

or minister to any such parsonage or rectory, and also the enjoyment of any such parsonage or rectory, and of the rights, profits, and emoluments thereof, by any such incumbent or minister, shall be subject and liable to all rights of institution, and all other spiritual and ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority, which have been lawfully granted by his Majesty's royal letters patent to the Bishop of Nova Scotia, or which may hereafter, by his Majesty's royal authority, be lawfully granted or appointed to be administered and executed within the said Provinces, or either of them respectively, by the said Bishop of Nova Scotia, or by any other person or persons, according to the laws and canons of the Church of England, which are lawfully made and received in England.—[N. B. The bishopric of Quebec had not then been constituted.]

—Ed.]
 XLII. Provided always, and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the several provisions hereinbefore contained, respecting the allotment and appropriation of lands for the support of a Protestant clergy within the said Provinces, and also respecting the constituting, erecting, and endowing parsonages or rectories within the said Provinces, and also respecting the presentation of incumbents or ministers to the same, and also respecting the manner in which such incumbents or ministers shall hold and enjoy the same, shall be subject to be varied or repealed by any express provisions for that purpose, contained in any act or acts which may be passed by the Legislative Council and Assembly of the said Provinces respectively, and assented to by his Majesty, his heirs or successors, under the restriction hereinafter provided.

The succeeding and final clause of that portion of the Act which pertains to this appropriation, as it merely refers to the manner in which such variation or repeal of the law shall be referred for the assent of the King or Queen, we do not think it necessary to insert. Our remarks, too, upon the obvious spirit and meaning of the provisions above cited, must be postponed to our next number.

Accompanying the courteous and well-written letter of the Rev. Mr. Richey which appears in a previous column, was a request that we would offer upon the subject to which it refers such remarks as it might seem to invite. This we are willing to do; and chiefly, to rescue the short extract upon which this Letter is founded from the charge of containing what is erroneous or indefensible in doctrine. The extract in question—contained in page 160 of this journal—does not seem to us to imply a denial that sudden conversions may take place, or that the moment of their arrival may not be known by those who are happily the subjects of them. Its design seems to us rather to be,—to caution those who trust to impulses which may sometimes be mistaken for conversion, against the fallibility of any other test of the reality of such conversion than the 'mind of God,' and a 'living to God,' manifest in the person thus regenerated.

The extract alluded to having been furnished to us, amongst many others, by one of our correspondents; we cannot at this moment point out the occasion upon which it was originally used, or by whom indeed employed, so that we are unable to understand its full force and bearing without some knowledge of the context:—standing, however, nakedly as it does, we felt it to imply the caution to which we have just referred.

It is not our design to enter minutely into a subject which admits of so extended a discussion,—one, indeed, upon which various shades of opinion are found to exist amongst the exemplary and the pious even of the same communion; but while we deny not that conversions are often sudden and instantaneous, and while we concur generally in the sentiments adduced from Dr. Paley upon this question, we must be allowed to express our decided conviction that, as a general rule, conversion is rather a progressive than an instantaneous operation. In most of the narratives with which we are furnished of such happy changes, and in the details of them with which we meet in our ordinary Christian intercourse, we generally discover that the process of spiritual illumination, and of the renovation of the heart, has been gradual; and although, in many instances, the time and the circumstance can be referred to when, through the blessing of God, this change of impression from profligacy to penitence; or from indifference to zeal, has been commenced, man's own perceptions cannot always follow the gradual advancement of this work of grace, nor can his mind always light with precision upon the hour when 'perfect peace' had settled upon his spirit. The 'dew of God's blessing' has been gentle and insinuating in its operations; and the growth of the spiritual man has evinced a correspondence with the silent and gradual working of that influence by which it has been promoted.

And here we may be allowed to add—in the spirit of the caution which in the extract in question is meant, we think, to be conveyed,—that the change from an irreligious or careless life to the belief and temper of the 'new creature in Christ,' which has been gradual and progressive, is much more likely to prove genuine and permanent than one which has been suddenly begotten,—than one, for instance, which has been awakened by the effect of some exciting impulse upon the natural sensibilities of the mind and heart. If we recollect aright the argument of Dr. Paley in the very sermon which Mr. Richey has quoted,—for we are not at present in possession of that volume of his works which contains it,—it is admitted that the ordinary operations of the spirit are not of a character to be distinguishable from the impulses and dictates of a man's own mind and will; that as the order in which ideas and motives rise up in the mind is utterly unknown to us, as well as the precise time at which, or agency by which such order is changed or disturbed, so are we equally unconscious of any disturbing or converting agency of the spirit, distinct from the common operations of the understanding and the affections. Our Saviour, in his illustration of the Spirit's workings in his conversation with Nicodemus, seems to afford a sanction to this idea; while the opinion itself offers no contradiction to this tenet of the Apostle, "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

Whatever, in short, may be the professions which follow as the effect of the impulses we have alluded to, it is evident that we must wait for the proofs of a genuine conversion in the consistent tenor of a holy and religious life. We could never be satisfied with a mere appeal to the hour or moment when this exciting cause produced its influence; we could never be content with a mere declaration of having 'tasted and seen' the goodness of the Lord in conveying light to the darkened mind and conviction to the alienated heart;—we should rather say, that it was

safer to rely upon the evidences of a believing heart—upon the manifestations of the 'Spirit of Christ'—in the conduct and in the life, than to dwell upon the circumstantial, either as to time or secondary cause, of the conversion which is professed to be begotten.

The following account of the last meeting of the 'EASTERN CLERICAL ASSOCIATION' has been sent to us by an esteemed member of that body; while by the Secretary we have been kindly furnished with a resolution touching our editorial labours, to which we intend hereafter to revert:—

The last meeting of the Eastern Clerical Association was held at Carleton Place, Bathurst District, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 7th and 8th instant. The subjects which chiefly occupied the attention of the members, were.—1. What powers did the Laity possess in the choice of Bishops, and in the regulation of the affairs of the church in the age immediately succeeding the Apostles.—2. Inquiry into the Scriptural authority for the order of Deacon, and the validity of Lay-Baptism.—3. The case of the Presbyters of Alexandria choosing their own Bishops.

These were the subjects of discussion which chiefly occupied the meeting; others were briefly touched upon, but postponed for future consideration. Amongst the latter are, 'The relative excellency of prayer and preaching, and an examination into the full purport of the 28th and 29th verses of the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians; which, it is understood, are to be the prominent subjects of discussion at the next meeting.'

On the evenings of Wednesday and Thursday, Divine Service was performed in the Church at 7 o'clock. The prayers, on these occasions were read by the Rev. G. Archbold and the Rev. H. Patton; and the sermons were preached by the Rev. S. S. Strong, and the Rev. B. Lindsay,—the former having taken his text from 1 Cor. v. 14, 15, 16 verses, and the latter from 1 John iv., 7, 8 verses."

Our correspondent adds that, from various uncontrollable circumstances, this was the first opportunity he had enjoyed of associating with his reverend brethren on these interesting occasions; but expresses the high satisfaction which he derived from the present attendance, and his conviction that the greatest advantage to the Church, and to the cause of religion generally, must result from these Associations of the Clergy.

UPPER CANADA CLERGY SOCIETY.

LETTER FROM THE REV. H. H. O'NEILL.

March 17th, 1836.—Having received my license from the Bishop, I set off for the township of Whitby, on Lake Ontario; here I remained until the 7th of April, preaching to large congregations during the week, and three successive Sundays, and occasionally extending my visits to the Townships of Pickering and Darlington. It would occupy too much time and space to transmit a detailed account of my proceedings during this period, suffice it to say, that every where I was welcomed. In every place a kind feeling toward the Church existed or was speedily produced, and great desire expressed that I should prolong my stay, or that a Minister should be sent among them. In Darlington a good church is built, but there is no resident Minister.

June 13th, 1836.—In looking round upon the spiritual destitution of this naturally fine country, how powerfully are the words of our blessed Lord suggested to my thoughts, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few!" May He incline the hearts of his servants to obey his own direction under such circumstances, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

Nov. 11th, 1836.—I set out from Toronto on the 18th of June, and returned on the 21st of October, confining myself to the Home District, within the limits of which I traversed twenty-three townships, preached 62 sermons, and administered 120 baptisms, &c. Eleven of these townships I had visited before. And merely to say that (notwithstanding the excited state of public feeling occasioned by a general election then going on throughout the province, bad weather, and worse roads), I found them willing in every instance to attend upon my ministrations, would but very inadequately represent the kind and welcome feeling manifested by every denomination on my second appearance amongst them.

June 20th, 1836.—A greater anxiety (if possible) was manifested in the township of Gore for a church and Minister. The roads were exceedingly bad, but this did not prevent a numerous congregation from assembling twice on Sunday in the large room of a tavern. The meeting for Scripture conversation and prayer in the same place was both interesting, and I trust profitable. I make no doubt if a Minister of piety and zeal was sent among them, he would find a ready welcome from the people, and receive such contributions towards his support as their circumstances would allow. They are ready to build a church if a minister of this description were to come to them.

July 12th, 1836.—Albion had received no visit from a minister for ten months. On the second day of my arrival I admitted to baptism, after due examination, besides several children, two grown up persons, one eighteen years of age, the other sixteen years, which last was born of Baptist parents. The congregation, some of whom had never been baptized, were exceedingly attentive. Besides preaching on the subject, I gave tracts to the young women who were, I trust, seriously impressed. Next morning a whole family of children, from fourteen years and under were baptized. This township is thinly inhabited on the east side. For a distance of ten miles close to a forest, between Boulton's Mills and Lloyd Town, there were only two houses, both inhabited by Presbyterians, by whom I was immediately requested to baptize two naked boys who were playing in the sun before the door.

July 20th.—This was my third visit to Newmarket. While in search of my horse I discovered some Unitarians (called in this country Christians) and made an arrangement to preach to them in a school-house, where they are accustomed to meet for their mode of worship. Nothing had been done to the church at Newmarket since my last visit; however, the want of windows in summer is less felt here than at home: rude seats were quickly placed, and a rough pulpit, with a green cloth, served here as in the former case. The largeness of the congregations on this day, the first time of using the church, at both services, induced me to prolong my stay another week. But the most interesting circumstance connected with this visit was a permission

obtained to preach to the followers of a person well known in this part, whose name is David Wilson; he lives about four miles from Newmarket, in the village of Hope, township of East Gwillimbury. This singular character, who is reported to have been formerly a sailor, in coming to this country joined the Society of Friends, from whom he was soon separated. Being a good mechanic, he constructed, with the help of his followers, (who style themselves the Children of Peace) a beautiful frame building, which has received the imposing name of the Temple of Peace. In addition to this he has two meeting-houses, an old one where Sabbath services are conducted, for the present; and a new one, on a larger and grander scale, not yet finished: all three upon his own land. His religious opinions are a motley mixture of Judaism, Quakerism and Unitarianism. His public services consist of political harangues against Church and State, Tories, Clergy Reserves, &c. Prayer forms no part of his Sabbath ordinances—the pauses are filled up with pieces of music played by a band. He is an illiterate man, but numbers among his adherents several wealthy farmers.

August 22nd, 1836.— is a village beautifully situated on the south shore of Lake Huron. At the distance of three miles from the village, a military party is stationed, under the command of a lieutenant. The officers and men, as well as the inhabitants of the village, have frequently meditated the erection of a church; but the hopelessness of obtaining a minister has hitherto discouraged them from following up these resolutions: and latterly they have met with the strongest opposition from an active French Priest, sent here from Montreal. This gentleman's influence is unceasingly exerted for the increase of Popery. He is in the habit of visiting all the poorer Protestants, and actually made a proselyte of one named —, who would give me no other reason for invoking dead saints and worshipping a wafer, than that Mr. — was the only clergyman before me that came to his house and talked to him about his sins: "besides," said he, "my children are now schooled by the nuns; formerly they ran wild." I paid him two or three visits, but to all my arguments he still replied, "What better can I or my children do? When you are gone, where is the church or minister on Sunday? Are my children to be no better than heathens?"

Dec. 3rd, 1836.—In several conversations these three days with persons of the Universalist and other persuasions, I had full proof of the ingenuity with which plain Scripture was wrenched in support of their unhallowed principles. The inn at which I put up was kept by a Universalist, who is married and has children; he has several brothers who have large families, not one of whom have been baptized. The innkeeper at first declared that at Wellington Square there was no want of preachers, for they were visited by Baptists, Methodists, and best of all by Universalists. Upon expressing my surprise at his unqualified approval of the last mentioned denomination, he replied, "Yes, Sir, best of them all, they are rational;" other preachers consign to everlasting perdition all the human race but their respective sects, whereas the Universalist tells us that God will have all to be saved, and this is most agreeable to my idea of God's character. He is too merciful to punish any creature eternally for a few sins of this short life. What proportion is there between temporary sins and eternal torments?" Without entering into the particulars of my reply, I represented to him the fallacy of his arguments, and the dangerous unscriptural tendency of the system he had adopted. After some pause, he added, I am not learned enough to talk or give an opinion on these matters, but I confess there is a want of properly educated preachers in this country: much harm is done from our having none but ignorant men to explain the Scriptures.

Feb. 6th, 1837.—In conclusion we may observe, from the experience of one year's residence in this country, that the people in England can form but a very inadequate idea of the spiritual destitution of their friends, who emigrate and settle in the wilds of Canada; nor is the condition less to be commiserated of those who are collected in hamlets and villages unprovided with a resident minister. Letters, books, and verbal descriptions may carry home a mournful tale, but an accurate knowledge of the sad truth can be obtained by personal observation alone.

I am far from pretending by any representations I make to supply the deficiencies of others who have preceded me in writing on this subject; but I am willing to contribute, in the way of duty, my feeble aid towards awakening an interest at home which might induce our brethren in the mother country to consider the claims this colony has upon British sympathy, and to lead them to see that notwithstanding what has been already done there yet is room, abundant room, for the works of faith and labours of love.

Without disparaging Missionary exertions in Pagan lands, it is allowable to remark that no time or pains need be expended here in acquiring a foreign language, nor life endangered by unhealthiness of climate, but that health, piety, and talent, consecrated to the work, become at once available in a few short weeks after leaving the British shore.

The people at home are for the most part naturally engrossed with home proceedings, and such of them as give their attention to other countries take a greater interest in the Hindoos and worshippers of the Ganges than in the condition of the professed worshippers of the true God in the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. This apathy and unconcern may at length be removed by constantly bringing under their notice the periodical reports of the missionaries labouring in this quarter; thus urging upon their attention the distressing state of their brethren in this neglected region, and thereby the many fervent entreaties to "come over and help us," again and again repeated, may at length, in God's good time, be heard and fully answered.

LETTERS received to Friday March 30th:—

Rev. C. T. Wade;—P. M. Thornhill, (the papers have been forwarded);—J. B. Ewart Esq. rem. in full for vol. 1, including rem. from Rev. J. Miller;—Dr. Low, rem.;—Rev. W. Macaulay, rem.;—F. H. Howard Esq.;—Rev. G. Mackie;—Rev. J. L. Alexander;—Rev. S. Armour, (with £4 10s. for Trav. Miss. Society);—J. Kent Esq. with enclosures.