

sion, he thought it but fitting to observe, in the presence of so many members of the congregation, that if the industry of the churchwardens and Secretary had been very great, and the affairs of our parish in so flourishing a condition, still he felt, as he was sure this meeting would feel with him, that this happy result was principally owing to the ministrations, the talents, and untiring energy of the chairman; and that if he (Mr. Robinson) had great pleasure in moving the adoption of the Report, he felt equal if not greater pleasure in having it in his power to record this fact thus publicly.

Mr. R. C. McMULLEN seconded the resolution, which was adopted, viz.:

"That the Report now read be received, and adopted, and that it be printed and circulated among the congregation."

The Rev. J. G. D. McKENZIE proposed the second resolution, which, he said, from its nature was one usually entrusted to a clergyman; and with propriety, as it states "that in recording our past efforts and the increase of success that has attended them, we gratefully recognize the goodness of Almighty aid which has hitherto helped us." But this duty was not for clergymen alone to perform; and he trusted this assembly would consider the words of the resolution as of grateful significance and not of mere form; words which should come, not from the lip, but from the heart. We stand now in the house of the Almighty God. In this fair temple, raised to the honour of His name, the liquidation of the debt which has led to the exhibition of those Christian energies and zeal to which the report refers; and he had no doubt the spirit of this resolution would be responded to, and that all around him could here record their thanks to Almighty God. Thanks to God for benefits was deemed an obligation in all religions, and even the heathens acknowledged it by their voluntary offerings and sacrifices. Much more was it their duty; yet it was one to be performed with caution; and they should take heed that, while they recorded their thanks to Almighty God, they took no credit to themselves—made no mental reservation—there should be nought of vanity and pride—no idea of creature merit should have place in works of this description. To God alone the glory should be given. Now, let us consider, have we done our duty? can we declare that we have discharged it according to our means, our talents, and our opportunity? We must not rest with recording our thanks for the work, on which perhaps the many have had small concern. We must entreat of God to excite us to greater exertion and greater sacrifices. With our hearts overflowing with fraternity and fellow-feeling, we should deem no offering too costly for the House of the Almighty, nothing too valuable to dedicate to His services. Solomon dedicated his life to the erection of a temple to the Most High; and the cedars of Lebanon and the gold of Arabia were brought in aid. On the mitre of Aaron, the high priest, the type of Christ, "Holiness to the Lord," was inscribed in gold. Nothing was too costly in his honour. There he would state his happiness in acknowledging the debt he owed to the chairman for the introduction of the system of thank offerings among the congregation. He (the speaker) also had introduced it among his congregation with much success; there were not, it is true, the same striking results in his parish as exhibited here, but still his success was encouraging; and what could be more acceptable to Almighty God than such a grateful acknowledgment of His mercies. Thus let dissenters see our zeal in the cause of God. This will have more effect, and do much to bring them over from their unwise separation from the Catholic religion. We have privileges that are the legacy of centuries. We have a lineage that traces to the Apostles themselves; but while we glory in Apostolic succession, let no unchristian spirit take possession of our hearts. Let Christian love be the identity of brotherhood, and let us imitate the families mentioned in scripture, who, having lands sold them, not for their personal aggrandizement or private objects, but brought the money and laid it at the Apostles' feet.

Mr. HARMAN seconded the resolution, which was put and carried, viz.:

"That in recording our past efforts, and the increase of success that has attended them, we gratefully recognize the goodness of Almighty aid which has hitherto helped us."

Capt. J. H. LEFROY proposed the third resolution. It had been on the last occasion, as it was now, felt to be matter of regret that they were obliged to hold their meetings in this sacred edifice. No one could help feeling that public meetings, even for religious objects, were essentially things of a secular character, and they required for their full efficiency a freedom of speech and a liberty of action which were not easy to be reconciled with those subdued and reverential feelings which we must desire to maintain in that building, of which our old poet had said—

"God is more there than thou; for thou art there  
Only by his permission. Then, beware,  
And keep thyself all reverence and fear."

It was also no trifling element in the unfitness of the place in which they were assembled for such a purpose that it prohibited those expressions of feeling on the part of the audience which give encouragement to the speaker, and animation to the meeting. On this subject, therefore, little need be said, and he would pass to the inference that it should induce us to use greater exertions for the extinction of that debt, by which we were restrained from providing another place. He should feel much delicacy, however, in pressing this subject, after the satisfactory report which had been made on that head, and the very recent noble response of the congregation to the appeal made in the annual sermon for this object were it not that he felt assured that there was yet no inconsiderable proportion of the congregation which did not feel the paramount force of this particular claim. He remarked that there were some persons who became impatient at the very mention of the subject. Some, more particularly among those who had joined the congregation since it was first prominently brought forward, who could be brought with great difficulty to acknowledge that it had any claims upon them. Lastly, there were some who appeared to think that enough was done in this direction by others, and that their exertions might be directed to newer and more interesting objects. On these grounds he felt that it could not be unreasonable once more to urge strongly that the extinction of the debt should be the first object of every endeavour, while it remained we could enter heartily upon no other, however tempting or urgent. He pointed out that one way of effecting it would be for parties to come forward and purchase the leases of their pews. If sixty or seventy of these were sold for a term of years, even at a very low rate, it would almost clear the Church of debt. He then adverted to the desire indicated by the resolution, that a place could be provided where the children of this parish might be offered a sound scriptural edu-

cation. Of how great necessity this was, every year gave fresh proofs; in no other way could the rising generation be preserved from dangers which threatened our times. We saw infidelity on the one hand following in the train of those who separated religion from education; we saw Romanism on the other, re-asserting pretensions against which we had for three centuries been protesting, and making renewed efforts to establish its baneful dominion. Against both alike there was one and but one remedy; Scriptural education, under the guidance of that Church, in whose safe middle-way Christian truth had ever since the Reformation found its greatest security.

Mr. WM. SPRAGGE seconded the resolution. Amongst the means of increased utility pointed out, was the erection of a school-house, for the instruction of the children of the congregation, many of whom were alike ignorant of the nature of dissent and Romanism. As to the debt of the Church, for a long time they had only covered the interest and paid no part of the principal; but now he was happy to find the latter was in course of liquidation, and though the stock in the Building Society could not be fully paid up for years, yet it was a substantial means ultimately; and his belief was that the residue might be easily raised amongst the congregation. Other objects pressed upon us, but this was a paramount obligation. Then came the school-house and parsonage. The rent for the latter was making inroads upon their funds which need not be if a house were erected. At this moment we are threatened with being deprived of the Clergy Reserves, and if that take place we should then have to provide not only for all the wants of our own clergy, but also to aid our brethren in the country. The resolution was then put and carried, viz.:

"That it is matter of regret that we are obliged to hold our meetings in this sacred edifice; and that this necessity should excite us to redoubled exertions to liquidate the debt of the Church, in order to justify us in building a School-house, where not only may the children of our parish receive a sound scriptural education, but also where similar meetings may be held."

The Hon. H. SHERWOOD, M. P., proposed the fourth resolution, and said it afforded him great pleasure to hear the highly satisfactory report which had been submitted to them read. When he called to recollection the organization of the Church Society in 1842, he could not but observe that the promoters of it never could have contemplated such a rapid progress of its principles, and such an extension of its objects as its annals exhibited at the present time. It had wrought wonders in carrying out the objects intended; but still a great deal yet remained to be done. Even within the limited sphere of this parochial branch, there were wants of great importance to be supplied; but, he trusted, efforts would be made to meet them, and speedily too, notwithstanding they had many calls upon them for other matters connected with other churches in the city. He was sure they could be accomplished, and in saying this he expressed the sentiments of all who heard him, and of all others who take an interest in the Church Society. The resolution which had been placed in his hands directly related to the dissemination and diffusion of religious knowledge amongst the people, inasmuch as it has reference to a portion of the funds on which the Church had hitherto depended to carry this as well as other important objects into effect. The Clergy Reserves, it is well known, have been the subject of warm and acrimonious discussion for many years. Many who had come to the country within the last few years had seen and heard enough of this matter to induce them to pray that the discussion might never be renewed; and those who had lived in the country for the last twenty-five years, and who had taken part in the proceedings of this question, regarded the attempt to re-open it with a great deal of alarm. When the subject was first agitated it was generally understood and believed that the endowment was intended for the Church of England alone, and for years that opinion prevailed. Subsequently, however, and after much agitation, the highest legal authorities in England gave it as their opinion that it was intended for the support of the two established Churches of England and Scotland. The announcement of this decision was not received with much satisfaction in the colony, and the question became the all-absorbing topic. It was the source for many years of a great portion of its troubles. It was the never-failing watchword at the hustings, "the political spring of discord, strife, and hatred." Legislative proceedings were adopted without end. Numerous bills were passed by the House of Assembly, to appropriate the Reserves to secular purposes, as many, he said, as fourteen in number; but no bill had received the sanction of the two Houses of the Legislature, till, in 1839, when they passed a bill which was reserved, to re-invest them in the Crown, to be disposed of by the Imperial Parliament, for the support of religion. This bill Her Majesty would not sanction, as the effect of it was to transfer the duty from the local Legislature to Parliament, with a particular restriction; and her Majesty was advised by the law officers of the Crown that such a proceeding was unconstitutional. After this, in the session of 1839 and '40, when Charles Poulett Thompson, afterwards Lord Sydenham, came to Upper Canada to carry his Union resolutions, a second bill was passed by the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, at his suggestion, to settle this question. During this Session he sent down a message to each branch of the Legislature, in which he said—"In the opinion of the Governor-General, the circumstances of the present time imperiously demand a settlement of this long agitated question. The probable approach of the Union of the two Provinces would at once suggest the expediency of bringing to a termination, before that event shall occur, a matter so peculiarly affecting Upper Canada; nor is it less necessary, with a view to remove a source of unceasing excitement and discord within the Province, the protracted existence of which opens a bar to that tranquility so necessary to its prosperity. Deeply impressed with these feelings, the Governor-General has given to the subject all the attention in his power; and he has directed a measure to be prepared, to which he earnestly invites the consideration of the House of Assembly, in the anxious hope that it may tend to a final and satisfactory adjustment." The lands by this bill were to be devoted exclusively to religious instruction or to religious purposes. One-half of the future proceeds thereof was to be secured to the Churches of England and Scotland, subject to no variation and to no contingency. The remainder was to be given for the support of religious instruction amongst the different persuasions of Christians recognized by the laws of the Province, in proportion to the population of each sect, to be ascertained at fixed periods. Upon the basis of this bill the Imperial Act of 3rd & 4th Victoria, under which they were now acting, was passed as a final measure. After the Provincial bill was passed by the two branches of the Legislature, they requested Mr.

Thompson to transmit it to Her Majesty for her assent, and to this request he answered as follows:—"I will transmit the bill for the sale of the Clergy Reserves, and for the distribution of the proceeds thereof, together with your joint address, as required by law, without any delay, to Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State. I congratulate you most sincerely upon having thus terminated, so far as depends on your exertions, the agitation of a question which has now, for nearly twenty years, been the fruitful source of disagreement in the Legislature, and of strife and contentions among the people of this Province. May the Great Author of all Peace prosper your work; and in the restoration of tranquility to the country, and the extension of the blessings of religious instruction amongst the people, may you reap the rewards of your labour." And in his Speech at the prorogation of that session, he says—"By the bill which you have passed for the disposal of the Clergy Reserves, you have, so far as your constitutional powers admit, set at rest a question which for years past has convulsed society in this Province. In framing that measure, you have consulted alike the best interests of religion and the future peace and welfare of the people for whose service you are called upon to legislate; and I rely upon your efforts proving successful, notwithstanding any attempt which may be made to renew excitement or raise opposition to your deliberate and recorded judgment. It must be apparent then to every dispassionate man that the question as settled was intended to be final, and that it was so understood and accepted by the people, for no step to evince a contrary feeling had been taken for a period of upwards of ten years and not until the Commissioner of Crown Lands had introduced his celebrated resolutions into the Legislative Assembly during the last sojourn. As a further proof of what Lord Sydenham intended and what he understood by the passage of the Bill in 1839-40, in a dispatch accompanying the Bill to England, he thus wrote—"To establish the Union, without the settlement of this question, and to transfer the decision to the United Legislature, would be to add to the miseries of discord which already unhappily prevail in the Lower Province an entirely new element of strife—for amongst the various evils by which Lower Canada has been visited—one and one only—perhaps the greatest of all, has been wanting—religious dissent." In the year 1846, he said, it was true that the members of the Church of England had petitioned the legislature in consequence of the extravagance that was practised by the Government in the management of the Clergy Lands to have their share placed under their own control and in the same way the shares of others, if they wished it—some 40 or 50 per cent. upon the sums deducted having been allowed to agents and clerks, and which it was apprehended would, in a very short time, absorb the whole fund. These petitions were referred to a committee who, for the reasons set forth in their report, recommended the prayer of the petitioners to be favourable consideration of the House. Contrary petitions had also been introduced praying that no such change should be made, as it would be impolitic and unwise to give to religious corporations large tracts of wild and unsettled lands to manage. These petitions were also referred to a committee about the same time, of which committee the Hon. James Harvey Price was a member, and in their report to the House they express great regret that the long agitated question of the Clergy Reserves had again become a subject of discussion, and state that—"The Imperial Legislature intended the last statute to be a final settlement of the question, and notwithstanding the inequality of the division, it was accepted by the inhabitants of this Province as such." And they closed their report by strongly recommending that no change or deviation from the present system should be sanctioned by the legislature. In the face of this declaration that the question was finally settled, and was so accepted by the people, Mr. James Harvey Price introduced a series of resolutions having for their object the unsettlement of the question and a return to another ten or twenty years excitement of the worst and most dangerous kind. He sets forth, as the strong grounds for this proceeding, that the Representatives of the people had repeatedly disposed of these lands for other and different purposes than for that for which they were intended. Lord Sydenham gave this as the strongest reason that could exist for the final settlement of the question. Price's resolutions too contained this specious suggestion to cover the iniquity of his design, that the rights of present Incumbents should be respected. What was to become of religion, one would naturally ask, after the present Incumbents had passed off the scene of their labours? The increased population of the country, he said, would then demand increased spiritual aid, yet at such a time we should be deprived of the miserable pittance which the Church now receives from these resources. The property is held now under the guarantee of an Act of the Imperial Parliament, which ought to be considered as sacred as any treaty or any grant from the Crown. Then again the manner in which this question had been again brought before the country strikes a person as being exceedingly strange. According to our present system of Responsible Government, if a question of this nature was to be the subject of legislative action, it should be brought in as a Government measure upon the responsibility of Government. If it ought not to be entertained, then it should be opposed by the Government—on their responsibility also. In this instance it had been made an open question. Mr. Attorney General Lafontaine, the Premier, voting against it. Besides these resolutions, adopted in the extraordinary manner they were, they were transmitted to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, by His Excellency the Governor General who could not be said to have acted upon the advice of his Cabinet, for the principal members of it was opposed to the proceedings, and if he advised him at all, it would have been to recommend the Government in England not to accede to the suggestions contained. Lord Sydenham declared that the settlement of 1840 was to be considered final—that it would be unwise, if not unjust, to re-open it and transfer the decision to the united legislature. If, as Lord Sydenham said, it was important to settle it before the union was consummated, it was all important to maintain that settlement after the consummation of the union. Lord Elgin in his dispatch regrets the revival of agitation on the subject, and casts a sort of censure upon the friends of good order here, for endeavouring to influence opinion in England, rather than resort to measures, which may strengthen their position in this colony. He says, "the more violent and unscrupulous of the opponents of the existing settlement are enabled to create a prejudice against it by representing it to be the result of Imperial interference in a matter of Provincial concern." But he does not tell them in England, as he well might have done, that the object is to divert the proceeds of these lands from the support of religion altogether and to appropriate them

to educational or other secular purposes, if the legislature can again obtain the controul of them. The resolution I am now about to move, advises that vigorous operations should be set on foot to oppose any interference with the existing settlement. The feeling throughout the Province, he believed was adverse to any such interference—nay, many individuals who prior to 1840, were willing to consent that religion should be deprived of all public support, now feel that as the question is settled it should remain at rest—who then agitates the question now? a single member of the Executive Government in opposition to the chief of his colleagues. Is not such a state of things a downright mockery, and an insult upon the intelligence of the people? Though Lord Grey states in his despatch to Lord Elgin, of the 27th of January last, that the ministry will introduce a bill into Parliament to repeal the Imperial Act, with a view of throwing the question back again upon the Canadian Legislature, he has not yet succeeded in getting such a bill passed. Our battle therefore in the first place is to be fought in England, notwithstanding Lord Elgin's opinions, and if we fill there the contest must again be resumed here. We should therefore unite throughout the length and breadth of the land, to prepare for the encounter. Our position is now changed from what it was formerly. Before 1840, the question was in a very unsettled state. There was a variety of interpretations put upon the meaning of the provisions of the Constitutional Act, by which these lands were set apart. The Legislature here had the power to alter, vary or repeal those provisions—they did so, and upon the basis of their bill, the Imperial Parliament enacted the present Clergy Reserve Act, the language of which is clear, distinct and incapable of but one construction. The Church claims its property now under the clear and positive enactment of a statute, and time will shew whether a grant of land made under such circumstances for the support of religion is to be held sacred or not.

JOHN ARNOLD, Esq., seconded the resolution, which was put and carried, viz.:

"That the threatened attempt to open again the Clergy Reserve question, which was intended to be finally settled by the Imperial Act 3 & 4 Vic., ch. 78, is much to be deprecated, as placing it in the power of unscrupulous men to deviate these endowments from the pious purposes for which they were originally granted, namely, 'the maintenance and support of a Protestant Clergy,' and as tending to revive that agitation which for years was the principle cause of much discontent and disturbance throughout the Province. And should the said attempt be persevered in, it will be the duty, not only of Churchmen, but of all others who feel an interest in the religious welfare of the people, to resort to vigorous measure to counteract it."

Dr. BEAVEN said—The resolution which I have been requested to support, contains matters so new and so important, that I trust I shall be excused in entering into the subject of it at considerable length, in order that this audience may be prepared to vote upon it with an accurate understanding of the matter of it. It refers to the Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of this Diocese, in which he has invited the clergy at his ensuing visitation to deliberate on the temporal condition of the Church at this important crisis, when one great means of the sustentation of the Church in this colony is threatened with annihilation; and in which he has likewise requested, that the lay communicants would send deputies from their number to assist the Clergy in their deliberations. In reference to this Pastoral, the resolution comprises three principal points: 1. That we rejoice in this meeting, inasmuch as we trust that it is the first step towards the revival of synodical meetings. 2. That we are gratified to find that on this occasion the Laity are called upon to assist in deliberating on the temporal affairs of the Church at this important crisis. 3. That we hope that at this important meeting both Clergy and Laity will exhibit a spirit of Christian confidence in their Diocesan. It may be proper that we should consider each of these points separately and carefully, that we may understand fully all their bearings. In the first part of the resolution, mention is made of synodical meetings; and as there is not at present much discussion on this subject, and it is one into the nature of which it is probable that the greater portion of this audience has not had time and opportunity to enter, I will venture to occupy their attention with some explanation. In all ages of the Christian Church, meetings have been held for the establishment of rules of discipline and regulations of worship, and for laying down decisions of doctrine; of the latter kind are the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church, of the former what are called the Canons. These meetings varied in their nature, according to the extent of the portion of the Church from which they were assembled, which was to be effected by their decisions. The most numerous of these meetings are those called general or ecumenical synods or councils. These consisted of Bishops alone, and were called together from large sections of the Christian World. Some were intended to act as representative bodies of the whole Christian world, so that their decisions might be universally received, and these are called ecumenical; but in strictness there have been no councils which consisted of Bishops from the whole of Christendom; and therefore these councils themselves are more properly called general. The second class of these meetings are called provincial synods or councils, and are assembled from smaller sections of the Church, denominated provinces, and which in their origin were co-ordinate with certain civil divisions, and presided over by Bishops, bearing the title of Metropolitan, Primate or Archbishop; and they consist for the most part of the Bishops of those Provinces. Thus the Kingdom of England is divided into two provinces, that of York, and that of Canterbury. The province of York comprises the northern part of England, and did formerly comprehend Scotland; the province of Canterbury comprises the southern part of England, and the whole of the colonies; so that we in this colony are within the province presided over by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and form a portion of that province. Each of these two provinces has its synod, or as it is called, its convention. The convocations of the Church of England have a peculiarity in which they differ from the provincial synods of foreign Churches, viz.—that they consist not of Bishops alone, but also of deputies from the Cathedral bodies and from the parochial clergy; so that the Presbyters or Priests form an integral portion of them. The reason of this peculiarity arises from the fact, that the Clergy formerly taxed themselves; and accordingly when the Laity were summoned to assemble to tax themselves in Parliament, the Clergy were summoned to assemble in Convocation for the same purpose. This led to these meetings being employed for the purpose of discussing any matter of doctrine, discipline or worship, upon which it was important that the Church should decide;