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TORONTO  
**Diocesan Retrospect and Prospect**

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A PAPER READ AT THE  
FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE  
ARCHDEACONRY OF YORK

HELD AT BARRIE, SEPTEMBER 25TH AND 26TH,  
1900.

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SECRETARY OF THE DIOCESE OF TORONTO,  
1870, 1872—1898.



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## Diocesan Retrospect and Prospect.

A PAPER READ AT THE FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF  
THE ARCHDEACONRY OF YORK, HELD AT BARRIE,  
SEPTEMBER 25TH AND 26TH, 1900.

By J. George Hodgins, M.A., LL.D., ex-Honorary Lay Secretary of the Synod of the Diocese of Toronto.

Never was a Church, in any colony, so richly endowed financially as was that of the Church of England in Upper Canada in 1791. Her first governor, John Graves Simcoe, had strong views on the subject. So strong, indeed, were those views, on the desirability, and necessity (as he regarded it), of establishing the Church of England in this province, that they often degenerated into an unjust and unworthy disparagement of the pioneer labours of the missionaries of the other churches, who had sought to enkindle and keep alive religious feeling among the scattered settlers in the province.

As a member of the Imperial Parliament, by which the Constitutional Act of 1791 was passed, Simcoe, with others of like mind, promoted, if he did not prompt, the insertion of those portions of the Act which provided for the setting apart of one-seventh of the Crown Lands in the newly created province of Upper Canada, for the future support of a Protestant clergy. The Act further authorized the Governor-in-Council "to constitute and erect within every township and parish, which now is, or hereafter may be, formed, constituted, or erected, within such province, one, or

more, parsonage or rectory, . . . according to the establishment of the Church of England." The Governor-in-Council was further authorized, out of the Crown Lands set apart for a Protestant clergy, "to endow every such parsonage or rectory with so much, or such a part of the lands, so allotted, or appropriated, as aforesaid." At the time of the passage of this Act, there were only two Church of England clergymen in Upper Canada.

One reason of the solicitude of the British Government for the establishment and maintenance of the Church of England in Upper Canada, at this time, was its high appreciation of the unswerving devotion and loyalty to the Crown, of those who, "following the flag," left home and kindred in the revolted colonies, and settled in this province as the United Empire Loyalists.

A few spasmodic efforts were made—notably in 1818, 1825 and 1832—to give effect to the generous provisions of the Constitutional Act of 1791, for the setting apart of rectories and parsonages, and for amply endowing them out of the public domain; but it was not until 1836, that Sir John Colborne, under the advice of his Executive Council, first gave effect to these provisions of that Act, which had been passed 45 years before. In that year, 57 rectories were projected; but the patents of only 44 of them were executed when Sir John Colborne was recalled from the province. To these projected Rectories were assigned, in the aggregate, 23,000 acres of the Clergy Reserve Lands, or about on an average, 400 acres to each, but to the Toronto Rectory was assigned 800 acres. During the interval, from the passage of the Constitutional Act of 1791, until the erection and endowment of the Rectories, and later, the stipends of the clergy

paid were out of the public revenue, and by grants from the Propagation Society in England.

The establishment of these Rectories, and their endowment, after so long an interval of nearly 50 years from the time when the Act authorizing them was passed, met with great disfavour, and led to a most unpleasant and prolonged agitation against any further efforts to establish the Church of England (as was alleged) in Upper Canada. This feeling of hostility to the Church of England in this province was greatly increased by the selfish mistake which the rulers of that Church made at that time. They were not content with the boon of the Rectories and their endowment out of the Clergy Reserve Lands, but they laid claim also to the whole of the lands set apart for the support of a Protestant Clergy to the exclusion, not only of the clergy of the sister established Church of Scotland, but of the ministers of all other Christian churches in Upper Canada. And this claim, so pertinaciously persisted in, in the face of the positive declaration of William Pitt and Lord Grenville, who were the responsible promoters of the Constitutional Act of 1791, "that the provisions of [that Act] were not intended for the exclusive support of the Church of England [in Canada], but for the maintenance of the clergy generally of the Protestant Church," i.e., "any clergy that was not Roman Catholic."

Another mistake made by the rulers of the Church of England in this province, in those early days, was the strongly emphasized discouragement which the first Bishop, and other dignitaries, gave to the "voluntary principle." Doctor Strachan, the otherwise clear-headed and practical chief ruler of the Church, pursued the shadow of a state endowment of the Church of England in Upper Canada,

and for a long time shut his eyes to the very marked success and vitality of the non-endowed churches of the province.

In a remarkable confidential document, which the Bishop had printed in 1849, on "The Secular State of the Church in the Diocese of Toronto," he furnishes a painful and striking commentary on the effect of his own teaching hitherto, that it was "the duty of the State to support the Church," and thus relieve the people of their chief obligation to support the gospel among them. He said:

"Till lately we have done little, or nothing, towards the support of public worship. We have depended so long upon the Government and the Propagation Society, that many of us forget what is our bounden duty in this matter. Instead of coming forward manfully to devote a portion of our temporal substance to the service of God, we turn away with indifference, or we sit down to count the cost, and measure the salvation of souls by pounds, shillings and pence! . . . While we are bountifully assisted ourselves, and seldom required to do more than half, yet we are seen to fail on every side."

It is true, that, by his persuasive words and strong personal influence, Doctor Strachan succeeded in rallying around him, when occasion required, many of the leading members of the Church of England in Upper Canada, who aided him in his plans for promoting the interests of the Church.

#### CHURCH ACTIVITIES IN THE EARLY DAYS.

In taking a retrospective view of Church action in the early days, I would briefly refer to some of the various efforts put forth to promote what may be called the "activities" of the Church.

As early as 1817, a "Bible and Prayer Book Society" was organized at York, with Doctor Strachan as secretary. In 1818, the Society was divided into two. The Bible Society was the forerunner of the non-denominational one now in existence in Toronto. The other remained an exclusively Church of England Society, and subsequently became the Book and Tract Depository of the Church Society and of the Synod.

In 1830, a Pioneer Missionary Society was established at York, for converting and civilizing the Indians, and for "propagating the Gospel among the destitute settlers in Upper Canada." The seven separate annual reports of this Society show that its operations were carried on with great vigour and success.

In 1832-3, a "Travelling Mission Fund Society" was established, and it was enabled to put into the field five travelling missionaries.

In 1835, the "Upper Canada Clergy Society" was formed, and two noted ministers were sent to England to collect funds to make good the great loss caused by the withdrawal of the usual generous grant from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The withdrawal of this grant was the immediate cause of the establishment of the 57 Rectories in 1836.

In 1838, the Bishop of Quebec, who had then jurisdiction in Upper Canada, in a report to Lord Durham, the Imperial High Commissioner to Canada, made a strong appeal for the appointment of a Bishop by the Home Government for Upper Canada. The result was that the Rev. Doctor Strachan was appointed the first Bishop of Toronto. His diocese included the whole of Upper Canada, and the number of the clergy in the Province at that

time was 71. In his report to Lord Durham, Bishop Stewart drew a graphic picture of the new Diocese. He said: "It will be found that a lamentable proportion of the Church of England population are destitute of any provision for their religious wants. Between Woodhouse, upon Lake Erie, a district of upwards of 50 miles . . . there is not a clergyman. In the whole, . . . district of Wellington there is only one clergyman. . . . The clergy, except in a few comparatively large towns, are all more or less itinerants." To resume:

In 1841, the Diocesan Theological School was organized under the Rev. Dr. Bethune—afterwards Bishop.

I will now consider and briefly discuss certain questions affecting the Church of England in our diocese which are either unsettled, or if settled, are worthy of being reconsidered, with a view to reconcile differences of opinion and so to promote more effectually the well being and progress of that Church. And first I shall deal with the question of self-government by our synod.

#### I. THE RIGHT OF THE CHURCH TO MEET IN SYNOD ASSERTED PRACTICALLY.

Dr. Strachan, as Archdeacon of York, had long been impressed with the desirability of giving the laity a practical voice in the councils of the Church. He, therefore, the year after his appointment as Bishop, took steps to give effect to his desire on this subject. Accordingly, in 1840, he organized the Church Society of the Diocese, composed of the clergy and laymen who were subscribers to the society—having stated advisory meetings under its constitution.

As a tentative measure, this was a movement in



the right direction. In the meantime, the Bishop consulted authorities in England on the subject of Church Synods; but they discouraged him and advised "caution!" He, however, held "visitations" of his clergy, and invited the laity to attend, as representatives of Parishes. At one of these meetings (in 1853), a protest against the informal character of the Assembly was proposed, as follows:

"We the Members of the Church of England in the Diocese of Toronto . . . solemnly and respectfully declare our right to meet as a Synod, refusing to admit the right of interference from any quarter." This protest was put into more formal shape, in which the three orders present declared themselves to be "the Diocesan Synod of this Diocese," and that, as such, they decided then to proceed to the transaction of business."

## 2. THE HISTORY OF THE RECTORY PATRONAGE QUESTION IN THE DIOCESE.

In regard to the Rectory Patronage Question, I may say, that apart from certain differences of opinion on mere doctrinal matters, a great deal of strong feeling in respect to this question has been aroused, and it has not yet been allayed.

By the Constitutional Act of 1791, the right of appointment to the Rectories, when established, was vested in the Lieutenant-Governor. The first appointment, under that Act, was made by Sir John Colborne in 1836.

In 1851, an Act was passed by our Legislature, which was promulgated in 1852, by which the patronage of the Rectories was transferred from the Lieutenant-Governor to the Church Society of the Diocese. On that occasion, the Hon. J. Hillyard

Cameron, a prominent layman, stated that "lay nomination" was not against the principles of the Church of England, as both in England and Ireland collegiate bodies exercised that power. By unanimous consent, the Church Society authorized Bishop Strachan, by bylaw, to exercise the right of appointment during his lifetime.

In 1869, the Church Society was merged in the Synod, and the right of appointment to the Rectories was transferred from the Church Society to the Synod. A committee, having been appointed to report upon the subject, brought in a valuable report in 1870, but its final consideration was deferred until 1871, when the present Canon was passed.

Under our Episcopal system, the formal act of induction to a Rectory must necessarily rest with a Bishop, although, as is often the case, the nomination may be vested in another person. But when the right of appointment to Rectories was, in 1852, transferred from the Church Society to Bishop Strachan, that act did not, in any form, extinguish what, by statute, had become, and still is, the inherent right to laymen to an equal voice with the clergy in the appointment of Rectors in Upper Canada. The Bishop became, in that case, the representative agent of the lay, as well as of the clerical, members of the Church Society. And it is more than a mistake should he give effect only to the clerical and Episcopal side of that agency. He has no ecclesiastical, or official, right in himself to make an appointment, as the repeal of the bylaw would re-vest the right of appointment again in the clerical and lay members of the Church Society. Besides, the Civil Government in England has been careful not to confer any ecclesiastical jurisdiction

upon a Bishop in a colony. The same rule, and even a stronger one, has been observed in this province; for the 18th Section of the "Church Temporalities Act" of 1841, declares that it confers no "spiritual jurisdiction, or ecclesiastical rights whatsoever upon any Bishop, or Bishops, or other ecclesiastical person in . . . the Church [of England] in Upper Canada." And the 1st Section of the "Church Temporalities Amendment Act" of 1866 expressly declares that this 18th Section of the Act of 1841 shall not "be, in any manner, varied, altered, or repealed, by any Canon, or Bylaw, of the Provincial Synod."

In 1875, a reasonable effort was made to allay the feeling of discontent with the working of the present Patronage Canon in our Diocese. It was proposed "that, in construing the said Canon, it shall be held to mean that no appointment to a vacancy in any Rectory, etc. . . . shall be made in opposition to the expressed wishes of a majority of the Churchwardens and Lay Representatives of the Parish concerned, when consulted by the Bishop." While this proposal was declared "lost," it is still, as it was then, the general view of the lay mind on the subject, and will continue to be so, as long as the statutory right of the laymen is assumed to be entirely subordinate to that of the clerical and Episcopal—neither of which orders, separately or combined, have any right to appoint Rectors, under our statute law. It is a question whether our Patronage Canon of 1871 does not, in spirit and in practice, violate the provisions of the Statutes of '52 and '69, by concentrating in one order exclusively the powers conferred by the Legislature on three orders, and intended to be honorably exercised by them, in good faith, not by one, as

supreme, but by the three together, or by delegation.

2. RIGHT OF THE TORONTO SYNOD TO DIVIDE  
THE DIOCESE EXERCISED

In regard to the right of our Diocesan Synod to divide the Diocese, and thus provide for an increase of the Episcopate, I may state that our Synod in 1853 passed a resolution, dividing the Diocese into two dioceses—that of Huron and Toronto, and in its Constitution adopted in 1854, it declared that one of its objects was: "To provide (with the assent of the Crown), for the division of the Diocese into new dioceses, either forthwith, or at any future period."

In 1861, at the first meeting of the Provincial Synod, a similar declaration was adopted, practically covering the same ground as that in the declaration of the Toronto Synod of 1854. The Provincial Synod declared that one of the objects for which it was constituted was: "To provide, with the consent of the Crown, for the division of the (ecclesiastical) province into new dioceses, as occasion may require." As the whole of that ecclesiastical province had already been divided into dioceses, to meet purely local needs, this claim to redivide them would be a clear invasion of local Church rights, and also those of the Diocesan Synods, which were quite competent to give effect to their own wishes on the subject, as the Toronto Synod had done in 1853.

Ten years after its formation, the Provincial Synod, in 1871, went still further out of its way, and, without consulting the respective Diocesan Synods, and without the authority of law, conferred practically similar co-ordinate powers on the House of Bishops, as such.

These claims, on the part of the Provincial Synod to practically deprive the Synod of this Diocese of Toronto of its original right to divide the Diocese at its pleasure, opens up a question of jurisdiction on the part of the respective synods—both deriving their differing powers from the same statute of 1856-7,—but which time will not permit me to discuss.

#### 4. THE GENERAL SYNOD—ITS INEFFICIENCY AND PRACTICAL FAILURE.

In the "Declaration," adopted by the Provincial Synod of Canada in 1861, was one prospective purpose which commended itself to those members of our Church who looked forward at that time, and subsequently, to a prosperous future for that Church in the Dominion. Among other things, it was stated in the "Declaration" that one object, which the Provincial Synod had in view, was: "To promote the further consolidation and united action of the whole of the Dioceses of British North America."

After a good deal of varied consultation, the several Diocesan Synods agreed to the principle of a General Synod for the whole Dominion. "Each of these Diocesan Synods appointed clerical and lay delegates to convene at Winnipeg, and to suggest a tentative scheme on which the plan of a General Synod might be framed." The delegates at Winnipeg agreed upon a comprehensive framework for such a Synod, which was finally accepted by the various Diocesan and Provincial Synods, with a few suggestions.

In the proposed scheme, it was, among other things, agreed that the General Synod should have jurisdiction over:

a. All agencies employed in carrying on the general work of the Church.

b. The General Missionary and Educational work of the Church.

These, as well as other features of the Winnipeg scheme, was adopted by the General Synod at its first meeting at Toronto in 1894.

The result of the action of the General Synod, however, in these matters was very inconclusive and quite disappointing. Instead of providing for any kind of systematic supervision over more than 70 Church of England Mission Schools in the North-West, the General Synod has made no specific provision for such supervision whatever.

Instead of providing any comprehensive plan for the systematic visitation of the large number of scattered missions in the North-West, and so learning what are their actual needs and condition, the General Synod has adopted a sort of disjointed scheme of a Mission Board, composed of three divisions, with separate jurisdictions. But it has not provided in the Constitution any facilities for a thorough inspection of the missions, or an enquiry into their actual condition and working; nor does it publish any information as to the receipts from England and Canada of each mission, its condition, or its specific needs,—leaving contributors, therefore, to these Missions, Diocesan and otherwise, in the dark in regard to them.

Apart from this failure of the General Synod to adopt a really practical business-like way of dealing specifically, and controlling with precision and certainty, the various "agencies" employed in carrying on the "work of the Church," that Synod has taken upon itself to deal with matters outside of its jurisdiction. It has made no provision in re-

gard to the management and religious teaching, or oversight of its own Church schools; but it has laid down the law, *ex-cathedra*, in regard to the subject of religious instruction in the elementary schools of each Province in the Dominion, over which it has no jurisdiction. How this action can be designated the "Educational work of the Church of England in Canada," within the meaning of the Constitution does not appear. The Mission schools, the Church of England colleges and universities, and them alone, can be regarded as agencies for the "Educational work of the Church." But certainly not the non-church schools in the various Provinces,—over which the Synod can neither claim nor exercise control.

In its action, in this matter, the General Synod has invaded the proper and appropriate domain of the Diocesan Synods in a civil Province, provided such synods are in a position unitedly to speak on behalf of the members of the Church of England in each such Province. The Toronto Diocesan Synod has sought ineffectually for years, to have a Synod organized for the civil Province of Ontario, so that such a Synod could speak authoritatively, and with a united voice on this and other subjects, which are controlled, or regulated, by the Statute laws of that Province.

As a matter of fact, no single Diocesan Synod, or a Provincial Synod, has any status in dealing with the question of Religious Instruction in the Provincial Schools. They can, it is true, express an opinion on the subject, but they cannot follow it up with any decisive effect. Should they try to do so, it might be justly replied, that each Diocesan Synod represented only a fraction of the Church of England members in a province. And

to such action, on behalf of a Provincial or General Synod, it might be fairly asked, what right have the delegates from the Maritime Provinces, or of Rupert's Land, to say what the Province of Ontario shall do in regard to Religious Instruction in her Elementary Schools?

PRACTICE OF THE CANADIAN AND IRISH GENERAL SYNODS  
CONTRASTED.

In the Constitution of the General Synod of Canada, a most unpractical rule has been adopted—that the two Houses, except by mutual consent, shall sit apart.

How much more practical and common-sense is the very opposite rule on this subject in the Irish Church Constitution? In that Constitution it is declared that both Houses shall sit together in full Synod for deliberation, and the transaction of business, except when "the Bishops express their wish to consider separately any matter in debate, the further discussion of that matter shall be postponed until the Bishops shall have had the opportunity of so doing."

It is also provided, that, in case a question, which has been agreed to and passed by the votes of the Lower House, is rejected by a majority of the Bishops, is "reaffirmed at the next ordinary session of Synod by two-thirds of the clerical and lay representatives . . . it shall be deemed to be carried, unless it be negatived by not less than two-thirds of the then entire existing order of Bishops—the said two-thirds being present and voting, and giving their reasons in writing."

It is further provided in the Constitution (and very properly so), that "both Houses shall vote separately; but," (no doubt lest the vote of the



Lower House might be unduly influenced), "the vote of the Lower House must be declared before the Bishops shall vote."

As both Houses of the Irish General Synod are required to "sit together in full Synod for deliberation, and the transaction of business," the Irish Bishops are in a position to hear the arguments on both sides of a question before they can vote. But our Canadian Bishops, apparently, think that they can intuitively come to a sound conclusion of themselves, without hearing either side, or learning what are the merits of a question which may have been exhaustively debated in the popular branch of the Synod.

Our Synods, as at present conducted, have not been as great a success as they might have been under other management. Several Church matters of more than passing interest have been brought up for consideration and discussion, but which, in many cases, have led to no real or practical result; for, as a rule, many of them have not been thoroughly or exhaustively discussed. In the Provincial Synod of Canada (which is now a fifth wheel in our legislative machinery, so far as Ontario and the General Synod is concerned), various important questions come up; but generally it is an exceptional case when they receive the attention which they deserve. Synods are so set upon adjourning within a specified time, that questions are often either deferred, or sent to a committee, to be buried, instead of being fully discussed at the time when an interest in them has been awakened.

##### 5. GREAT SUCCESS OF THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY.

While there is thus much to discourage one in

this unsatisfactory state of things, it is very cheering to know of the great and unwearied service which the Woman's Auxiliary has rendered to the cause of Church of England Missions. The zeal of the Auxiliaries in the parishes has been unabated for years; and their practical system of dealing with the calls made upon them has lightened the labours, and cheered the hearts, of the isolated missionaries in the North-Western portion of our Dominion.

6. LESSONS WHICH THE CENSUS OF THE PROVINCE  
TEACH US.

Time will not permit that I should deal with other practical questions, touching the condition and progress of our Church; but I would fain call your attention to what I regard as the serious lesson which the religious census of this Province teaches us.

I have first selected the census returns for the period intervening between the appointment of Bishop Strachan and the meeting of the first tentative Synod of 1851, showing the result of the Bishop's active supervision of the diocese during the first decade of his episcopate.

The census returns, which I give of this period, refer to the years 1839 and 1850, as follows:

	1839.	1850.	Increase
Population of the Province .....	400,346	803,493	403,147
Church of England population .....	79,754	182,623	102,839
Presbyterian " .....	78,383	161,016	82,633
Methodist " .....	61,038	147,758	86,720

In this case, the adherents of the Church of England more than doubled their numbers in Upper Canada, by 23,115; the Presbyterians by 4,250, and the Methodists by 25,582, in 1850.

The census returns, which follow, cover a period

of twenty years, nearer our own times; but they by no means show so satisfactory an increase, as far as the Church of England is concerned, as does the decade just mentioned. The following are the census returns for 1871, 1881, and 1891:

	1871.	1881.	Increase over 1871.	1891.	Increase over 1881
Population of U. C.	1,620,851	1,926,922	306,071	2,114,321	187,399
Church of England adherents .....	330,995	366,539	35,544	385,999	19,460
Presbyterian do. ....	356,442	417,749	61,307	453,147	35,398
Methodist do. ....	462,264	591,503	129,239	654,033	62,530

It will be seen from these figures that from 1871 to 1881, the Church of England population increase was 35,544; the Presbyterian increase was 61,037; and that the Methodist increase was 129,239.

The census returns from 1881 to 1891 show a very much more marked increase in the number of adherents of the two other Churches, over that of the Church of England. From 1881 to 1891, the general population was increased by 187,399. The Church of England increase was only 19,460 in those ten years. The Presbyterian increase was 35,398; while the Methodist increase was 62,530.

It will also be noticed that, as compared with the Church of England, the Presbyterians and Methodists had wonderfully increased their numbers in Upper Canada since 1850. In that year, the Presbyterian population was 21,607, less than that of the Church of England; in 1891 it was 67,148 in excess of it; while the Methodist population, which, in 1850, was 34,865, less than that of the Church of England, in 1891 was 268,634 in excess of it.

Taking the census returns for our own Diocese for 1881 and 1891, the same results are apparent,

although in not so marked a degree. These returns show that, in 1881, the adherents of the Church of England in the Diocese of Toronto numbered 107,553; the Presbyterians, 95,323, and the Methodists, 155,553; in 1891, the numbers were: Church of England, 129,893; the Presbyterians, 116,796, and the Methodists, 193,290.

#### A BRIEF RETROSPECT—THE FUTURE.

In summing up, by way of retrospect, it will be seen that, while we have an excess of machinery, it is never kept in continuous and effective motion. There is also much overlapping of subjects by Synods, and, therefore, an unnecessary conflict of jurisdiction.

What we want is a careful and thoughtful revision of our work and a simpler mode of doing it. Especially should the laity be given some real and continuing part in Church work and government. The organization of the St. Andrew's Brotherhood should have a duly recognized and distinctive share in our Church system and work.

Our present stereotyped rule of holding our Diocesan Synod in only one place, year after year, should be changed, and thus many more laymen in various places in the Diocese might become personally interested in Church work and progress. We should meet as a Synod (as this Conference has wisely done), in Barrie; and we should also meet in Cobourg and Peterboro, at intervals. If that change in our system were made, numbers of laymen, in these localities, who never attend the Synod, and only have a very vague idea of what is being done, would get to know and to be familiarized with all the "activities," so-called, of the Church. Our Woman's Auxiliary

and the sister Churches have invariably adopted this plan of bringing knowledge of Church work home to hundreds of members, who thus become personally interested in it, and, as a consequence, active workers in the cause.

As to the future of our Church in this Diocese, that will depend, under God's blessing, on those now engaged in promoting its varied interests. The holding of such Conferences as this is a hopeful and encouraging sign of active Church life; and I hail it with pleasure as a good omen for the future. In this great work, let us "not be afraid nor dismayed," for the battle is not ours, but the Lord's.

In God's great field of labour,  
All work is not the same;  
He hath a service for each one  
Who loves His holy name.

Rise up! for He hath called you,  
To a mission of your own;  
And rightfully to fulfil it  
His grace can make you strong.