

Canadian Churchman.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 1853.

LEGISLATION FOR THE COLONIAL CHURCH.

We shall conclude our remarks on this subject by noticing the features of Mr. Gladstone's Bill somewhat more in detail.

The Bill does not profess to originate the right of the Colonial Church to meet in Synod for the regulation of their own affairs; for that was inherent in every Church antecedent to any Parliamentary Act; but as that right was surrendered by the Clergy of England, by the noted Act of Submission, 25, Henry VIII., and as doubts existed whether that Act, which still governs the Church in England, did not also bind the Clergy of the Colonies, the preamble of the present Bill sets forth that "it is expedient that such doubts should be removed, and that under certain restrictions they should be suffered to make regulations for the said management by agreement among themselves."

Sir J. Packington expressed his opinion that the Act of Submission could not impose any disabilities on the Colonies, and that the present Bill was unnecessary. In this view of the Act we concur with him, as to its not in any way affecting the Church in the Colonies; still we think that such a Bill as the one before us is expedient, both to terminate doubts, and to give an authorized resuscitation of rights which, if possessed, have certainly been long in abeyance.

The first clause relieves the Colonial Bishops, Clergy, and Laity from the weight of any statute of the United Kingdom which might be construed to prevent their free Synodical action. It is defective, however, in its description of the persons, merely saying,—"and the Lay persons of the Diocese, being declared or bona fide members of the Church of England, or being otherwise in communion with the same."

There is too much vagueness in these terms; for it would still be left to determine what sort of declaration should be required, or what should constitute bona fide or real membership, or what other way of being in connection, should be considered as satisfying the intention of the Bill.

If the Bill were to be taken as the origin of all our Synodical rights, such a vagueness in the description of the persons affected by it, would be a source of endless difficulty; the qualification not being precisely and clearly stated.

As the Bill, however, must be taken merely as a relieving enactment, declaring that the Church of England at large, in the Colonies, is not restrained in its Synodical action by any of the prohibitory statutes of the United Kingdom, it in fact sets the Church here at liberty in every thing connected with its self-regulation, except where certain restrictions are specified by the Bill. Saving those particulars, the Church is free to settle its own mode of meeting and proceeding; and the practical sense and judgment of the Church will, doubtless, as was well shown in its first Synod in May, 1852, decide upon the necessary details much better than any distant Legislature. The best practical mode seems that recommended by our Bishops at their conference, viz: That the Church should meet by representation, the Laity being represented by delegates chosen by the communicants of the several congregations.

The clause also leaves it open to the Church to meet in single Diocese or by combination of Diocese. We think it would be preferable to have one convocation for the whole of the Upper Province, into whatever number of Sees it may hereafter be subdivided; for it would certainly be more convenient to have uniformity in regulations and same Church.

On the last part of this clause which subjects the Church entirely to the authority of the Local Legislature, we have already expressed our opinion, as being a restriction totally inconsistent with the purpose of the Bill and the principles of religious liberty.

The second clause is as follows:—"But it shall not be lawful to impose by any such regulation any temporal or pecuniary penalty or disability, other than loss of the emoluments of any ecclesiastical office or benefice, under any sentence or proceeding affecting the tenure thereof." This effectually guards the private and civil rights of individuals, preventing the Church from depriving them of anything but what they receive from, or hold under, her.

The third clause—"And no such regulation shall be binding on any person or persons other than the said Bishop or Bishops and their Clergy, with the Lay persons residing within the said Colonies, and being declared as bona fide members of the Church of England, or being otherwise in connection with the same."

This clause effectually negatives any charge of an attempt at "dominancy" over other religious denominations or persons. The regulations of the Church are to rule the Church only, and none beyond its pale.

The second and third clauses would empower the Synod, "to avoid any ecclesiastical office or benefice," that of a Bishop not excepted. We conceive that under the constitution of the Church of England, the power of suspending or depriving a Bishop ought not to be vested in any Synod, whether of one or several Dioceses, but should be reserved to the Crown.

The fifth clause maintains the subordination of the Bishop, Clergy and Laity, to the See of Canterbury.

The sixth is the clause which virtually dispenses with the oath of supremacy, and to which we referred in our first article on this subject.

The seventh provides for the extension of the Act by order in Council, to other Dioceses besides those specified in the schedule appended.

Though we should be sorry to see the Bill passed exactly in its present form, we think it may by some further amendments be adapted to the purpose for which it was designed. Nor would we close our critique without expressing our feeling that the Colonial Church is deeply indebted to the honourable gentleman who, in framing the Bill, and seeking to obtain some definite legislation on the subject, has shown so much zeal and interest in our welfare.

SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES.

Some philanthropic ladies, prompted, as we are well convinced, by the purest and most christian motives, are at present extensively circulating the subjoined document throughout our Diocese:

"The Duchess of Sutherland has invited the Women of England to join her in an affectionate Address to the Women of the United States on the subject of Slavery.

The Undersigned Women of Canada, equally British subjects with those of England, and nearer to the scene of Slavery, sympathise warmly in the feelings which promoted the Address, and adopt it as their own.

THE ADDRESS IS AS FOLLOWS:—

"A common origin, a common faith, and, we sincerely believe, a common cause, urge us the present moment to address you on the subject of that system of negro slavery, which still prevails so extensively, and even under kindly disposed masters, with such frightful results, in many of the vast regions of the Western World.

"We will not dwell on the ordinary topics—on the progress of civilization, on the advance of freedom everywhere, on the rights and requirements of the 19th century—but we appeal to you very seriously to reflect, and to ask counsel of God, how far such a state of things is in accordance with His Holy Word, inalienable rights of immortal souls, and the pure and merciful spirit of the Christian religion.

"We do not shut our eyes to the difficulties, nay the dangers, that might beset the immediate abolition of that long-established system; we see and admit the necessity of preparation for so great an event; but, in speaking of indispensable preliminaries, we cannot be silent on those laws of your country which, in direct contravention of God's own law, 'instituted in the time of man's innocency,' deny, in effect to the slave the sanctity of marriage, with all its joys, rights, and obligations, which separates, at the will of the master, the wife from the husband, and the children from the parents. Nor can we be silent on that awful system which, either by statute or by custom, interdicts to any race of men, or any portion of the human family, education in the truth of the Gospel and the ordinances of Christianity.

"A remedy applied to these two evils alone would commence the amelioration of their sad condition. We appeal, then, to you as sisters, as wives, and mothers, to raise your voices to your fellow-citizens, and your prayers to God, for the removal of this affliction from the Christian world. We do not say these things in a spirit of self-complacency, as though our nation were free from the guilt of it perceives in others. We acknowledge with grief and shame our heavy share in this great sin. We acknowledge that our forefathers introduced, nay, compelled the adoption of slavery in those mighty colonies. We humbly confess it before Almighty God; and it is because we so deeply feel and so unfeignedly avow our own complicity, that we now venture to implore your aid to wipe away our common crime and our common dishonour."

Our opinions on the question of slavery are well known to all who have been in the habit of perusing this sheet. From first to last we have testified against it as the most gigantic and monstrous of all moral or political iniquities. We regard the system as being repugnant alike to the laws of God, and the instinct of our common humanity; and having a necessary tendency to engender vice and crime, wherever the poisonous shadow of its branches prevail.

Such being our matured convictions, we hail with pleasure every legitimate movement directed against the enormity of enforced servitude. From the bottom of our

heart do we bid God-speed to all who devote their energies to the uprootment of this infernal tree; and we rejoice that the women of Canada have resolved to follow the example of their sisters in the mother country, by the adoption of the admirable Address which we have given above.

Having so unquestionably expressed our sentiments on the general question, we trust that we may be pardoned for asserting with all deference, that the Address, though excellent so far as it goes, yet exhibits an omission which if not supplied will greatly militate against the attainment of the object in view. We refer to the marked—the sudden silence preserved on the subject of compensation to the slave-holder.

This has been all along the fatal error of the abolitionists of the neighbouring Republic. With burning eloquence and melting pathos, and withering sarcasm they have painted the ten thousand miseries of the sable bondmen, and the cruelties of those who hold them in servitude. To use a common expression they have turned the subject inside out—with the single, but signal exception to which we have made reference. They have been generous but not just. Most liberal have they been with their sympathy, but with an unwholesome and ungainly thrift have they kept their pockets tightly buttoned whenever the pecuniary portion of the question came to be hinted at.

And what has been the result of this one-sided and most selfish course of procedure, precisely what might have been anticipated. The southern planter finding himself denounced as a brigand with whom no terms of compromise fell to be made, has been rendered a hundred fold more callous to the claims of the negro serf than he otherwise, in all human probability would have been. With him the question has become one of life or death, commercially speaking. Ruin, sweeping, inevitable ruin would follow the unconditional emancipation of his human chattels, and the abolitionists, if they do not declare in so many words that they will oppose compensation, at least virtually act as if such a declaration was emblazoned in front of their platforms. Slavery they denounce with all the fervid emphasis which they can command: remuneration they do not so much as whisper!

Are the women of Canada prepared to identify themselves with a course of action so utterly sordid and one-sided? most earnestly do we trust that they are not? most earnestly do we trust that they are actuated by the same honest and straight forward spirit which impelled the parliament of their Fatherland to pay millions out of an exchequer exhausted by a gigantic war, towards the righteous redemption of the slaves of Colonial Britain!

Let the text then nobly read to them be their rule of action in the present instance. Our females do not deny that compensation is a matter of simple and indisputable justice. In the address above recited they say in reference to the slavery existing in Republican America: "we acknowledge with grief and shame our heavy share in this great sin. We acknowledge that our forefathers introduced nay compelled the adoption of slavery in those mighty Colonies." These premises being thus so frankly admitted, the bounden duty of compensation follows as an irresistible conclusion. And we assert without hesitation that the candour and fairdealing which should ever distinguish the daughters of England demand that this duty should be prominently dwelt upon in any appeal regarding slavery to their Republican Sisters.

The address which has given rise to these remarks is to the "Women of the United States."

Now the women of the free States, require no stimulus in the premises. They have sufficiently demonstrated that their warmest sympathies have been excited in favour of the captive negro, and not even the breath of a British Peeress can make the flame of their ardour burn with a more enthusiastic glow.

Mainly therefore must the address be intended to operate upon the hearts and consciences of the female denizens of the Southern or Slave-holding States.

Let us ask the fair Canadian originators of this movement, how their appeal would be received by the parties immediately above indicated, lacking, as it does, the most dream-like allusion to the question of compensation? Would the Southern woman not be inclined to regard it as being little short of a studied insult?

"You talk to us," she would naturally say, "about the frightful results of the system which you denounce. I admit the truth of all that you say." There are few well-principled Southern ladies who would not readily make such an admission. "You confess moreover that the system was not one either of our seeking or our making. Our ancestors did not populate their plantations of their own accord, with the dark hued bondsmen. On

the contrary, by your own shewing they were compelled by the peremptory fiat of law so to do.

"Do you aim after the unconditional emancipation of our slaves? Then you demand our patrimonial ruin. Our husbands, and fathers, and brothers could no more afford to make such a sacrifice than her Grace of Sutherland could afford to abandon the rent revenue of her princely estates in Scotland.

"If you disclaim any such views," would the Southern woman continue, "why do you not say so, plainly and categorically? Why not wind up your sisterly address with a business-like assurance, that as you have been 'heavy sharers in the sin,' so you are willing and ready to be as heavy sharers in the pecuniary sacrifice necessary to do that sin away? In this way alone can you demonstrate the sincerity of your aspirations, and redeem yourselves from the stigma of being mere lip-sentimentalists, like the cold-blooded fictionist Stern, who would shed tears over a dead ass, but refuse to bestow a shilling for the relief of human misery!"

It is because we earnestly and devoutly long for the utter extinction of slavery, and its myriad attendant horrors, that we have spoken so plainly, and it may be unpalatably. Emancipation never can take place without the concurrence of the slaveholder—never, we mean in a christian and legitimate manner, such as the women of Canada alone could approve of. And never will the slave-holders become parties to a settlement of the question, till their interests and unquestionable claims, are fully admitted, and made the basis of any remonstrance or negotiation.

We trust therefore that the printed form of the Address already in circulation, will be recalled, and superseded by another recognizing distinctly the duty of compensation, and pledging the memorialists to contribute toward a fund originated for that purpose to the utmost extent of their means and abilities. For want of such a clause the Address got up by the Duchess of Sutherland has been severely censured by some of the leading journals of the Empire; and the same vital omission, it requires no seer to predict, will insure its being received in the Southern States of the neighbouring Republic with feelings at once of contempt and antagonism.

GRIMSBY PAROCHIAL SCHOOL.

We learn with much satisfaction that the Rector of Grimsby has succeeded in establishing a parochial School in his parish. From a circular issued by the Rev. Doctor, we extract the following statement of the "chief reasons" which led him to take this step.

"1st, That the youth, who have been admitted into Christ's Holy Church by Baptism, may be so instructed in all things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health," that they may "daily increase in His Holy Spirit more and more."

2nd, That, while the "Principles of the Doctrine of Christ" form the leading feature of instruction, a good and sound English Education may be offered to such of the youth of the Parish as may desire to turn their attention to Agriculture, Commerce, or Mechanics.

3rd, That, if any desire to embrace either of the Learned Professions, they may be enabled to qualify themselves for an Academical Education, in this School, without entailing on their friends the expense of sending them away from home.

Thus, depending on the blessing of God, this humble attempt to impart sound Religious and Secular Instruction to the youth of Grimsby Parish is made.—Psalm xc. 17.

One excellent regulation of the school is that the pupils are required to attend the Sunday school and to accompany the Rector and Teacher to Church on Sunday, Holydays, and Fasts. It is likewise stipulated that they sit with the Teacher when in Church.

In order to do every justice to the institution the Rector has secured the services of a teacher from the Oxford Diocesan Training School, a gentleman, we understand, well qualified to conduct efficiently such an establishment.

With much interest will we watch the progress of this most meritorious attempt to establish a parochial seminary in which the youth of our communion may be indoctrinated at once with religious and secular knowledge. It stands forth as a solemn practical protest against the infidel common school system with which Canada is at present cursed, a system, we trust doomed to speedy and deserved extinction.

THE CLERGY AND THE PRESS.

We commend to the attention of our clerical friends the following article from the Philadelphia Presbyterian, containing as it does matter worthy of serious consideration. There can be no question that a religious paper extensively circulated in a parish or mission tends mightily to interest the people in the progress and strugglings of the