

The Church.

"Her foundations are upon the holy hills."

"Stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

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[No. 13.]

A CHARGE,

DELIVERED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO,

At the Visitation, on Wednesday, October 12th, 1853

By JOHN, LORD BISHOP OF TORONTO.

(Concluded from our last.)

Instead, therefore, of keeping up a constant jarring between this world, in which we must act and take an interest, and the world to come, in which we ought to find our lasting happiness and welfare, we should discharge our duty in our present state with all our might and in the most religious spirit we can put forth; and in doing this, we may be assured that we are preparing ourselves for a greater trust and higher station in the world to come, of which this is an earnest and a part.

In fine, our style of preaching ought to be made conformable to the spirit and peculiarities of Christianity, and the example of our beloved Master, who fulfilled "the work that was given him to do." And in thus following him in our subordinate spheres with corresponding diligence and practical wisdom, we shall hope to rise with him to a higher place in his Father's Kingdom. Always remembering that this world is the kingdom of grace and of forgiveness to sinners; that we must never cease to be humble, contrite, believing, thankful and full of hope, as becomes beings who are conscious of having sinned, but who are also permitted to look for that pardon and acceptance which was proclaimed by one who himself came from Heaven on this special errand of mercy to the human race.

Were you, my brethren of the Clergy, conscientiously to pursue the course which I have endeavoured, though feebly, to bring under your consideration, it would vastly increase your influence for good, and the whole diocese would present a formidable barrier to the progress of evil. Our office is to bring men out of the kingdom of this world into the kingdom of God. We are therefore to be at work in both kingdoms; hence the necessity of our being watchful and diligent in our vocation, prompt in charity, blameless in our conversation, and pure in our doctrine, that we may win the love and respect of our people, and procure from them a ready concurrence and obedience in all things lawful.

This is the true and prevailing influence to which a faithful clergyman ought to aspire and endeavour to possess in his Parish; and, while it admits of no abuse, cannot fail to be effective for good.

CONTROVERSY WITH ROME.

In my last charge I briefly mentioned what has been called the Papal Aggression, and told you that I did not view it in so formidable a light as many others. The language is indeed arrogant and offensive, and deeply to be regretted; because it was sure to produce (as it has done) great excitement, by rousing the worst passions and reviving the warfare between the two Churches, which good men hoped was gradually subsiding. But, since it could have little or no effect as a positive attack on our Protestant faith, I deprecated all penal enactments.

If, indeed, it militates against the Royal Supremacy and the Constitutional Law, the Imperial Government had, and still has, the remedy in its own hands, to preserve its prerogatives, to keep the peace, and to see that the just rights of all parties are secured.

It is true the Roman Church desires not toleration and equal rights, but absolute ascendancy and domination, crowned at last by the suppression of every other creed. But this is no new discovery; it has ever been the leading principle of that Church before, as well as since the Reformation. She may have advanced or withdrawn it, at times, as it suited her convenience, but she never gave it up. Her doctrinal pretensions are ever the same; and wherever Romanism lifts her head and extends her branches, freedom of thought withers and disappears.

All this was as well known before the Aggression as since, and rendered the remedy adopted against it more than ridiculous, because (as was foreseen) totally ineffectual. And so will be the result of all attempts in the present age to coerce matters of opinion and conscience, because they are beyond the power of legislation.

There is nevertheless serious difficulty in dealing with the Roman Church. It is not simply a form of worship and Theology, for, in that case, Roman Catholics and Dissenters would be much the same. But the Roman Catholic system is different from all varieties of non-conformity, for it is not merely a Religion but a Polity, and this System or Polity embraces the whole of her Religion.

The truths she publishes exist only in her keeping, or during the pleasure of the Pope, whom she pronounces infallible, and who can alter, change, extend, or contract day by day whatever she affects to believe. She is therefore continually in a state of transition, and her polity grasps all things of a temporal as well as of a spiritual nature, when opportunity serves.

So far as our Church is concerned, these attacks from Rome have done her good service. They have opened the eyes of all the thoughtful and serious of our own people and of all other Protestant denominations, both at home and abroad, to her vast importance in the religious war that Rome in her phrenzy has commenced; and they begin to doubt whether they are acting wisely, not only in alienating themselves from the Church of England, the true bulwark of the Protestant faith, and aiding the great enemy of Gospel truth on account of some minor differences unknown to the Church Catholic in its primitive purity, and which, when traced back to their foundation, have only the authority of single and erring individuals. As if the judgment of one was to be preferred to the Creeds which have been sanctioned by the prayers, and watered by the tears and blood, of saints and martyrs.

The attacks of Rome are not made against Protestant Dissenters, whom she values as nothing; but, as might be expected, they are directed against the United Church of England and Ireland—her only powerful opponent; before whose vigor, zeal and learning she has often quailed. She feels our Church is a true branch of the Catholic Church, the pillar and ground of truth, and the only one that can make head against her corruption.

Nor is the United Church of England and Ireland insensible of her high mission. She knows it to be her duty, as it is her privilege, to stand in the front of the battle. But her weapons must not be those of her adversary,—intolerance, persecution, torments, and death; but those which were used so effectually by the holy Apostles and their successors during the first three centuries of the Christian era. These holy men went forth having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. Above all, they had the shield of faith, wherewith they were able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. They had the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the

Word of God; and all these were sanctified with prayer, and supplication, and watching with all perseverance.

Now these weapons are all ours, and, if used in humble dependence upon God our Saviour, they will be as effectual now against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places, as they were during the more early ages of the Church.

The same weapons directed by the same Holy Spirit distinguished the great preachers of the Reformation, and enabled them to shake off the fetters of superstition and the corruptions of Faith, and to rear the purest form of Gospel truth and order that had yet been known since its first promulgation. And, for more than three hundred years, the Church which they established in such purity and excellence has brought forth a succession of sons not unworthy of their fame and approbation.

During this long period the Divines of our Church have nobly and incontrovertibly supported the principles and evidences of the Christian faith against every form of heresy and infidelity. With Rome they have carried on the contest in a manner unanswerable and triumphant, both from Scripture and reason. Every novel and unauthorized sect, as it arose, has been met with a complete refutation of their errors and the most perfect elucidation of the pure and complete doctrines of the Gospel which were once delivered to the Saints.

Surely in the founders of our Church, and their able and vigilant successors, our Clergy of the present day can never want high examples to animate their zeal in the cause of Divine Truth.

I look, therefore, forward with assurance to a successful issue in our contest with the Church of Rome; and while our main defence will continue to be the strict discharge in all Christian love of our duty in our respective parishes; yet, should any of us be called to a more extensive field, I hope we shall not be found wanting.

COLONIAL CHURCH REGULATION BILL.

I directed the Colonial Church Regulation Bill to be printed for the Conference, because some expression of opinion on its provisions seems to be called for from the Clergy of this Diocese.

The Bill was introduced by his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, who remarked, on the 21st of July, in the Lord's Committee, that, for some years past, considerable distress and inconvenience had arisen in the Colonies in consequence of the want of the regular administration of their Ecclesiastical affairs. His Grace further stated that there was considerable unanimity among the members of the Church in the Colonies on the subject, for all agreed that some legislation was necessary on the part of the Imperial Parliament; that whatever plan might be adopted for the regulation of the Church in the Colonies, the Lay members ought to have a fair share in the administration of her affairs; but that nothing ought to be agreed upon which had any tendency to separate us from the Church in the Mother Country.

After a spirited debate the Bill passed through the Committee and was reported to the House, with amendments, without a division.

As the measure had been agreed upon by the whole bench of Bishops and unanimously passed the House of Lords, it was expected to go through the House of Commons without the slightest difficulty. It was simply permissive, not compulsory, and merely empowered the Church in the Colonies to exercise her natural and inherent right to regulate her own affairs and discipline, but which certain impediments placed in her way by some antiquated and obsolete laws prevented her, without some enabling enactment, to carry out.

The Bill consists of the preamble and seventeen clauses, and is entitled, "An Act to enable the Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the United Church of England and Ireland, in her Majesty's Foreign and Colonial possessions, to provide for the regulation of the affairs of the said Church in such possessions."

On Tuesday, the 2nd of August, the Bill was called up in a way very singular, if not offensive, by Lord John Russell, who told the House of Commons that the Solicitor General had prepared certain clauses to do, in an unobjectionable manner, what was proposed by the bill; and moved that the second reading be adjourned till Monday the eighth. This called up Mr. Kimmaid, who declared that he would resist the Bill in every stage, as opposed to the principles of Colonial self-government.

How he can make this out does not appear; but he concluded his speech by moving that the Bill be read a second time that day three months. The Colonial Church seemed to have no friend in the House, or any one who took the slightest interest in a proceeding of the utmost consequence to her future welfare and progress, if not to her existence, except Mr. Roundell Palmer, who, in a manly and straightforward speech, vindicated the measure against the unworthy clamour and mean prejudices raised against it by misrepresenting its character.

This upright senator considered the treatment the Bill had met with not very respectful to such a body as the Bishops of the Church of England with whom it had originated, being the result of the mature and deliberate consultation of that venerable body, assisted by several of the Colonial Bishops, who had come home for the express purpose of considering by what means they might best accomplish the objects desired by the members of the Church of England in their respective Dioceses, without introducing the principle of a Church establishment, and without interfering with the rights of other denominations of Christians.

Mr. Palmer declared that the Bill was not open to those terms of contumely and reproach which had been thrown out against it, nor was it open to the charge of seeking to obtain any special privileges for the Church of England in the Colonies. His defence of the Bill was true, vigorous, and triumphant, but he was alone; only one senator could be found in the House of Commons to stand up in favor of the inherent rights of the Colonial Church, embracing more than a million of British subjects!

It is true that the Chancellor of the Exchequer faintly admitted that the measure had not been fairly attacked in the discussion that evening, and therefore he thought it right to say a few words before the question was put. He believed that the positive character of the provisions of the Bill, which was objected to as tending to create an Established Church in the Colonies, was a fault in the Bill; if so, why were not those provisions modified by the Duke of Newcastle, who was a party to its preparation, and who seems to have been permitted to make amendments he thought right or expedient, while the measure was in progress through the House of Lords.

It is a new thing to see a Minister of the Crown eagerly assiduous in rendering palative a measure and passing it unanimously in one house, and then allowing it to be thrown out without ceremony in the other.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer likewise stated, that in

a former session of Parliament he had brought in a Bill for the purpose of liberating the Church in the Colonies from the real or supposed disabling effects of Imperial Statutes, and so far to place it in the position of Dissenting bodies in the Colonies; and to that declaration of the law or repeal of the disabling statutes, he added certain clauses containing certain restraints. He then proceeded to make several judicious remarks respecting the provisions of the Bill and the true question at issue, which, if they had been made with a view of amending the Bill, instead of forming an excuse for acquiescing in its postponement, the Colonies would have been thankful.

But, when it is considered that Mr. Gladstone might have procured, through his colleague, the necessary modifications of the measure before it passed the House of Lords, or when it came before him in the House of Commons, we cannot feel assured that he was earnest in the cause, or that his fondness for his own Bill did not make him forget the respect due to the heads of the Church at home as well as of the Colonies, who were all earnestly employed in perfecting the measure; and although they might not be, (as was sarcastically observed,) such Colonial philosophers as there were in the House of Commons, they were nevertheless anxiously desirous of maintaining the connection between the Church at Home and the Church in the Colonies, and entitled to much more courtesy and respect than they appear to have received.

As the subject stands over to the next session of Parliament, we must wait with as much patience as we can under a sense of unmerited disappointment, and solace ourselves with the hope that the Imperial Legislature will give a fair reception and full consideration to some such measure during the next session, for the purpose of allowing the Church fair play in the Colonies, upon the footing of an Established Body.

On reference to the Statutes of Upper Canada, I find that the Legislature at its first session enacted that in all matters of controversy relative to property and civil rights, resort shall be had to the Laws of England as a rule for the decision of the same; but no notice whatever is taken of the Ecclesiastical Laws of England. Hence it might at first be inferred that they did not extend to this Diocese; but on further examination, such an inference does not hold good, for the Colonial Churches are in law considered as offshoots of the Church of England; and their Clergy are by their ordination vows bound by the same regulations as those of the Mother Church. Their Bishops are under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and to His Grace, their Clergy may in certain cases appeal; and such appeal, when brought to a hearing, must be decided by the Ecclesiastical Law of England.

Moreover, the case of holding regular Conventions in the Colonies was tried by the Bishop of New Zealand, a Prelate whom all bless and honour; but the regulations or canons drawn up under his guidance, when sent to England and submitted to the highest law authorities, were declared illegal and invalid.

Now, it being the great object of the Colonial Church to preserve and maintain its identity with the Church at Home, this cannot be effectually done without some measure of the Imperial Parliament, and as this may be done, according to the Hon. Mr. Gladstone by a simple enactment of half a page, it is strange that such opposition or difficulty should stand in its way. Nevertheless, the emancipation of the Colonial Church is of great importance and worth waiting for, and it is so just and reasonable that it cannot be much longer delayed.

As the Bill has been postponed, I shall not detain you with going through its different provisions, for enough transpired in the House of Commons to satisfy us that it will never be presented in the same shape; and therefore the best course open for us to take will be to make use of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's hint, and request simply by petition a single clause of half a page to enable us to hold Synods for the management of our Ecclesiastical affairs. This much even our greatest enemies seem prepared to grant, and perhaps it is better than to be entangled by a number of details and restrictions. The measure, though delayed for this year and perhaps longer, must soon again come up; for neither indifference nor the continuance of the bitter hostility with which it has been assailed, can long prevent its being brought forward in a modified form and becoming law. In the meantime let us be patient, but yet strenuous in demanding our just rights and privileges, which we do not forfeit by removing to a Colony.

THE CLERGY RESERVES.

On Friday, the 3rd of December, 1852, Sir William Molesworth asked Sir John Pakington, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether it was the intention of the Ministers to bring in a Bill to enable the Canadian Legislature to dispose of the proceeds of the Clergy Reserves, subject to the condition that the stipends and allowances heretofore assigned and given to the Clergy of the Church of England and Scotland, or to any other religious bodies or denominations of Christians in Canada, should be secured during the natural lives and incumbencies of the parties now receiving the same.

Sir John Pakington answered that Her Majesty's Government had given the fullest and most anxious consideration to this difficult question, and to the whole of the circumstances under which it had been forced upon their attention; and his answer now was, that, considering that it was essentially an Upper Canada question, and that the Representatives of Upper Canada were as nearly as possible equally divided upon it,—considering that the majority which had carried the Resolutions consisted of a large proportion of Roman Catholic members of the Lower Province, whose religion had been amply and magnificently endowed,—considering that the Act of 1840 was proposed and accepted by all parties as a final settlement of this long discussed and most difficult question,—and considering, above all, that the Act of 1840 was part of the arrangement made by the Act of Union of the two Provinces;—considering all these circumstances, it was not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce any Bill for the purpose of enabling the Canadian Legislature to dispose of the proceeds of the Clergy Reserves in the manner referred to by the honorable gentleman.

Unhappily, Lord Derby's Government was soon after overturned by the strongest and most accommodating coalition that is to be found in the history of the British Empire, and no sooner was the new Ministry installed, than it began the work of sacrifice.

The despatch of the Duke of Newcastle, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the Earl of Elgin, Governor General of Canada, on the subject of the Clergy Reserves, is dated the 15th of January. It was published on the 16th February, at Quebec, and reached Toronto about the 20th.—This document announced a total change of policy in dealing with the Church property in Canada, from that which had been wisely and honestly adopted by Her Majesty's late advisers. It took the Province completely by surprise; and before the members of our Church had time to consider the grounds upon which a change so injurious to the interests of religion in the Colony was sought to be supported, or to devise the means of averting a course which must, if pursued, not only destroy the peace of Canada, but in time, be made a precedent for subverting the Church Establishment of the United

Kingdom, we learned from the London Times and other English journals, that a Bill for placing the Reserves at the disposal of the Canadian Legislature had been brought into the House of Commons, and had passed to a second reading.

You are aware that the Bill thus introduced has become Law; and a reference to the debates will show that nothing was said by the supporters of the measure to invalidate in the slightest degree the powerful, and what ought to have been felt as the irresistible, arguments of the Earl of Derby, Lord St. Leonard, the Bishops of Exeter and London, and other friends of the Church, against it.

The argument of Government was simply a repetition of the revolutionary maxim, skillfully disguised in verbiage and sophistry,—"that might makes right;"—but, as you are well acquainted with this subject, and I trust, convinced, that everything within our power to avert this calamity has been done, I shall not enlarge upon it, at this time, but merely observe, in the words of one who was in the House of Lords during the debate, that the most revolting and melancholy feature of the proceedings, and which in the end may prove far more disastrous than even the confiscation of the Clergy Reserves, was that of beholding nine Bishops out of nineteen (the number present in the House of Lords) voting for the destruction of the temporal support of a branch of that very Church which they had vowed in the most solemn manner to cherish, preserve and extend; and handing over three Dioceses, embracing a space nearly as large as the half of Europe, to the tender mercies of the Church of Rome. Were these Bishops to live to the age of Methuselah, they could never atone for the iniquity of this sacrilegious vote.

The field of debate, and I fear, of contention, in spite of Lord Sydenham's solemn protest, and the judgment and opinions of the best informed sons of the Church, both here and at home, has been transferred to this country; and it becomes us to consider what steps ought now to be taken in defence of our dearest birthright; and, if we do so with prayerful earnestness for light and direction, in a matter of so great importance to ourselves and our posterity, and really and truly feel as the conscientious sons of our Holy Church ought to feel, we shall act with unity and faithful determination in that high and holy character, and not, I trust, without effect. The divine grace will be with us, and we shall have nothing to fear.

It nevertheless becomes us to look the danger in the face, and to examine it in all its bearings; for to be thoroughly acquainted with the extent and nature of our position, is, under God, half the victory. We have been betrayed and deserted by our natural protectors, and it is well; we trusted, perhaps, too much in the arm of flesh, instead of entreating the aid and protection of our Heavenly Father; and, neglecting self-reliance and exertion under his guidance, we have been too much disposed to look for that assistance from distant and uncertain friends, which we might have supplied from ourselves.

It must, indeed, be allowed, that the prospects of the Church in this Diocese are, in a temporal aspect, dark and threatening; for, should her remaining property be confiscated, our Missions, from time to time, will become vacant, as their Incumbents die. Not that in all cases the ministrations of the Church will then cease, but it will be so for a time in many; and, from the poverty of our people, their hardships in the new settlements, and severity of the climate, they are, and will continue to be for years, (even where willing) unable to support their Clergy. Add to all this, the most fearful feature of the Church population is the coldness and apathy of many of its wealthy members, and their unwillingness to give up to God his portion for the support of public worship. Hence many of the successors to those Incumbents who shall be taken away will have to eat their scanty morsel in bitterness and sorrow. In the meantime, the extension of the Church in the new and remote settlements will be sadly retarded.

But, leaving this gloomy side of the subject, I am unwilling to believe that we shall lose the remainder of our Church property, for the following, among other, reasons:—

1st. We have, I should hope, a phalanx of 22 members in the House of Assembly attached to the United Church of England and Ireland; and, should a dissolution take place, we shall have many more. Now, although they have not, in all things, answered our expectations by their unity, firmness, and untiring exertions on this vital question, yet, when the crisis actually comes, we feel assured that none of them will shrink from the combat, but that each will do his utmost to protect the Church of his Fathers from further spoliation. And, if so knit together, they will succeed, because no minister would dare to resist one-fourth of the Assembly, thus resolute and determined; or, if he attempted to do so, their righteous cause would gain them a sufficient number of friends to baffie his injustice.

2nd. By the debates in the Imperial Parliament it appears that the Endowments of the Church of Rome rest on the same footing, or rather on one more precarious than those of the Church of England, and that nothing within the Province of Canada is excluded from the action of the local Legislature. Hence every measure introduced into the house which affects the one affects the other, and this construction and understanding our friends ought to insist upon as of present operation, and thus at once tear away the delusion on this side of the Atlantic, as it has been on the other, viz.—that the property of the Church of Rome is better protected than that of the Church of England; for it is not so. Both may be dealt with as the Legislature thinks fit.

3rd. I cannot bring myself to believe that the Roman Catholics will join the enemies of Christianity in their crusade against religious endowments, for, besides those they enjoy in Lower Canada, they have by the 3rd & 4th Victoria, a large interest in the Clergy Reserves in Canada West, of which secularization would deprive them; and they must be singularly blind to their own interests if they do not see that the fiercest opponents of the clergy reserves are the most bitter foes of all sacred endowments whatever.

4th. It is true the Church of England has great reason to complain of Roman Catholic members in the House of Assembly since the perpetration of the union. To their votes she owes the destruction of her University, and the transferring of the question of the reserves from the Imperial Parliament to the local Legislature. But there is still time to return to a more just and becoming policy. They should recollect that from the first settlement of Upper Canada till the union of the two provinces in 1840, a courteous and uninterrupted interchange of civilities and social intercourse continued between the Church of England and the Church of Rome; and although many Roman Catholic members have been hostile, yet the two Churches still maintain the same friendly interchange of good offices. And, as the Church of Rome has not yet spoken on the subject of religious endowments, it will be easy for her, if so inclined, to restrain her friends in the legislature, and to direct their energies into the proper channel.

Indeed I have no hesitation in saying that we have a right to expect that such will be the course adopted, because the