

A CHARGE BY THE LORD BISHOP

(Continued from 1st Page.)

2nd. Hence the case affording opportunities for establishing separate schools can seldom happen; and this accounts in some degree for the fewness of their number.

Again: Under the Supplementary Law, section 4, the promoters of separate schools must tax themselves for their support; which entails upon them much trouble, as they are deprived of the assistance of the municipal authority.

This is not only a cruel and unnecessary, but an unconstitutional restriction; because, were they included in the general assessments, the portion paid by them could be easily ascertained.

To such separate schools, the inspection of Superintendents appointed by County Councils, and their delivery of Lectures, may produce great inconvenience and hardships, if such are of different denominations, unless restrained by wise regulations.

On the whole, it is very evident that the framers of these Statutes were not merely insincere and hostile to religious liberty, but they had not got so far in the race of liberality as—common toleration; for, while they hold forth the semblance of separate schools, they take care to discourage and cripple them by insidious conditions, totally inconsistent with honorable dealing.

In fine, the restrictions on separate schools render their establishment to any extent altogether impracticable; and yet we are told, with ludicrous solemnity, that all ground and semblance of a complaint of injustice is taken away from the supporters of separate schools.

When we contemplate these restrictions and the exultation of their promoters at their enactment, we are not a little astonished at their heartless absurdity. But it is always found that the greatest brawlers for liberty are the most cruel despots to all who dare to think differently from them.

Such restrictions are unknown in England, where (blessed be God) true Christian liberty prevails; but they are in perfect keeping with the principle of separating religion from education, which will be found, when carried out, exclusive and intolerant.

On reading the school laws of this Province we are struck with two things:—

First, Their slavish imitation of the educational policy of our neighbors.

Second, Their complete negation of everything like Christianity, while, with incredible assurance, they pretend to be based on religion.

This covert enmity to true religion is not to be wondered at, because the position of the population of Upper Canada and of many of the United States is very similar.

The general tendency however is not the less to be lamented, for it leads directly to democracy and socialism.

In a mere secular point of view, we readily admit that much has been done in Upper Canada to promote what is vulgarly called education, and we are willing to believe that many of those employed in carrying out the laws act under the delusion that they are favorable to religion.

We are also disposed to admit that so far as the Normal School is concerned there is much in it to approve as a nursery for teachers; because it does not altogether ignore religion, as the common schools virtually do. And it may be further conceded that the masters employed in the Normal School have evinced much ability and skill in training the teachers, both male and female.

Nor are we disposed to overlook the unwearied assiduity and zeal of the Chief Superintendent, (however misdirected by enactments which he has, we presume, no power to control) in managing the whole system of education now in operation throughout Canada West. Nor are we unwilling to believe that the Superintendent carries his exertions in favor of religion of some sort further perhaps than a rigid interpretation of the laws would warrant.

I blame not the persons employed, or find fault with what has been done so much as what has been left undone. Much has been accomplished and more is in progress to render the scholars, male and female, physically comfortable in this world; but to render the system complete, we must educate the whole, body and soul, and not only make man fit for his place here, but for his higher state of existence in a future world, and if this principle cannot be carried out in mixed schools to the satisfaction of both Roman Catholics and Protestants, the law should render the establishment of separate schools easy of attainment, instead of making them all but impossible.

Now, it is because this provision is not honestly carried out, that we complain; and because it is assumed, contrary to the fact, that the common-school system is founded on Christian principles. Whereas, the statutes by which they are established make no reference whatever to Christianity or the Bible, but virtually exclude all religious instruction worthy of the name, and afford no opportunity to parent of any communion to bring up their children in the doctrines and duties of their faith.

Throughout the school acts no direct reference is made to man as an immortal and accountable, guilty and redeemed being, but all is secular. Hence such secular knowledge, being unscientific must, silently but effectually, undermine every sacred and moral principle and feeling, and thus promote infidelity and moral corruption throughout the province, and send forth generation after generation, into the ocean of life, with no compass to guide and direct them.

All this fully appears from the regulations of the Council of Public Instruction, founded on the 14th section of the Common School Act:

"That no foreign books in the English branches of education shall be used in any model or common school without the express permission of the council of public instruction; nor shall any pupil in any such school be required to read or study in or from any religious book or join in any exercise of devotion or religion which shall be objected to by his or her parents or guardians; provided always that within this limitation, pupils shall be allowed to receive such religious instruction as their parents and guardians shall desire according to the general regulations which shall be provided according to law."

Now the special regulation and recommendation made by the Council of Public Instruction for Upper Canada is the following:—

"The public religious exercises of each school shall be a matter of mutual voluntary arrangement between the trustees and teacher; and it shall be a matter of mutual voluntary arrangement between the teacher and the parent or guardian of each pupil as to whether he shall hear such pupil recite from the scriptures or catechism or other summary of religious doctrine and duty of the persuasion of such parent or guardian. Such recitations are not, however, to interfere with the regular exercises of the school."

Now this seeming approach to religious instruction is most offensive and derisive. It seems to have been drawn up by persons who are ashamed of religion and plotting its destruction.

First, the trustees and schoolmasters must agree, and they may be all persons who have no religion or sense of religion whatever. Then the parents and teachers must arrange. The best result of these negotiations that can be expected is that at the option of the trustees and convenience of the teacher, if so inclined, a verse of Holy Scripture may be occasionally read, or a question from the catechism asked, provided the school business does not interfere.

Under the mockery of such an enactment and regulation there is no guarantee that so much as the Lord's Prayer is ever heard in any one school, or the Holy Bible ever reverently introduced, or the children taught so much as the Ten Commandments. Nor have we any assurance that either trustees or teachers are God-fearing men or have the slightest regard for holy things.

Hence, whatever may be asserted by the promoters of the school system it is evident, that it contains no available provision for religious instruction, not can it be effectively introduced without separate schools, as in England.

Let us now look at the working of the system. It is said to be founded on that adopted in Ireland, and that the same books are used; and to some extent this appears to be the case.

In the common school annual report of 1851, page 28, the grand total of schools for 1851 is 3,001
And the grand total for 1850 is 3,059

Decrease - - - - - 58
From the same report, page 36, it appears that in 1850, out of the whole number of schools (3,059), two thousand and sixty-seven used the Bible and New Testament, leaving 982 schools not using the Bible and New Testament.

It further appears on the same page that in 1851 the schools reported as using the Bible were 1,748
Not using it - - - - - 1,253

Total number of schools 3,001

It also appears from the same report that the number of common schools in 1851 had decreased by 58, and the number of schools using the Bible and New Testament had decreased by 319.

Moreover, it appears from the same report, page 36, that the Scripture Lessons prepared for the Irish schools were not used in any school, nor the lessons on the truth of Christianity; nor (so far as the tables furnish information) was any reference made to Christianity.

Now, to say that under such a plan of instruction the principles of religion and morality are inculcated, when not a book on religion or morals is used except in such schools as admit the Old and New Testament, is a fallacy.

Without calling in question the success of the common school system in a merely secular point of view, it clearly appears that it has and can have no practical influence in promoting true religion. Nothing is attempted to be taught but worldly knowledge, while that knowledge to which all other should be subservient is entirely neglected.

That such a state of things cannot long continue, we may be well assured. When the question shall be regularly brought home to the hearts of our people, whether their children are to be taught religious truth, or be confined to secular instruction, we shall not find one in ten who does not desire his child to be instructed in the Gospel of our Saviour.

But they have been and still are deluded by the assumption daily and hourly put forth that the Christian religion is the basis of our common school system. This deception cannot now be continued; and the good sense of our people will soon, I trust, seek a remedy for so pernicious an evil. And this remedy may be found without any other alteration of the law than granting separate schools where desired, without any penal restrictions.

Such restrictions no State has a right to impose upon its people. It ought to make no distinction between different religious communities, but award to each, in due proportion, their share of the public money and assessments, leaving the religious portion of education to be settled by each denomination in their own schools according to their own religious opinions, and annexing no other condition except a guarantee that the aid should not be misapplied.

Now, the modification we desire is our undoubted right, so far as it can be practically attained, for although there may be difficulty for a time in carrying it out into extensive operation from the scattered nature of our people, yet it may be at once effected in cities, towns and incorporated villages, and extended by each denomination, as its population admits. There is no difficulty in England.

"The Wesleyan conference receives grants from the State on condition that it shall be the fundamental regulation and practice of their schools that the Bible shall be daily read therein by the children and religious instruction shall be given to all children in the said schools whose parents and guardians shall not, on religious grounds, object thereto."

"And again, that every school shall be regularly opened and closed with devotional singing and prayer, in which the Wesleyan Hymn Book shall be used; that the Holy Bible, comprising the sacred scriptures of both the Old and New Testament in the authorized version only, shall be read and used in such schools, accompanied with instruction therein by the teachers or visitors, or both."

"That, for the purposes of catechetical instruction, the Wesleyan catechism authorized by the yearly conference shall be used in the schools, and that Christian Psalmody shall form a part of the daily exercises of the children and young persons in such schools."

"Similar stipulations are accepted as entitling them to grants by the British and Foreign School Society, which is the official adhesion of the great body of dissenters."

"Grants are awarded to the Roman Catholics in England for the maintenance of their schools without special conditions, because the Church of Rome claims for her clergy the sole and exclusive charge of the religious and moral training of her children, and a power to frame the regulations connected therewith. No right of Lay interference, even though Catholic, can be recognized in these matters."

Such is the practice in England. All denominations who apply have grants conferred upon them for building school-houses, for salaries to masters and mistresses, for the purchase of books, and stipends for pupil teachers, &c.

FREE SCHOOLS.

In regard to free schools, it has been said that to make them absolutely so, would be to drag education into the kennel; to paralyze and degrade it, and to place it on a level with the schools of the work-house. It has also been said that no one values what he has not paid for. It has been further noticed that Connecticut, which, in connection with common schools, was held in honor, has fallen from this high position because her state endowment is more than sufficient to meet all the requirements of instructing her youth; that it has put her actually asleep. Hence her school fund is quoted as a warning and example to deter other States from giving the proceeds of their funds except on condition that those who receive shall meet the aid given by an equal sum from rate or contribution.

It is even urged that in some places in Upper Canada the attendance has fallen off since the schools became free.

The question of placing education within the reach of all entirely without cost, is no doubt perplexing; but I believe that under any circumstances good schools will command full attendance. At the same time the more you interest the parents in them the more will they value the benefit; and although it may be admitted that in large towns and in our back settlements, the situation of some parents renders them unable to pay the school fees, their number is very few and might be easily remedied without exposing their poverty.

The moral effect of a small tax on the poor in the shape of school pence is, that it appeals to paternal duty and enforces domestic piety. It likewise establishes parental authority and vindicates personal freedom. Thus schools, which should resemble so many Christian households, if wholly supported by extraneous means, do not excite the sympathy of parents nor the anxiety and personal interest of the teachers. They become matters of business, in which the affections have no concern; the parents and teachers become estranged, and the public or social relations supersede the domestic.

To make the families of the poor scenes of Christian peace ought to be the first object of the school; but our common schools are so conducted as to substitute the idea of the citizen for that of the parent, political rights for those of domestic duties, and the claim of public privileges for the personal law of conscience.

But let the members of the Church have their separate schools and all other denominations that may desire to enjoy that right, and we shall be able in a great measure to restore

domestic kindness and authority in our household; and having a common bond of union and love with our teachers, and the same faith and truthfulness, our schools will gradually exchange their selfish and political character for the charities of domestic life.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

As in the present state of public affairs it may be some time before we can attain that simple alteration in the school law for which we are contending, we are not in the meantime to be idle. But, while we urge our claim with all becoming earnestness, we must, in as far as possible, supply the deficiency. Permit me therefore, with this view, to suggest the increase of your Sunday schools in number and efficiency.

Establish one at each of your stations; and though this will be attended with no small additional trouble, remember that all your time and faculties belong to the Church—that your vows bind you in the most solemn manner to do everything in your power for her benefit; and if you go earnestly to work, you cannot fail. I am not, my brethren, ignorant of the difficulties you will have to encounter from apathy and carelessness, from the scarcity of teachers and from their general inability, even when willing; but such obstacles are daily overcome by others, and why not by us? You will not only have to solicit and persuade your teachers to come forward to your assistance, but you will have to win over to your side their parents and friends, many of whom are cold and indifferent, and not merely unconscious of the vicious principles upon which our system of common schools is established, but many of them in their ignorance are satisfied and pleased with the progressive secular knowledge which some of their children may have made.

If you speak of their religious deficiency, they do not seem to be sensible of it, but, on the contrary, believe the confident assertions, so often repeated, that sufficient attention is paid to this the most valuable of all branches of knowledge. All these things are indeed disheartening; but the truth is on your side, and with good temper and perseverance, you will overcome all such impediments.

Again: you will have to meet your teachers from time to time by yourselves, to encourage them and shew them how to proceed in communicating instruction in such a way as may secure respect and affection from their pupils. You will say, perhaps, that it is impossible for me to keep my engagements at my different stations and likewise assist at so many schools. This may, to some extent, be true, but much may be done by good arrangements.

You can take the schools for an hour by rotation, and this at such intervals as may not interfere with your various engagements. Moreover, you can appoint an evening on some week day to meet the teachers of your different schools in their turn. Nor will the discharge of this more increased duty be slow in bearing fruit.

Your congregations will become more numerous at your different stations, more attentive and docile. By acquiring greater influence and more kindly respect and attention, you will feel encouraged from the conviction that by your own exertions and those of your teachers, you have been impressing on the young of your charge the great truths and precepts of Christianity; training them up in the principles of religion and habits of regularity, propriety and cleanliness, enlightening their understandings, softening their hearts, purifying their morals and civilizing their manners.

Nor would these benefits be confined to the pupils; your teachers would become so many friendly missionaries among your people, to extend and enforce your instructions, and you would in a short time be delighted with the happy change through your whole mission. All would become acquainted with their Bible, and learn to know their duty as men and Christians, and to understand those principles which are to be their guide in after life, and their path to heaven. And is it nothing to have excited a general spirit of improvement among all ranks of your people, to have brought the rich acquainted with the wants and actual circumstances of their poorer neighbours, and to have produced among them mutual feelings of sympathy and acts of kindness? Is it nothing to unite your flock through the whole neighbourhood, removing the prejudices of one, encouraging the efforts of another, softening the asperities of a third, and engaging the affections of all?

I can only touch upon Sunday schools as one of the most trustful sources of a clergyman's usefulness; but there is one duty more upon which I must detain you a few moments, namely:

VISITING FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE.

This Apostolic injunction can never be safely omitted, because there are so many benefits gained by such visits to families which cannot be attained in any other way.

It is, however, to be feared that many clergymen content themselves with one general visitation, and think they have done enough; but if they never see their people afterwards how are they to become acquainted with their tempers and dispositions, their peculiar habits and propensities? Hence the necessity of establishing a regular system of visitation.

Large as our missions are they seldom exceed 64 square miles, or a square of eight miles; but whatever their extent may be, let it be divided into such portions as may be visited systematically in a given time.

Commence your first round as quickly as possible after you take possession of your mission, that you may know your people, and ever after so arrange that you may visit every household at least once a year.

Some families require your personal attention oftener than others, and to this you should as far as practicable give your attention. You should be found occasionally in every part of your mission, otherwise you will never become intimately acquainted with your scattered flock.

To proceed in this manner is more necessary in a colony like this than in the mother country, because our population is continually moving—some going and others coming; and in the more remote settlements the greater number are commonly emigrants just arrived.

Suppose the mission, when you first assume the incumbency to contain 600 inhabitants, or 120 families, with the certainty of doubling every ten years: this presents at first sight a formidable field of labor, but as the population is mixed a third or fourth only belong to us, it is not beyond the strength of an active clergyman, with the aid of method and order.

At first his portion would be about thirty or forty families scattered over a large surface, and these may be all visited in a very few weeks; nor should he refrain from calling on those without, when they are disposed to receive him.

As the inhabitants increase so will the labor, but not in an equal ratio, for the roads will be getting better and will lessen the fatigue of travelling. In time the population will become thousands instead of hundreds, and as this is proceeding the mission will be divided into two, three or even four missions, till at length they somewhat resemble parishes in our fatherland.

The missionary will find great benefit from having correct lists of the people under his charge; the number composing each family, the number of communicants and of the confirmed. Such lists may be rendered particularly convenient and beneficial by appending privately, for his own special use, remarks on their character, habits and dispositions, their progress in religious knowledge, and their general conduct.

To the emigrant recently arrived, and still mourning over his separation from his fatherland, the sight of a good and faithful clergyman is felt to be a blessing. Much may be said to soothe the father and mother in their novel position, surrounded perhaps by a large family of children with many

trying difficulties and privations to contend with. He can remind them that One is watching for them and looking after their spiritual concerns, who will never leave them nor forsake them. He can encourage them in their new career, in acquiring a certain independence, and shew them that the hardships they are enduring are temporary, and not on the whole greater than those they were suffering in their native country, with this happy difference, that here a few years of steady labor is sure to secure a competence, while such a result for persons in their condition is hopeless in their native land.

Then, taking an interest in their children, furnishing them with tracts to read during the winter evenings, and urging the benefit of sending them to school as soon as their ages permit, they feel their hearts warmed towards their pastor as their friend and benefactor. They return to their labors with redoubled strength, and are cheered by the hope that in a short time they will be comfortable and happy. They may also be made aware that already their situation is much improved from what it was in England or Ireland, for the four great wants of the poor, house-room, fuel and food, are abundantly supplied; and if their clothing continue homely for a time, the second or third crop will remove that inconvenience.

I might enlarge on the uses to be made by the faithful missionary of the domestic events of joy and sorrow which happen in all families. The marriage, the birth, the confirmation—the first communion on the one hand, and the times of misfortune and trouble, of sickness, of grief for the departure of some beloved one: all of which may be made, through God's blessing, the means of great spiritual and temporal improvement; but, considering the ground I have yet to pass over, I must forbear.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

In this way we gradually train our people to profit by public worship and to value the blessings of the Sabbath day.

Every seventh day God speaks to a fallen world and gives us the foretaste of a better Sabbath, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

Its holy and tranquilizing duties, its sanctifying lessons, the self-communing which it promotes, are among its special benefits. But even as a mere respite from toil, worldly cares and distractions, it is replete with mercy. Paramount to all its privileges are the public services of the Church:—"We assemble and meet together in God's presence to render thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul."

To give full efficacy to the Church services we must endeavour to procure from our people punctual attendance, to be scrupulously careful in making the responses, and to join in the prayers with our hearts and understandings. For, unless we get our people young and old, to do all this, they do not profitably worship; all seems dead and uninteresting. We must therefore win their affections to the beauty of the service, and teach them how to make every prayer and petition their own. And in order to effect this, we should read the prayers with solemnity and fervor, and shew by our manner that we feel them to be what they really are, contrite, humble, grateful and trustful.

Thus an earnest and subdued utterance will shew that our souls are engaged and that the language of our lips is heartfelt and sincere.

But not only ought the members of our Congregations to attend to the responses and thus identify themselves with the holy services of the Church, but also to the Psalmody.

The influence of music in aiding religious feeling is admitted by all men: it has delighted all ages and all nations; and they must have hearts very cold and insensible from which it doth not draw religious delight.

PREACHING.

Faithful and fervent preaching ought ever to accompany the ordinance of prayer; and perhaps the best rule is that laid down by the Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews:

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from good works and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands and of resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment, and this we will do, if God permit."

The Apostle tells us not to dwell exclusively on the principles or rudiments of our holy religion; but, when these are well understood, to proceed to their practical application. And this appears to be the principle on which our inestimable Book of Common Prayer is composed. It provides that our congregations, old and young, shall be made well acquainted with the great doctrines and facts of the Gospel as illustrated in our Saviour's life from Advent to Trinity Sunday; and again from Trinity to Advent, it directs us more especially to their application to our advancement in holiness and purity of life and conversation.

Hence, during the course of its ecclesiastical year, it delivers to us the whole counsel of God.

Among the many excellences of the Book of Common Prayer is, that it furnishes the most appropriate texts for every Sunday, fast and festival of the year, and enables us to divide the word in the most perfect and useful manner. It gives every doctrine and precept its proper place; and the clergyman who preaches in accordance with its calendar, is sure to preach the Gospel in all its fulness.

To preach the Gospel in faith and fervor, is to feed the flame of true devotion, to bestow wings on the soul, and give life to the good affections of the heart.

It is not, however, my intention to dwell on the present occasion on this subject, however important, but to direct your attention to two errors in the mode of preaching, which seem too prevalent in the present age, and which a due reference to the Book of Common Prayer, as we have recommended, will effectually remedy.

In the first place, many dwell almost exclusively on doctrinal points, and some select only one or two favorite ones upon which they expatiate Sunday after Sunday, and exhibit great ingenuity in subtle distinctions, curious abstractions and technical phrases, which bewilder and confuse, but give no definite instruction or edification.

Were the doctrines taken up on the days the Church sets apart for their express commemoration, and presented in their tenderness, sublimity and beauty, the effect would be very different. They would purify and elevate the hearts and minds of the people, instead of wearying and distracting them with refined divisions and repetitions.

In the second place, a numerous class of clergymen teach that the world and the things of the world, though necessary to be attended to for their temporal comfort and prosperity, are nevertheless among the deadliest enemies to our spiritual and future interests. Now, although in times of great peril and revolting sacrifices, in daily dread of martyrdom and the crushing of our dearest affections and hopes, the mind naturally becomes gloomy, and may at such times sympathize with this view; yet in the passing age, when the profession of Christianity exposes us to no privations, the proper distinction should be taken between using and abusing the things of this world; and the preacher ought not to depreciate intemperately the gifts of God, and cry down the beauty of the Creation around him, its thrilling interests, its glorious works and holy affections. The common affairs of life should not be represented as hostile to our true concerns and interests, but as the appointed field of our duty and probation.

(To be concluded in our next.)

