attention to this wise and judicious counsel of the Lord Bishop of Huron, than which none could have been more appropriate had he addressed them to our own Synod.

We are also glad to learn from other portions of his Lordship's address, that the cause of the Church of Christ is making satisfactory progress in his Diocese. He states that nearly all his parishes are supplied with the ministrations of the Church. This indicates a vigorous vitality in that part of the Dominion; and his Lordship wisely and prudently urges the extension of the work of God into the "regions beyond"—an attention to which will not only be the performance of a duty to others, but will have a reflex influence in stimulating the activity and zeal of the Church at home.

"GOSSIP IN EXCELSIS."

OUR attention has been directed to some paragraphs anent Church matters in this diocese which, though inspired from Toronto, have not appeared in the daily papers of the city. Briefly, they are to the effect that the "High Church" party so-called are deeply indignant at the Bishop of Toronto not only for giving his patronage to the "Protestant Episcopal Divinity College," but also for giving utterance to some remarks which seemed to reflect on the social status of his clergy, as well as upon their attainments, and their zeal for religion. If this indignation is really felt, it has hitherto been latent, as no mention of it has been made in the columns of either the *Globe* or the *Mail*, in both of which the words complained of originally appeared. We must be well assured that this spirit really exists before we criticise it—merely remarking in passing that, supposing its existence to be otherwise than hypothetical, to condemn his Lordship on a mere news-

paper report of certain words alleged to have been publicly spoken by him—words by the way differing substantially in meaning and context in the reports furnished by each paper—is manifestly not only disrespectful to the Episcopal office, but unfair to the Bishop himself. To hang a man first and try him afterwards savors too strongly of Judge Lynch to be popular with Churchmen. If there are those who feel aggrieved at what was reported as the speech of his Lordship surely the proper course would be not to foment secret feelings of what can only be dubbed mutiny against the God-appointed head of the Church in the diocese, but to wait upon him or write to him and respectfully to ask him whether or not he was correctly reported, and whether the interpretation put upon his words were the true one. We are persuaded that the Bishop would at once disavow the correctness of the account furnished by either paper, and *a fortiori* indignantly repudiate the sense imposed by the *vox populi* upon his utterances.

We have already dissented from the idea that this indignation exists at all. If it does, it can only have its being in the minds of a few whom not even an angel from heaven would content, if he were specially sent to assume the burden of the Episcopate. We have shown that it is unreasonable, being founded upon mere gossip. To state it plainly. Is it likely that a Bishop who came into the diocese as a peace-maker, who was hailed as such by both parties in the Church, would be the first to throw down the apple of discord, and sow the seeds of strife between the clergy and the laity? Putting aside the Christianity aspect of the case, surely his Lordship would not be so wanting in tact as deliberately to insult those from whose ranks he has himself sprung. By his own confession his Episcopate has been too brief in duration for him to have personally made the acquaintance of anything like all the clergy in his diocese. If, therefore, he spoke as some imagine, he could have formed his opinion only from information furnished him by those whose interest it is to dissever, if possible, the Bishop from his clergy, and to make him the tool of an insolent and aggressive faction amongst the laity. But to do this would be to condemn on hearsay evidence alone a body of men than whom there do not exist in the Church of God any more courteous, more gentlemanly, better educated, or more devoted to their sacred calling. This his Lordship would, we imagine, be the last to do, unless he wanted to show to the world his unfitness for the high responsibilities of his office.

But, allowing that the Bishop has been correctly reported in this matter, cannot his words legitimately bear a favorable construction? Could not his Lordship be interpreted as expressing the hope that, with the establishment of the new College, with himself as Visitor to exercise a punitive and restraining supervision, its professors might be really learned men ready and fitted to impart sound learning and religious education to students regularly constituted as such, instead of mere amateurs, whose time was already more than sufficiently taken up by their onerous duties as parish priests and "editors" of newspapers, giving lectures necessarily crude, owing to want of time for preparation, to equally amateur pupils, who, while nominally theological students, contrive to have two strings to their bows, and to combine secular and money-making pursuits with a by no means very strict attention to sacred studies? In this way the status of the so-called Evangelical clergy would be raised, the cause of mission work would be thereby improved, and the

hopes of the "Reformed Episcopal" and other Nonconformist bodies to make further recruits from the ranks of the Church Association would be nipped in the bud. Thus the want-of-education-difficulty, as well as that of having men altogether devoted to the work of God and not striving to serve God and Mammon (as students) would be got over, and outsiders would not have it in their power to point the finger of scorn at the "Low Church" clergy as the mere tools and creatures of sundry headstrong and opinionated laymen, each one of whom, Diotrophes-like, loves pre-eminence.

In the same way it is hardly fair to accuse his Lordship of pauding to snobbery by advocating that the clergy be selected—as in this new first-class college they are to be—from the plutocracy—we have only nature's aristocracy in Canada. What the Bishop evidently meant, if he has been correctly reported, is that he hopes to see the day arrive when more men of private means shall take Holy Orders. In this way a two-fold good will result. First, such clergy will be totally independent either of pew-rents or the moneyed autocrats so superabundant in too many so-called "free churches." Hence they will be enabled to act and to speak as their conscience dictates, and will not be afraid of the starving-out process too frequently resorted to in the case of so many congregations where the laity and not the clergy rule. The work of God will thus not be let and hindered by the whimsical and factious element, whose delight seems to be to eliminate from the Church all ecclesiastics not of its own peculiar stripe. In the second place, by a reflex action, the money hitherto devoted by the Mission Board to the support of congregations thus ministered to by wealthy parties will be available for a Sustentation Fund, whereby every clergyman in the diocese shall be put in possession of at least a moderate competency, and thus not be so liable to the starving-out process already alluded to. In this way the hands of the clergy will be strengthened and the tyrannical powers wielded by sundry laymen, whether individually or in a body, proportionately lessened—to the greater good of souls. In so far then as these reports referred to the Bishop, it will be seen that his Lordship should be held not only blameless but even worthy of praise till he himself shall say that the worse interpretation of his words is the true one.

But these paragraphs go further. They insinuate that the venerated Provost of Trinity College has assumed the rôle of a disappointed, injured, and disgusted man; that because he was not made Bishop, he is going home in a huff, never to return. Those who know how loyally Archdeacon Whitaker has stuck to his post through good report and evil report, who recognize his self-denying spirit and his single eye to God's glory, would be the first to pass by such calumnies with the contempt they merit, as the vile inventions of those with whom the wish is father to the thought. But, as some who know the Provost only as represented to them by those whose interest it is to misrepresent him may imagine the idle talk to be true, we are authorized to give the report the most unqualified contradiction, and to add that no inducement, however tempting, will cause him to lay down his office, and that he intends, God sparing him, to return to Toronto by the end of the vacation at furthest.

To one other of these rumors we are compelled to allude, namely, that, as the *DOMINION CHURCHMAN* has no *raison d'être* as a "High Church newspaper," it is to be superseded by another that shall better meet the views of "the party!" We