

And when the subject is thus introduced, what course should be pursued? what decision should be arrived at? It is easier to ask than to answer this question; and in all I write, I am wishful rather to suggest inquiry than to dictate action. It will be unfortunate for the Church if the majority of the Synod should go there unfamiliar with the question at issue, and unprepared to record upon it an intelligent vote. A constitutional principle is involved; the progress of the Church is very much at stake. There is no doubt that a wise decision will be formed; and the probability of this will be all the greater if, in the meantime, we candidly consider all the bearings of the subject. As it appears to me, there are two courses open before the Toronto Synod, one of which it must adopt. It may either act in accordance with the 7th clause of the Canon on Missionary Bishops, and by its own act separate and set apart the Algoma District as "suitable for the establishment therein of a Missionary Bishopric;" and then memorialize the Provincial Synod to proceed forthwith to the election of a Missionary Bishop for such diocese, conformally with its own Canon; or, it may retain possession of the district, and for the more effective performance of missionary work therein, separate it from the other parts of the Diocese, and elect a Suffragan or Missionary Bishop, according to its own Canons and By-Laws. The distinction between the two plans of action thus submitted is this, that the first remits the matter entirely to the Provincial Synod, and henceforward the Toronto Diocese will have no direct interest and responsibility in the Missionary Bishopric of Algoma; whereas the second preserves in the Toronto Synod the power of independent action, and will impose upon it the burden of providing an "adequate support."

It is almost difficult, at first sight, to say which would be the preferable plan. If, as I have already shown, we can only be assured of united and hearty co-operation throughout all the Churches comprised within our Ecclesiastical Province, then there can be no question that the first proposal will be the most acceptable, and that without any hesitation we should confide the subject to the Provincial Synod. But there seem to be serious doubts about the propriety of such an arrangement. The experience of the last two sessions of the Provincial Synod is not very reassuring. There is danger of delay; there is danger of disunion; there is danger of another break down; and while fully alive to the magnitude of the work, and to the difficulty of its accomplishment, I am inclined, with others, to the opinion, that the least of two evils will be, for the Synod of the Toronto Diocese to form an independent Missionary Diocese, to elect the Bishop according to its own Canons, to provide the necessary funds by endowment and grant, and to make the regulations by which the work shall be carried on.

The Synod has an unquestionable right and power to do this. It may by its own vote separate any portion of its territory from the rest, and form it into an exclusive Missionary See, or independent Diocese, as has been done in the Diocese of Rupert's Land, and as Dr. Lett has proposed in his scheme for a threefold division; or the Bishop even may request the appointment of a Suffragan for any particular portion of his diocese, with or without the right of succession to the office and title of Bishop of Toronto, on the demise of the present occupant of the See. In either case the Synod would proceed to an election according to the rules which have been already provided, and which may at the time be laid down. The election could take place at the annual meeting of the Synod, or at a special session convened for that purpose. Both