

To the Editor of the Canadian Churchman.

SIR.—The subjects which I wish to call your attention, although relating more immediately to one of the Lower Provinces, is, I conceive, of vast importance to the Church generally. From the anomalous position of the Church of England in the British North American Colonies, she has to contend against many evils which she has not the power to correct. Were that of which I complain of this nature, I should not trouble you with any remarks of mine upon it. I do not regard it, however, in this light, and I, therefore, think we have a right to complain of it, and ought to endeavour to rectify it.

About fifteen months ago, a clergyman from one of the Canadian Dioceses paid a visit to some friends residing in a populous parish in one of the Lower Provinces. He was received kindly by the two clergymen laboring in the parish, who courteously asked him to officiate for them, and, when he left, he took with him their best wishes, both for his temporal and spiritual welfare. At the end of rather more than a year, he paid another visit to his friends—was again welcomed by the clergyman officiating in the parish, and, although the novelty of the thing had in some measure worn off, he still had his admirers among the parishioners. The abilities will take for a time with almost any congregation. The difficulty is to continue to please. And a few individuals, arrogating to themselves the patronage of a district about to be formed into a separate parish, made a proposition to the stranger to become the future incumbent of the district.

His answer to the requisition presented to him was—that he could not accept of the invitation, because it came only from a part of the congregation worshipping at the Chapel of Ease.

And this answer was given, although the clergyman to whom I refer was acquainted with the fact that not many months ago pains were taken to ascertain whether the congregation of the contemplated parish would be willing to receive the assistant minister as the incumbent, in case there should be a new parish formed, and that three-fourths of them willingly and cordially gave their assent.

In this case, too, the clergyman of whose conduct I complain, already has a parish in Canada, which he himself considers a very desirable one; and the gentleman whom he is thus invited to supplant has laboured in the same sphere for the last fourteen or fifteen years, zealously and efficiently, as his enemies acknowledge. These facts speak for themselves.

It is by such means the body of Christ is rent asunder, that injury is done to the flock of Christ; and that the seed of discord thus sown will inevitably spring up and produce a deadly harvest. Who can tell how great the evil may prove?

But surely there should be some power in the Church to check such things. To what purpose are her dignitaries and the Canons, if she cannot restrain the unruly, especially among those that minister at her altars? Weak as she is in these Colonies, when assailed by them that are without, it cannot be that she is destitute of the power to repress an evil which would inevitably cause wide spread discord and desolation among her members.

LATIMER.

September 14th, 1852.

To the Editor of the Canadian Churchman.

DEAR SIR,—Your admirable notice of the Act of the Legislature conferring the patronage of the Rectories on the Church Society has won you golden opinions, and given rise to the best anticipations as to the future independent working of the "Canadian Churchman." I think, however, the plan you propose in reference thereto might be somewhat improved.

The Church Society, as we are all aware, experienced a most deplorable calamity last year, the evil effects of which it still feels. The revelations as to the mode in which it had been mismanaged by its officers in Toronto had estranged the love of many of its once ardent friends; and, to all human appearance, the days of the Church Society were numbered; or, at least, it had so lost the confidence of Churchmen, that its usefulness seemed gone, when most unexpectedly, (for so great was the general apathy to these matters, that few appear to have been aware of such an act having been passed) the "Churchman" announces that the Royal Assent had been given to the bill vesting in the Society a large amount of Church patronage; and it now depends on the members to say whether the exercise of this patronage shall act as a stimulant to the slowly-reviving Society or only serve as a further specific to make it perfectly torpid.

The question which must come up is, how are these Rectories to be filled? Three, I believe, are now vacant, viz: York Mills, Sandwich, and Peterborough. Shall we adopt the course you suggest, and leave the patronage in the hands of the few in your city who have already proved themselves such shrewd guardians of the interests of the Society? All the Diocese will at once exclaim, no. We in the country naturally feel a jealousy towards those in whose direction the Church Society is necessarily placed;—I mean the Standing Committee and the few incorporated members who reside in Toronto, and consequently find no difficulty in attending the monthly meetings; and if the patronage of these Rectories is placed in their hands, it may, perhaps, cause a little interest in the city, but it will excite a very opposite effect in the country. On the other hand, if the patronage is left to your correspondents "D. S. L." shall it be

adopted? and shall we throw this additional patronage into the hands of the Bishop. I say No. The clergy, if they boldly speak their sentiments, say No. The people say No. And why? Is it that our confidence in our excellent Bishop is diminished? Is it that our clergy and laity would not be perfectly satisfied with any selection he might make, and believe that that selection would be the best? Do we not all know that the Bishop is better acquainted with the wants of the different missions, and, at the same time, with the several capacities and various talents of his clergy, than any one else in the Province? To these questions but one answer can be returned. The various appointments made during the present Episcopate, prove that never was patronage more admirably, more honestly, more impartially dispensed than it has been during that period. But still this is not the question. We will not always have a Dr. Strachan to be our overseer; and may the Almighty long avert the day which will remove him from us. We know not who may succeed him. Bishops have been who have abused their patronage by placing over parishes men of the orthodoxy of whose opinions the Church is not satisfied. And no Diocese is found in England where all the patronage is vested in the Bishop. The number of missions and incumbencies that are in our Bishops gift are already very numerous, and, we rejoice to say, daily increasing, while, in all human probability, another rectory, patented by the Crown, will never be established as an addition to the Church Society, although we hope to see many more Rectories erected by individual Churchmen, according to the provisions of the Church Temporalities Act. But further, what is the great question to which the Church is unanimously directed? It is Convocation. What is the great boon which this Diocese, together with all the other Dioceses, is looking for? It is Convocation. The Colonial Churches especially seek for a power to govern themselves, and to manage their own affairs. And here we have received as it were an instalment, in the privilege of appointing clerks to the rectories; and yet it is proposed that we should declare ourselves incapable of exercising this the first instalment.

Can we not, Mr. Editor, adopt a plan, free from the objections to which your remarks, as well as your correspondent's, are open; some plan by which the Church Society might have its due influence—a Society admirable in its constitution, and embracing in membership some of the principal laity of the Province, together with the Bishop and Clergy?

Suppose that one month after the vacancy occurs in any of the Rectories, the District Branch of the Society in which the Rectory is situated, be convened, and then let them name two Priests to the Parent Society; let the Parent Society, if they think proper, name a third; and let the three be submitted to the Bishop, and then let his Lordship make his selection of one of the three to be the future Rector.

And see the justice of this mode, if adopted. The District Branch is given a most important office, is invested with a highly honourable and solemn privilege. The laity (that most essential ingredient in our Church) will feel that they are not overlooked. The Parent Society is not deprived of their voice, should they choose to exercise it. And the result of both District Branch and Parent Society is submitted to the Bishop.

By this means will a new impetus be given to that Society which is capable of doing much good. The interest in it will be freshened. New members will be added to the Corporation; while, at the same time, all will feel assured that the most fitting clerk will be selected; and, consequently, the spiritual wants of each parish so filled will be most consulted. And, from my knowledge of the country, I would say that a similar course in case of every vacant incumbency or mission would be more acceptable to both clergy and laity than that now adopted.

I feel I have already encroached too much on your space, and, therefore, I will add no more, as I have no doubt the scheme will commend itself to all well wishers of the Church Society. I would only suggest that the District Branches forthwith be convened, and that they prayerfully and solemnly canvass the question—and let a full meeting of the incorporate members be held on the next Lord's day, which will, I believe, be on Wednesday, the 6th October, and may the Great Head of the Church be present to influence the decision.

A WELL-WISHER OF THE CHURCH SOCIETY. September 14th, 1852.

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

ENGLAND

The election of proctors for the diocese of Gloucester and Bristol took place in the chapter room of the cathedral at Bristol, about 130 of the clergy being present. The Dean and Chapter of Bristol had previously appointed Canon Jackson the residuary canon, as their representative, the Rev. Sir John H. Seymour having been appointed by the Dean and Chapter of Gloucester. Only beneficed Clergy were cited. Dr. Phillimore, Chancellor, presided. The local papers give the following very full report of the proceedings, interesting from the question arising out of the amalgamation of the two dioceses:—

Dr. Phillimore the Chancellor, spoke as follows:—"Reverend Gentlemen—You will have collected from the several documents you have heard read by the registrar that you have been convened for the simple purpose of reading two proctors to represent the clergy of the united diocese of

Gloucester and Bristol in Convocation. You are aware that in former days Convocation met and transacted business with as much regularity as Parliament itself. Those days have long passed away. It had two objects viz., the granting a subsidy to the Crown, and the interest of the spiritual affairs of the kingdom. After the Restoration, Convocation was employed in settling the arrangement of the Liturgy, and in granting an aid to the Crown. This subsidy was granted in 1651, and is the last ever granted by Convocation; from that period the clergy have been a vexed by Parliament together with the laity. Since that period it has transacted no real business; it was allowed to meet in the reign of Queen Anne, and the last time it was permitted to act was in the commencement of the reign of George II. It was prorogued in 1717, and since that period has met for form only. It undoubtedly, however, still remains a part of the constitution, and might, consequently be called into action. Whether the exercise of its functions has been wisely or unwisely foreborne for the last 135 years I whether this long repose has been the preservation of its existence? whether its existence may still, on any possible contingency, be the means of saving the constitution? are all momentous questions, well worthy of consideration of the statesman and jurist but happily wholly without the sphere of our consideration at this meeting: we are precluded from entering upon them. Thus much, however, is clear, that the clergy are restrained from making any constitutions or canons in Convocation without the license of the Sovereign, and that the law and constitution of this country have vested in the Queen alone, in virtue of her supremacy, as the head of the Church, the power of allowing the clergy to enter upon synodical energy and action. But to pass to the business of the day, which is limited and confined to the election of proctors. No doubt, they were sent from each diocese. This diocese laid under peculiar circumstances, two dioceses had been consolidated into one. The best investigation they could make into the point was this, they had from the time of that consideration or union, been considered and treated as one diocese, and especially so with regard to the return of proctors for Convocation. Under these circumstances it appeared clear that they should return one proctor for each archdeaconry. As to the mode by which that selection was to be made, it appeared to him it would simplify their proceedings and conduct to a more equal result if they agreed to propose that each archdeaconry should select its proctor for Convocation. He should now be glad to hear any gentleman who might have a proctor to propose for the archdeaconry of Gloucester.

DAILY PUBLIC PRAYER—BISHOP WILSON.

Under the signature of "Fidelis," a series of Letters has appeared in the English Churchman, giving lists of the chief towns and villages which are without the privilege of a Daily opportunity of worshipping Almighty God in the place solemnly set apart for His Worship. To call public attention to this subject cannot but be useful to both Pastors and People, but it is doubtful whether it would not be still more useful and effectual if, before multiplying our Daily Public Services, we were to make some decided and persevering effort to improve those which we already have: for it, as is often the case, Clergy and Laity are shocked, and pained, by haste, heartlessness, and irreverence, in the mode of celebrating Divine Service, where there is Daily Worship, it is not very likely that they will be disposed to think very highly of the privilege or the duty. It may be, therefore, well to suggest, that "Fidelis," or some one else, should publish a list of the Churches where Daily Service is celebrated with visible and audible reverence and propriety. Or, perhaps, following his negative plan, it might be better to publish a list of Churches where it is not celebrated decently, distinctly, and deliberately. For instance, the lists might be arranged somewhat as follows:—

Churches where Daily Service is evidently not a labour of love, but a task, which is got through as quickly and indistinctly as possible. Churches where God's Word is not read in the ears of the people, but hurried through, and slurred over, without any distinction of manner, let the matter be what it may.

Churches where serious reverential worshippers are not edified and comforted, but pained, annoyed, and irritated, by the inaudible, hurried, and irreverent manner of the Clergy and leading worshippers.

Churches where the Clergy do not pray and read like men of feeling and intelligence, but rather as mere wooden machines, and as if wholly unconscious of the meaning of the words uttered.

Churches where all the Rubrics are scrupulously adhered to—except those which enjoin an audible distinct, reverential, and appropriate manner of saying or reading the various, and varying, portions of Divine Service.

It is much to be feared, that if such a list were honestly prepared, it would, like that in preparation by "Fidelis," show that what ought to be the rule is manifestly the exception.

Upon this subject, which has frequently been alluded to in the English Churchman—but without any apparent effect—it is to be hoped that the Bishops will here long speak out; meanwhile, the following Letter from one whom all sound Churchmen profess to revere—Bishop Wilson—may have some effect upon the offenders, as well as the Bishops; God grant that it may. So far as this subject is concerned, I think the writer's notice somewhat accidentally—it may be providentially—some remarks in it, upon another subject, having been suggested by a young lady, as suitable for the "Parson's Work" department of the English Churchman. [We heartily wish that

both old and young, of both sexes, would bear this department of our Journal in mind, whenever they see or hear of anything likely to be of use to their brethren and sisters who are engaged in promoting the spiritual and temporal welfare of the people.—Ed. E. C.] The following is, in fact, a Pastoral Letter, and was addressed to each of the Clergy of the Diocese:—

Bishop's Court, Ash Wednesday, 1738.

Dear Brother,—This solemn season gives me occasion to put you in remembrance of some things which I have more than once mentioned in Convocation, which, because spoken to all in general was, I suppose, the reason that there was not due regard paid to them: as I hope there will be to this letter, which is addressed to you, in a particular manner. Whoever lays any thing to heart, must see plainly that even within our own parishes, libertinism and wickedness have much increased amongst us, and seem to call for national judgments. For my part, I can attribute this to nothing so much as to the negligence and irregularity of some of the Clergy; (God forbid that I should say so of all) and particularly with respect to your reading the Service of the Church after an *hasty, careless and intellectless* manner, and to your way of preaching.

With regard to the first, this is a certain truth, that such prayers as do not come from lips expressing the earnest desire of a devout heart, will never touch the heart of those who hear and seem to join in them, with any serious devotion, which is one reason that there appears so little true devotion amongst the common people, whereas if the Prayers and the whole Service was read with great deliberation, observing the proper pauses, and full periods, (without which I am sure no one can read Prayers intelligibly) people's understandings might go along with the Minister, and in their hearts say Amen to all the petitions as they ought to do, and they would be attentive to, and edified by the Psalms, Chapters, and Hymns, and other parts of the Service. But when the Prayers, Psalms, and Lessons are hurried over, neither he that reads nor they who hear, can possibly be affected (I am sure it has been so with myself) as people ought to be who are in the presence of God and His holy Angels, and asking favours, without which they must be miserable. And though this may seem a small matter to those that do not consider how by imperceptible steps sin and profaneness get ground, I am confident a great deal depends upon it. Our people believe that we ourselves are in good earnest, by the zeal and devotion we discover, and by imprinting upon their souls a reverential sense of the presence of the Angels of God, though not seen amongst them, and would prevent the mocking of God by heartless prayers. And then the haste that is made, without a decent pause, betwixt the end of one Prayer and the beginning of another, looks so like a man's being tired of the Service, and glad to get it over, that he may get out of the presence of God as soon as he can; this is what any good and prudent person would avoid, if it was but to escape the observation of the common people and their reproach; which I do profess I have heard made with my own ears. There is another notorious indecency, which every serious man must observe, and that is, many of the Clerks hurry over the responses, and Psalms and Hymns, as fast as ever they can chatter them over, and lead the people into the same errors, and to think that he is the bravest scholar, who gets soonest to the end of a verse or answer. I hope every one who hath any regard for the honour of God and his Service, and for my advice, will see this amended, both in the Clerks and people that can read, or I must endeavour to do it after another manner.

As to the Sermons, I am confident that a great deal may be done towards hindering the growing sins of these times. If all the Clergy would but seriously lay to heart the real and present necessities of their own people, and speak to them after a plain and affecting manner, and not make Sermons harangues and their own peculiar fancy, and without, they ought to be pious instructions, to lead men to heaven and save them from hell; if they would show them, for instance from plain Scriptures, there is a necessity, as ever they hope for salvation of dealing with others as they themselves would be dealt with; of forbearing to harass one another with frivolous and vexatious law-suits, wasting their time, their money, and health, if they would in a few plain words not in tedious discourses, shew them the damnable sin of taking rash oaths or by turns leading others to perjure themselves; if they were often and often admonished of the great sin of disobeying the magistrates, whether ecclesiastical or civil, of censuring their orders, and despising their authority, as far as they can do it with impunity while considering and while knowing that they are in the place of God here on earth; lastly, if the guilt of drunkenness, common swearing, and profaning the Lord's day, in some particular towns and parishes, were a little insisted on, after some short, plain, and pious manner, and presentments were made as conscientiously as formerly they have been, I question not but yet we should see a manifest change in the manners of our people for the better, especially if every Clergyman would so behave himself, as he might shew he is in good earnest concerned for the souls of his people, and could with some humble confidence say with St. Paul, Be ye followers of me as I also am of Christ.

As for such as care not what life they lead, or example they give (God forbid that there should be many such) I pray God to touch their hearts most powerfully from above, if they may repent and be converted, or be hindered from giving offence to others, the enemies of God, of the Church, of the Church, who are zealous and busy in every corner to promote and multiply contempt of holy things and persons; if we are careless and unconcerned for the souls of our God and Saviour, we shall have but a poor account to