

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY, 1848.

SHALL WE HAVE A "FREE CHURCH" OF ENGLAND?

Shall we have a "Free Church" of England? Will the diocese of Hereford become as celebrated in the ecclesiastical history of England, as the presbytery of Strathbogie in that of Scotland?

Our readers, we presume, are by this time aware of the circumstance which suggests these queries. By virtue of the compact which subsists between the Church and State in England, the Crown enjoys the right of presentation to vacant bishoprics. The Church enjoys great temporal advantages from the state in being secured immense wealth and many signal and exclusive privileges. And the State, in return, claims, and has conceded by law, a right to interfere in the spiritual affairs of the Church.

A short time since the See of Hereford became vacant, and the Crown, through Lord John Russell, its Prime Minister, nominated the Rev. Dr. Hampden to the episcopal chair. Now Dr. Hampden had rendered himself obnoxious to a certain party in the church by a course of theological lectures delivered in Oxford some fifteen years since. The sentiments propounded at that time had the effect of arraying the Tractarians against him, and the feeling of hostility still remains. His nomination caused a great storm in the church. A protest from the Bishops was sent to the Premier, signed, we believe, by more than half of the Episcopal bench, but without effect. Remonstrances from distinguished laymen also appeared, but with no more satisfactory result. Lord John stood firm upon the right of the Crown, and the law of the land.

Had the Church herself been permitted to choose the new Bishop, we presume Dr. Hampden would have had but little chance of the appointment. To have an obnoxious prelate thus forced upon her, is one of the inconveniences resulting from her connexion with the State. The circumstance as it stands is a forcible illustration of the evil of such a connexion. Such intrusion is unquestionably a serious grievance. The Non-Intrusionists of the Scottish Church, when the question came in a similar way, to open issue, manfully shook themselves free of the State. Will the Non-Intrusionists of the English Church do the same?

Of course we are not of those who consider that the fact of his being opposed by the High Church party is sufficient evidence against his actual fitness for the episcopal office. From all that we have heard of him we believe him to be a man of eminent attainments and an enlarged and truly Christian spirit. Those who oppose him urge the charge of heterodoxy against him, but without sufficient foundation. Dr. Hampden is doubtless a believer in the orthodox doctrines, but has sufficient discrimination to distinguish between speculative theology and vital religion. He places abstruse dogmas where they ought to be placed—out of the range of essentials. He believes the Trinity, no doubt; but he does not consider it necessary to salvation that every one else should accept the definitions of Deity which Trinitarians offer. The belief in God, and the proper feeling towards Him, are things essential and primary. The definitions concerning the mode of the divine existence involved in the doctrine of the Trinity are matters of secondary importance. Such, if we understand them aright, are the views of the new Bishop of Hereford.

The following extracts from Dr. Hampden's works will probably convey a better idea of his views than any explanations we can now offer:—

Dialectical Science . . . established that peculiar phraseology which we now use, in speaking of the Sacred Trinity as *Three Persons and One God*.—B. L., p. 130.

There is much of the language of Platonism in the speculation on the Generation of the Son, and the Procession of the Holy Spirit.—p. 117.

The orthodox language, declaring the Son "begotten before all worlds, of one substance (sic) with the Father," was settled by a philosophy, wherein the principles of different sciences were confounded.—p. 137.

The divine part of Christianity is its facts; the received statements of doctrines are only episodic additions, some out of infinite theories which may be raised on the texts of Scripture.—p. 390.

The application of the term punishment to the sacrifice of our Saviour belongs to the Aristotelic philosophy.—p. 250.

The base of this philosophy of expiation was, that it depressed the power of man too low.—p. 253.

Christ is emphatically said to be our Atone-ment, not that we may attribute to God any change of purpose towards man by what Christ has done, but that we may know (sic) that we have passed from the death of sin to the life of righteousness by Him (sic).—Ib.

The notions on which the several expressions of the articles at large, and in particular of the Nicene and Athanasian creeds, are founded, are both unphilosophical and unscriptural, belong to ancient theories of philosophy, and are only less obviously injurious to the simplicity of the Faith than those which they exclude.—p. 378.

The speculative language of the creeds was admitted into the Church of England, as established by the reformers, before the genius of Bacon exposed the emptiness of the system, which the schools had palmed upon the world, as the only instrument for the discovery of all truth.—Ib.

The orthodox ought to have contented themselves with the name of original sin, to designate the moral fact of the tendency (sic) to sin, in human nature.—p. 231.

A positive deterioration of our carnal nature is a scholastic notion.—p. 225.

The idea, that the corruption of nature exists in infants, is the result of the theory.—p. 221.

Unitarians, in that they acknowledge the great fundamental facts of the Bible, do not really differ in religion from other Christians.—*Observ.* p. 20, 21.

THE PROVINCIAL CENSUS.

The census of the Province is about to be taken; and we perceive by a letter of instructions issued from the Office of Registration that a column has been opened for Unitarians. It has long been our desire to arrive at some tolerably correct information with regard to the number of Unitarians in Canada. We would, therefore, remind our friends scattered over the Province, who may see our paper, of the usefulness of returning themselves and families under their proper religious designation, no matter what church they gather with for the present.

The *London Inquirer* says that the Unitarian Congregation, Cross Street, Manchester, has three of its members representatives in Parliament,—viz.: James Heywood, Esq., M.P. for North Lancashire; Alexander Henry, Esq., M. P. for South Lancashire; and J. B. Smith, Esq., M. P. for Stirling.

The following persons have consented to act as agents for the *Bible Christian* in their respective vicinities:—

- Benjamin Burland St. Johns.
- Alexander Workman Bytown.
- J. P. Grant Perth.
- Elder G. W. Colston Oshawa.
- Dr. B. R. Church Merrickville.
- J. R. Smith Martintown.
- Dr. Purvis Gananoque.
- Dr. Gavin Russell Carlton Place.

Monies lately received on account of the *Bible Christian*:—

- 5s. 0d. from T. J. G., of P., and 5s. 0d. from B. K. C., of P.
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- 5s. 0d. from M. M.F., of R.

COMMUNICATION.

"Teach me Thy way, Oh Lord, and lead me in a plain path because of mine enemies."—*Psalms* xxvii. 2.

When we consider how plain and simple, how sublime and beautiful are the teachings of Jesus; it appears strange, yea wonderful that we should, so often, instead of gratefully complying with, and profiting by His wholesome and perfect rules, His divine and soothing precepts, suffer our feeble minds to wander far off into the dreary and interminable labyrinths of doctrinal speculations.

—It seems strange that we should, willingly drag our heavy footsteps through dismal swamps of miry doubts and controversy, when we might just as well, and more easily, be walking hand in

hand in the "straight and narrow path" of duty; wending our serene and happy way through rich green pastures, still and pleasant waters.

Why, oh why! are we so frequently willing to follow even the dimmest shadow, rather than the true light? Why seek the aid of subordinate planets to enlighten our hemisphere, when the full blaze of Gospel-day so gloriously enriches our horizon?

Why waste these precious moments in fruitless toil and effort? Why burthen our minds, sour our tempers, and weaken our understandings with perplexing questions which profit nothing, instead of invigorating and exalting our fainting spirits at the clear flowing fountains of Calvary? There we may always find religion in the calm simplicity, and heavenly purity of its nature, as it flowed from the lips of One who was meek and lowly, even from the lips of the Holy One of God.

We have no need of subtly devised human creeds. The proper bond of the religion of Jesus is stronger than any such creeds! The wind bloweth where it listeth, but we cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the spirit. If we obey the golden rules of our great Teacher, then are we happy—then are we free indeed! Man can add nothing to the extension of our liberty. Man can set no bounds to the emancipated spirit. None but Jesus can mark out a path for the true disciple.

Oh, if one and all of us would but strive as constantly and anxiously to abide by, and practice, the simple and obvious gospel truths, as many do in disputing concerning the belief of their neighbours, how would darkened and distracted life become changed to a radiant scene of continued enjoyment, and this earth itself would resemble paradise.

M. A. H.

(From the *Canada Official Gazette*.)

PROVINCE OF CANADA.

AT HER MAJESTY'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL for the Province of Canada, held at the Government House, in the City of Montreal, on the 19th day of January, 1848—

Present:

HIS EXCELLENCY

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL IN COUNCIL.

WHEREAS by an Act of the Imperial Parliament, passed in the third and fourth years of Her Majesty's reign, intitled: *An Act to provide for the Sale of the Clergy Reserves in the Province of Canada, and for the Distribution of the Proceeds thereof*, it is among other things enacted (Section 2.) "That the proceeds of all passed Sales of such Reserves which have been or shall be invested under the authority of an Act passed in the Eighth year of the reign of King George the Fourth, intitled: *An Act to authorize the Sale of Part of the Clergy Reserves in the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada*, shall be subjected to such Orders as the Governor in Council shall make for investing, either in some Public Funds in the Province of Canada, secured on the Consolidated Fund of the said Province, or in the Public Funds of Great Britain and Ireland, the amount now funded in England, together with the Proceeds hereafter to be received from the Sales of all or any the said Reserves, or any part thereof: Provided always, that the necessary Expenses of such Sales shall be borne and defrayed out of the first monies received therefor."

And (Section 3), "That the Interest and Dividends accruing upon such Investments of the Proceeds of all Clergy Reserves sold or to be sold, and also the Interest to accrue upon Sales on Credit of Clergy Reserves, and all Rents arising from Clergy Reserves that have been or may be demised for any Term of Years, shall be paid to the Receiver General of the Province of Canada, or such other person as shall be appointed to receive the Public Revenues of the said Province, and shall together form an annual Fund for the purposes hereinafter mentioned, and shall be paid by him from time to time in discharge of any Warrant or Warrants, which shall from time to time be issued by the Governor in pursuance of the Provisions of this Act, (that is to say) in the first place, to satisfy all such annual stipends and allowances as have been heretofore assigned and give to the Clergy of the Churches of England and Scotland, or to any other Religious Bodies or Denominations of Christians in Canada, and to which the Faith of the Crown is pledged, during the natural lives or incumbencies of the Parties now receiving the same: Provided always, that until the annual Fund so to be created and deposited with the Receiver-General suffice to meet the above mentioned stipends and allowances, the same, or so much thereof as the said Fund may be insufficient to meet, shall be defrayed out of the casual and Territorial Revenue of the Crown in the Province of Canada;" and (Section 4), "That as soon as the said Fund shall exceed the amount of the several stipends and allowances aforesaid,

and subject always to the prior satisfaction and payment of the same, the said annual Fund shall be appropriated as follows, (that is to say,) the net interest and dividends accruing upon the investments of the Proceeds of all Sales of such Reserves sold or to be sold under the authority of the before recited Act of the Eighth year of the reign of King George the Fourth, shall be divided into three equal parts, of which two shall be appropriated to the Church of England, and one to the Church of Scotland in Canada; and the net interest and dividends accruing upon the investments of the Proceeds of all Sales of such Reserves sold under the authority of this Act shall be divided into six equal parts, of which two shall be appropriated to the Church of England, and one to the Church of Scotland in Canada; Provided always, that the amount of the before mentioned stipends and allowances which shall be paid to and received by any Clergyman of either of the said Churches of England or Scotland shall be taken, as far as the same will go, as a part of the share accruing to each Church respectively, by virtue of this Act (that is to say), the stipends and allowances to any Clergyman of the Church of England, as part of the share accruing to the Church of England, and the stipends and allowances to any Clergyman of the Church of Scotland as part of the share accruing to the said Church of Scotland so that neither of the said Churches shall receive any further or other sum beyond such respective stipends and allowances until the proportion of the said annual Fund allotted to them respectively in manner aforesaid shall exceed the annual amount of such stipends and allowances;" and (Section 7), "That, subject to the foregoing Provisions, the residue of the said annual Fund shall be applied by the Governor of Canada, with the advice of the Executive Council, for purposes of public Worship and Religious Instruction in Canada."

And whereas there is now a residue of the said annual fund arising from the new sales of Clergy Reserves, in that part of the Province of Canada heretofore constituting the Province of Upper Canada, made under the authority of the said Imperial Act the 3d & 4th Vict. chap. 78, amounting to about eighteen hundred pounds, currency, (and increasing every year) applicable for the purposes mentioned in the seventh section of the said last mentioned Act, and His Excellency the Governor-General is desirous to obtain such information as may enable Him, with the advice of Her Majesty's Executive Council aforesaid, to distribute the said residue in the most equitable manner, among the different Religious Bodies in the said part of the Province, for the purposes mentioned in the said 7th Section.

Now thereof, notice is hereby given, that any Religious Body in that part of the Province of Canada heretofore constituting Upper Canada, that may be desirous to receive a share of the said Residue, under the provisions of the said 7th Section, shall, on or before the FIRST day of JULY next, make an application to that effect, addressed to the Clerk of the Honble. Executive Council, at Montreal, stating for which of the purposes mentioned in the said 7th Section they would desire the share of the said residue, which may be allocated to them, to be applied, and setting forth also, as nearly as possible, the number of persons, in the said last mentioned part of the Province, belonging to their Religious persuasion.

By Command,
J. JOSEPH, C. E. C.

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