

hopefulness of the future. And we rejoice the more because it is, by the Divine blessing, the result of much labour, energy, and perseverance. Not that we have in reality acquired any new privileges—because from the most early ages the Church of Christ had the inherent right to do what we are now authorised to do by enactment; but fettered by human laws, encroachments and penalties, which she was unable to remove, she was compelled to remain, in a great degree, passive and quiescent. How different our position now from what it was on the first day of May, 1851, when I called you together under the humble name of holding a conference on the temporal affairs of the Church. Simple as this movement was, it did not escape the censure of many who, being forgetful of the Divine origin of the Church, were accustomed to look upon her as not only the creature of the State, but entirely subject to its behests; and so ignorant were they in such matters that many of them believed that, to introduce the lay element and assume the slightest independence of action, were dangerous innovations, which ought to be discouraged. But the moderation of our proceedings and the mutual deference and courtesy manifested in the intercourse between the clergy and laity, and, above all, the unanimity with which they arrived at the same results, soon obtained general favour, and gained for us the special approbation of the more respectable and pious members of our communion. The session of the Conference was very short, but we found time to petition our gracious Queen for permission to hold Diocesan Synods, to express our opinion on the subject of education, and take such steps for the protection of our endowments, and their application to the sacred purposes for which they were set apart, as they seemed to require. The critical situation of the Church property, and some movements made at home on the subject of the Colonial Church, rendered it expedient to postpone the next or second meeting of the Synod of Conference till October, 1853. During this interval an Act had passed the Imperial Parliament, authorising the Legislature of the Province of Canada to make provision concerning the Clergy Reserves and the proceeds thereof. With what severity and disregard to vested rights this power was carried out, is so well known and so painful, that I abstain from any extended notice of its details; but I must not omit the noble