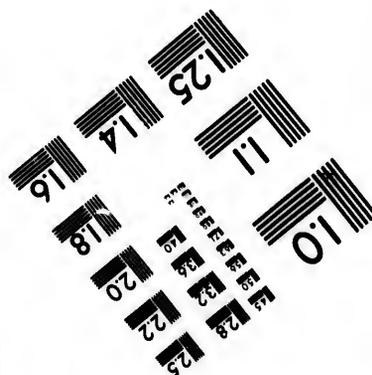
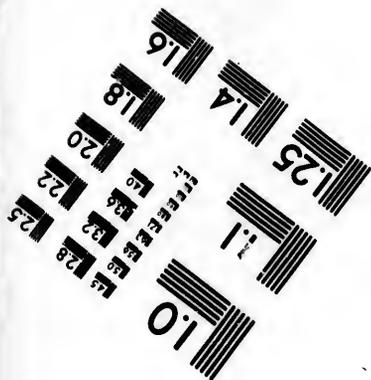
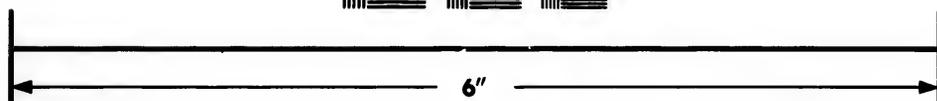
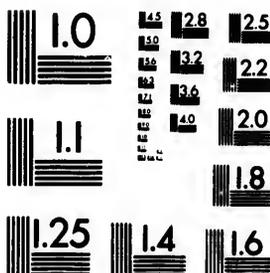


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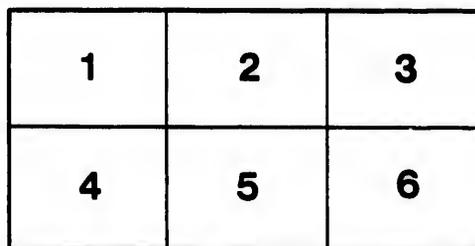
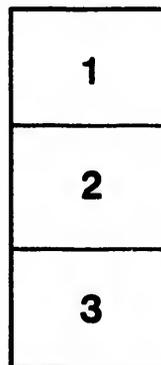
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# LETTER

OF

**Dr. THOMAS ROLPH,**

OF ANCASTER, U. C.

TO

THE HON. AND RIGHT REV. DR. A. McDONELL, LORD  
BISHOP OF KINGSTON.

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ANCASTER, GORE DISTRICT, SEPT. 11, 1837.

TO THE HON. AND RIGHT REV. DR. A. McDONELL,  
LORD BISHOP OF KINGSTON.

MY LORD,—As it appears to me that the period is at hand, when a final arrangement will be made for the religious instruction of this Province, I beg permission to offer a few observations to your Lordship, as the venerable and respected director of the Catholic Church in Upper Canada, on the claims which the Roman Catholics have on the British Government, in the settlement of this very important and neglected question.

If it is the duty of a good government to take care that the spiritual necessities of the people shall be provided for, is there a single reason, founded either in law, justice or expediency, why the Catholics of this Province should be excluded from this benefit? At the conquest of Quebec the Roman Catholic faith was the professed faith of the people; the Priests had a provision made for them, and secured to them by law; the British Government bound itself by solemn treaty to preserve their sacred privileges inviolate. Upper Canada was then part of the Province of Quebec, and by virtue of this treaty, and by sanction of law, did the first Catholic Missionaries in this Province receive their lawful dues from their flocks. After the division of the Province of Quebec into the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, a seventh portion of *this* Province was reserved for a Protestant Clergy; and shortly afterwards an Act of the Provincial Parliament decreed that tithes should not, in *future*, be established in this Province. By the operation of this Act, then, the Catholic Clergy have been thrown altogether on their flocks for support, with the exception of a trifling annual allowance being given by the Government to your Lordship, for distribution amongst the Clergy. It has not occurred to many, that in proportion as the population has become more scattered, a greater necessity has arisen for churches and missions; and that no augmentation of allowance having been made, the distribution money has become less to each clergyman, from being divided amongst a larger number of recipients. The people seem to me to entertain very erroneous views, on the subject of a provision made by the Government for the clergy. Our brethren from the Emerald Isle, more especially,

exhibit an extraordinary sensitiveness on this subject. Nor can it be wondered at, my Lord, considering that the Catholics in that but too long misgoverned country have been compelled, by law, to sustain a church differing in doctrine and discipline from their own. And I cannot disguise from your Lordship, that I have ever thought that that gallant, noble, generous, susceptible people were fully justified in refusing the proffered aid of a government for the sustentation of their priesthood, as long as that government compelled them to maintain an establishment such as I have described. Even with this serious objection, however, the Catholics of Ireland receive an annual grant from the British Government, for the support of their College at Maynooth. Assistance to the Clergy, by the Government, by no means involves an amalgamation with the State. The French Government, after the abdication of Charles the Tenth, determined that the Roman Catholic religion should no longer be designated as the religion of the State; all religion, as far as the government was concerned, was placed on a strict footing of equality. But did the government think it necessary to withdraw all support and provision from the clergy of the country? No: they knew, by fatal experience, that the country could not prosper, nor the people be either good or happy, without a pious and efficient clergy; and accordingly a legal provision was made for them. It would occupy too much space, in the columns of a single letter, to give the various extracts from the evidence given before the Committees of the Houses of Lords and Commons in 1825, by Ireland's intrepid and persevering champion, O'Connell, as to the utility and necessity of making a permanent provision for the Catholic Clergy; but I would refer those who may be sceptical on the subject, to read attentively that evidence, as well as his still more able and interesting letter on Glebes. They carried conviction to my mind, and notwithstanding his opinions and views have since changed, however satisfactory or clever the answers to his own former opinions may seem to be to others, to me there is something so much cleverer and more striking in his original positions that I find they haunt my remembrance when I have quite forgotten his objections to them. The Protestant Governments of Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Prussia, take particular care that the people of the respective churches in their dominions shall not be without faithful, zealous and efficient pastors; and those who have witnessed the industry, morality, frugality, sobriety and happiness of the great bulk of

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the people in those countries can find no other satisfactory cause for these virtues than the benign influence which genuine piety must always diffuse over the social condition of mankind. Before setting forth the total inaptitude of the voluntary system for supplying the spiritual wants of the people, I will again revert to France, in corroboration of the dreadful condition of a people without religion. Not many years, my Lord, before the French Revolution, the people of that country were celebrated through the earth for their suavity and politeness; that event suddenly transformed them into democratic furies; all softer passions were swallowed up in one boundless appetite for blood. Murder was aided by mechanical skill, and from the testimony of the late eminent antiquarian, C. A. Stothard, Esq., thirteen heads were severed in one short minute. So fixed and indulged was the passion for slaughter, that a solitary or dual execution would not collect a crowd; it was only when numbers bled that spectators could be obtained. The unearthly mania raged from the capital to the extremities of the empire. Lewis was no more, and Robespierre reigned. Nor rank, nor age, nor sex could awaken pity. Atheism, like some fell demon, stalked through France, triumphant over all the virtues and charities of humanity; and wherever he turned his steps the honorable and the helpless bled; while Europe stood paralyzed and horror-stricken at the slaughterous scene! The same combustible materials are now at work; the same principles which led to the French revolution, are those which, *masked as "voluntary principles,"* would banish religion from the world. One of the ablest jurists of England says, "An honorable and competent maintenance for the ministers of religion is undoubtedly *jure divino*; whatever the particular mode of that maintenance may be. For, besides the positive precepts of the New Testament, natural reason will tell us, that an order of men who are separated from the world, and excluded from all lucrative professions, for the sake of the rest of mankind, have a right to be furnished with the necessaries, conveniences, and moderate enjoyments of life, at their expense, for whose benefit they forego the usual means of providing them. Accordingly all municipal laws have provided a liberal and decent maintenance for their national priests or clergy."

Now, my Lord, independently of the poverty of the people in a country where years of incessant toil are required before the forest can be converted into a farm, and where the conso-

lations of religion and the quiet of the Sabbath are so indispensable to reconcile the exhausted pioneer to his hard lot—inde- pendentlly of this powerful obstacle to the voluntary system, there is a formidable one founded on human nature itself. At a public meeting in Newry, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Blake, the exem- plary and eloquent Catholic Bishop of ———, spoke on the subject of the Poor Laws, and said, “ Voluntary contributions, although they enhance the merit of individuals, are too preca- rious and too liable to fall off to be relied upon with confidence ; and hence in every year it is only by the greatest efforts and sacrifices that our workhouse is supported ; and I regret to say, that whilst many who are not the most able to contribute, give more than they can afford : others who have abundant means, give little or nothing.” What his Lordship has here stated of the poor is fully as applicable as to the support of the clergy. The present eleemosynary system of maintaining our clergy is open to various and powerful objections. Its total insufficiency to accomplish the purpose is one ; and that, notwithstanding the exaction of dues, and the repeated, I had almost said dis- graceful, supplications made to the various congregations, whose pastors have neither glebe nor Government allowance. Besides leaving as it does numerous districts altogether desti- tute of religious instruction, and proving as it does, even under the most favorable circumstances, highly detrimental to the poorer and most industrious members of the community.

If a portion of the incomes of the clergy were derived from glebes set aside expressly for their use, no burden would be imposed upon the people but such as they could conveniently and cheerfully bear. If the burden of supporting clergymen were altogether taken from the land, it would press very in- conveniently upon the earnings of the industrious classes. It was this evil which, according to Lingard, led to the setting apart of endowments originally for the church. If you contem- plate, my Lord, the great extent of country, and the large po- pulation that are totally unprovided with churches and pastors, the evil must strike you as one of uncommon magnitude.—In Guelph, Dundas, and Oakville, there are churches, the first two supplied by one clergyman, whose mission amounts almost to a martyrdom ; when if the real wants of the Catholics in the Gore District were supplied, there would be a resident pastor at Hamilton, Dundas, Brantford, Guelph, and Oakville. Disguise it as it may, there are now hundreds of children who receive no religious instruction, and solely from the want of

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resident clergymen. Is this, my Lord, a sound, wholesome, proper state of things? It would be no ordinary national benefit to have a number of well educated men dispersed over every part of the Province, whose especial business it would be to keep up and enforce the knowledge of those most exalted truths which relate to the duties of man and to his ultimate destiny, and who would besides have a sort of general commission to promote the good of those among whom they would be settled in every possible manner; to relieve sickness and poverty, to comfort affliction, to counsel ignorance, to compose quarrels, to soften all violent and uncharitable feelings, and to reprove and discountenance vice. This is the theory of the business of a resident clergy, and the salutary effects resulting from such a state of things would soon be felt. In remote districts, the good pastor's residence would prove a centre of civilization, from which gleams of refinement of manners, of neatness, of taste, of science and general literature, would be diffused throughout communities and neighborhoods, where nothing but the pestilent streams of sedition at present ever penetrate. Well then, my Lord, the advantage, the utility, nay, the necessity of a resident clergy, I presume will be admitted by all; and are the Irish Catholics alone to be deprived of these inestimable blessings: the English Church will be endowed—no one can dispute her claim; the Scotch, with that indomitable perseverance, the characteristic of their race, forgetting all difference in politics, united together as one man upon this subject, and have obtained from the British Government a recognition of *their* claim; and shall the brave sons of Erin, who still cherish the religion of their great apostle, the faith of whose hearts is still fresh as the verdure of their isle, who under every vicissitude clung to their religion, and who, after three centuries of persecution which had explored every form of envenomed and malignant law, exhausted every mode of mental and physical torture to eradicate the attachments to their religion from their hearts, without success, be excluded from the blessing of a participation in a religious appropriation for the Province? No, my Lord, it would be unworthy of the present enlightened government of Great Britain, who would not wish to treat the Irish with less justice in her colonies than she seems disposed to treat them with at home. My Lord, there are associations implanted in the human breast, which may be modified to good purposes, but which can never be reasoned into silence—that belong to certain prejudices, which,

though leading sometimes into practical mistakes, and often crossing the best laid plans of a particular economy, help on the whole to incline the scale to the virtuous side, and to keep up in the great mass of human beings a diffusive sympathy of moral feelings and predilections. Among these is that prejudice which associates with the sacred service of religion, habits of a higher order than those which are necessarily brought into exercise in exacting dues, begging for assistance, and little things of vulgar sound and illiberal concern. It is hard for him, who is compelled by threats of closing the church, statements of extreme poverty and want, to emerge to the serene summit of his high and holy duty; and still harder for those who listen to these complains and wailings to cherish for him the same love, respect and affection as if he had not mixed with his denunciations against vice, murmurings against their miserable and inadequate support of their religion. Well then, my Lord, the Irish will still retain their faith like the Jews, and carry it with them into every land where they settle. They find in those who differ from them that no two interpret the sacred volume alike, and that even those who explain their doctrines to others are not agreed among themselves: looking therefore on every reformation in matters of faith as erroneous, and looking on reform in religion, as a supposition that God in his first effort could not give his religion the solidity and perfection required, they resist every effort at proselytism; the Government ought therefore to profit by the benevolent suggestion of a Protestant Bishop of Derry, if we cannot make them good Protestants, let us exert ourselves to make them good Catholics. And, indeed, the Irish are worth conciliating, for with all their vagaries, there is that mirthfulness, hilarity, good temper, and thoughtlessness, which render them enterprising in danger, of unshaken fidelity, persevering under reverses, prodigal of life, patient of fatigue, of hunger, of cold, and every hardship attendant on the settlement of a new country, while still cherishing attachment to home.

“ So bold and frank his bearing, boy,  
Should you meet him onward faring, boy,  
    In Lapland’s snow,  
    In Chili’s glow,  
You’d say, what news from Erin, boy ?”

It is therefore in every respect most desirable, my Lord, that every legitimate effort should be made, by us, to induce the government to assist us, in the erection and endowment of

our churches, clergy, and schools. The Right Rev. Dr. England, of Charlestown, by whose apostolic efforts churches are in progress of erection in the Island of Hayti, accompanied with a decent provision for the clergy,—after eloquently expatiating on the necessity of a well educated and efficient Priesthood, proceeded thus: “But you are well aware that qualification is not sufficient. They must, when found qualified, be properly ordained and duly sent, and although they should be animated with an apostolic spirit, and fully disposed according to the Saviour’s injunction, to be content with food and raiment during their sojourn on earth, though their bread should be to do the will of him who sent them, yet it is necessary that they should have provision for this food, for this raiment, and be also furnished with means for attending in those places to which they are called by the duties of instruction and of administration. Our’s is not a district in which old and long endowed churches are found scattered through the land, in sufficient numbers to meet the demands of the people: our’s is not a district in which the members of the church are found, either sufficiently wealthy or sufficiently contiguous, to sustain by their united efforts in their immediate vicinity, the pastors whom they need and whom they desire, and however anxious the clergy may be to devote themselves to the service of this people, even for this devotion they will want the common necessaries of decent support. How many are desirous of hearing the word of God and partaking of the instructions of religion, who are scattered widely distant from places where any churches are built! How speedily do these neglected souls lose their fervor! How quickly does hopelessness produce indifference in their minds. How easily are the indifferent, regardless of the truth or falsehood of doctrine, induced to conform to the external observances of the society in the midst of which they live!” What an exact portraiture of the state and condition of this Province, at least as far as the Catholics are concerned, has this able and exemplary Prelate drawn. And can any one, not absolutely demented, not perceive that the same melancholy results would follow—that, indeed, they are not, now, of daily occurrence, owing to the great want of churches and clergymen. The same admirable sentiments are set forth in the pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Baltimore and Bishops in Council. “In those countries where parochial or other benefices exist, the incumbent, when worn out by labor or age, or incapacitated by sickness or accident, is not cast

aside : he still enjoys his right to the place, and continues in possession of the income ; and it is fit that it should be so ; for to use the expressions of the apostle, who, when he admonishes Timothy to ‘labor as a good soldier of Jesus Christ,’ tells him also, that ‘no man being a soldier of God entangleth him with secular businesses, that he may please him to whom he hath engaged himself,’ the Clergy are prohibited by the Canons of the Church from being engaged in traffic, that they may be wholly occupied in their ministerial duties. The emolument which they receive is comparatively moderate, sometimes wretchedly small ; they are liable to applications from the distressed, and to demands for the purposes of religion sufficient to deprive them of the power, even if they had the will, of laying up for themselves a provision for age or infirmity, and the canonical regulations, in such contingencies, provide for their support out of the benefice, and for the discharge of the duty by giving an assistant, to maintain whom both the incumbent and they who are served contribute. \* \* \* Instances have occurred, where meritorious priests, after a long career and a faithful discharge of duty, have been left neglected and in utter destitution. We would appeal to your feelings of justice to say whether this was as it ought to be. To provide for a succession of the clergy, is also a general concern with us ; if no measures be adopted to educate and to form, by proper discipline, a body of clergy to supply vacancies as they occur, what must be the consequences ? Many of our most flourishing churches have had to undergo long destitution, to struggle through great difficulties, *to witness many scandals*, and to suffer heavy losses, because of the want of a clergy, sufficiently numerous and properly qualified for our missions. Many Catholics who came hither from other nations as well as many of our own citizens who have removed to the interior, have been condemned to wander in spiritual desolation, until becoming estranged from their religion they were indifferent to its concerns or its practices ; and they themselves and thousands of their children have been lost to the church. \* \* \* \* \* The body which is to be served has been accustomed to undertake that expense in most parts of Europe, and have been assisted by the donations and legacies of the wealthy and the pious.”

How earnestly Dr. Fleming, the Catholic Bishop of Newfoundland, has been striving to obtain assistance from Government for the support of his clergy, his numerous and eloquent

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letters published in England demonstrate. In the same spirit that saint like prelate, Bishop Baines, recently addressed his clergy in England: "During the last twelve years that I have been honored with the episcopal charge, I have not only keenly felt the spiritual distress of this extensive district, but have anxiously directed my attention to procuring it relief. Of the cause of the evil there can be no doubt. The imperfect way in which our missions have been supplied by the refugees and *outcasts of other dioceses, whose education was frequently as defective as their conduct was dis-edifying*, (precisely the men suited for the voluntary system) proved that a want of a diocesan clergy was the cause of our misfortunes. \* \* \* \*

With regard to the cultivation of the mind: it is unnecessary to remark to you, that they who are intended to teach others, should themselves possess learning; and this in a degree proportioned to the state of Education amongst those with whom they may happen to be thrown. Religion must necessarily suffer, particularly in those times of boasted learning from an ignorant or ill-instructed clergy. However edifying their conduct or eminent their virtue, they can never possess the influence over their flocks, which the interests of religion require they should possess, if they are not superior in learning as well as in virtue to those whom they instruct. For this reason, the Holy Ghost, speaking of the priesthood, says, 'Because thou hast rejected knowledge I will reject thee, that thou mayest not exercise towards me the priestly functions.'" For these godly ends, colleges, seminaries, and universities were established throughout the world, not long after the apostolic age; well supported, amply endowed, putting Paganism to flight, and causing an honorable rivalry amongst ecclesiastics and laymen in their assistance to these splendid institutions. The progress of knowledge, to be productive of good to mankind, must be subservient to religion. To render the intelligence which is now so widely being spread subservient to this end, to avert from scepticism the immature understanding in the incipient stages of philosophy—to instate religion on the throne of the mind, and cause virtue to keep pace with science—to constitute, in short, the public intellect a sanctuary for the will, and a conscious evidence of the wisdom of the Creator, would be to attain the greatest good; and with the aid of science and philosophy to ennoble and expand the character and happiness of man, and rear to his maker and to eternity a monument of mind, commemorative of the glory and blessing of creation.

My Lord, if we look to the Catholic Clergy in Lower Canada, we behold them, generally, well educated, well disposed, *gentlemanly* men; you will find a polish of manners, a courtesy of carriage, a benevolence of feeling, and a real goodness of heart not to be surpassed by any body of men. Discharging the truly sublime and pastoral duty of peacemakers between men; visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction; standing as the connecting link of human and brotherly affection between the richest individual in the parish and the poorest; showing them their essential relation and dependence on each other; bidding this to treat with justice and kindness, and that to perform his work cheerfully and with gratitude:—I am an entire stranger to the philosophy that could consent, that such an office and such a body of men should be left to the precarious dependence of voluntary support. Custom, law, and affection are all commingled together to preserve inviolate their immunities, privileges, and rights.

My Lord, in a market town in the centre of England, where I acquired the rudiments of my profession, lived a Catholic Priest, who was educated at Doway; he was a scholar, a gentleman, and a saint; a thousand aching pulls at the heart-strings, and a thousand recollections of kindnesses received, that will not leave a mind that has not got the faculty of becoming ungrateful, but still

“Lingering, haunt the greenest spot  
On memory’s waste—”

brings this venerable ecclesiastic before my mind’s eye. With a small congregation, he was nevertheless supported most comfortably and respectably, by an ample endowment.

‘A man he was, to all the country dear.’

And during the harvest season, when hundreds of labourers poured into the country, from the Emerald Isle, and came to chapel on the Sunday morning, from a circuit of twenty or thirty miles of surrounding country; often have I seen the tears roll down his venerable cheeks, at the cruelties and oppressions they were accustomed to experience from the effects of prejudice, power, and misrepresentation; their wants and necessities were relieved by him; their accidents attended; their sicknesses cured; and all by the means which a pious endowment had placed in his hands. No one ever wished a shilling taken from his income. His monitions and advice came to the heart

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and "prevailed with double sway," and it was impossible to resist the force of appeals, shot at the heart, by such enchanted archery. None was his character by any means solitary. Doway, Bornheim, Valladolid, &c., gave hundreds of such ecclesiastics to Great Britain, and those who were acquainted with the virtue of that priesthood, which France in an evil hour drove from her bosom, will readily agree with me, my Lord, that profound humility, scripture piety, courteous demeanor, and extensive acquirements were their common characteristics. There now resides in this Province, in West Flamboro', a clergyman belonging to that branch from the Scottish Presbyterian Church, called Seceders; whose virtues, talent and usefulness no one will deny, I mean the Rev. Wm. Christie; he is provided with an annual salary (as I have been informed) of from £50 to £80 sterling, by a synod in Scotland. He is a strenuous supporter of the voluntary system, and having exerted his powerful eloquence in setting forth its claims in an irresistible manner to his congregation, they took him in all the pregnancy of his signification, and called on him to surrender his allowance and trust to their munificence and generosity. The Rev. gentleman, however, very wisely and prudently in my opinion, determined to follow the apostolic injunction of "holding fast that which is good," assigning as a valid and all sufficient reason, that he was apprehensive that they were too few in number, and too scanty in purse, to tax themselves so severely on his account; and that they had better postpone, until some future period, their praiseworthy determination; in fine, until they could accomplish that object without inflicting injury or injustice on themselves. The want of a Catholic Church in Hamilton has been long most severely felt, the numbers of Catholics in that beautiful and flourishing town being 750, founded on a recent census, most accurately taken.

By dint of great exertion and incredible sacrifices, the Catholics have succeeded in raising and closing in a church; they are now required to erect a house for a clergyman, before they can be supplied with a resident pastor. In my hearing the Hon. A. N. McNab promised to grant a lease to Bishop Gaulin, of a good, comfortable house, at a pepper-corn rent, until they could build one themselves. Now, although this munificence and generosity on the part of Mr. McNab are only in conformity with his whole career; if the necessity for providing for the religious instruction of so large a portion of the community was

so evident as to induce this spirited gentleman to make such an offer, how criminal in the government not to *co-operate* with the people, and place beyond the reach of private aid so important and essential an undertaking! If Mr. McNab's offer was praiseworthy, why should not similar assistance from the Government be equally so? Is he more interested in the morality and welfare, spiritual and temporal, of the people? What good reason can be assigned for throwing these burdens on private generosity? And what more legitimate and useful method of employing the public treasure than by the erection of churches and parsonage-houses, and the establishment of glebes, where a large community well disposed, are unable, from their circumstances, to make the necessary provision? Through the zeal of a resident clergyman, the people are often reminded of their duty; they are daily witnesses of that lofty and ennobling charity—that constant intercourse and intimate familiarity with the poor—that untired exertion for their happiness, their welfare, their education, their improvement,—that household sympathy with their wants,—that tender controul over their conduct,—which renders the pastoral office, when properly sustained, the most interesting, as it is the most useful, to the whole community. As Mr. Bulwer remarks, it is a singular circumstance, that by far the two ablest defenders of ecclesiastical establishments have been a Dissenter and a Deist—the pious Dr. Chalmers and the philosophic David Hume. The aphorism of the latter, that where the support of the ecclesiastic depends wholly upon the people, he stimulates their zeal by all the quackeries of fanaticism, is daily verified, and indeed, my Lord, it would not be difficult to adduce sundry cases of extortion for dues, &c., on the part of some warm sticklers for the voluntary system, that were perfectly disgraceful. Mr. Bulwer has been long known as one of the most unflinching and zealous reformers in England, and yet an eloquent advocate for a legal provision for the clergy. Speaking of a parochial clergy, he says, “In penetrating every corner of the island—in colonizing every village—with the agents of civilization, in founding schools, in enlightening the magistracy, in operating unconsciously on the moral character and spiritual teaching, even of the various sects; in curbing, to a certain limit, the gloomy excesses of fanaticism,—in all this you behold the redeeming effects of an ecclesiastical establishment; effects which are sufficient, let us acknowledge, to atone tenfold for all its abuses.” But there are still other reasons, my Lord,

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why we should receive assistance from the Government for the erection and endowment of our churches. I have stated before that by an Act of the Provincial Legislature, we have been deprived of the advantages which we should and ought to possess, by the Treaty of Quebec. This being the case, our numbers large and generally poor, we possess peculiar and powerful claims on the Government. And when we know that in other Colonies and possessions of the British Crown, assistance has been given to our clergy, we should not relax our efforts until we obtained a provision, as well as the Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches. In 1832 the celebrated Abbe Dubois, who had escaped the guillotine in France, and dedicated his life to the conversion of the heathens, and who became in manners, dress, custom and habits, almost a Brehmin, "to win some to Christ," stated before a committee of the House of Commons, that the allowance made by the Government to the Catholic Missionaries, was by no means commensurate with their necessities, and that although he had been at the head of extensive congregations in India, yet without the succor and assistance of Government, they could not be made respectable to their flocks. He proposed a scale of allowance for the Bishops, Priests and Schoolmasters, and was successful in his recommendation.

I have before reverted to Bishop Fleming, who has addressed Lord Glenelg for the purpose of obtaining land for the erection of churches, parsonage houses, and schools, in Newfoundland. This prelate spoke of his application, at a public meeting in Great Britain, in the following strain :

"Can I bring myself to think now that I shall be refused—can I for a moment suppose that a liberal Cabinet will suffer any brief authority to stand between his subjects and their benevolent Sovereign? I did hope, and do hope still, that independent of my claims and those of my people upon His Majesty's Government, a wise Ministry will see the generous policy of granting such a favor, and securing by the boon the affections of 70,000 Catholics of the most faithful subjects beneath His Majesty's sceptre; for should I have to return disappointed, surely it would be difficult, I fear, to influence their belief as they exist beneath impartial and benevolent rulers." I quote this eminent prelate, principally, because I think his testimony will have some weight with those few voluntaries among the Catholics who have become so from very different

influence than that of the galaxy of virtue which I have adduced. But more of this anon.

A letter dated Sydney, August 2d, 1836, states—"Every thing here goes on well; and under the jurisdiction of the Right Rev. Dr. Polding, the prospects of the mission are cheering in the extreme. *The Roman Catholics are now in a perfect state of equality with the Church of England, there being no established church in New South Wales.* There are 26,000 Catholics in the Colony. Six priests are most laboriously engaged, and six more are daily expected. They each receive £150 per annum from the Government, which exercises no control and uses not the slightest interference with the Catholics in religious matters."

"RELIGION IN AUSTRALIA.—An act of Council has passed to the effect that whenever £300 are raised for the erection of a church and parsonage, the Government may advance the same sum—and that if one hundred adults sign a declaration of their wish for a clergyman, a salary of £100 may be given—if two hundred, a salary of £150. and if five hundred, a salary of £200. Already nine clergymen are wanted."

The British Government have also extended their beneficent assistance to their Catholic subjects in other colonies. Through the indefatigable exertions of Mr. O'Connell, the Cingalese missions in Ceylon have been aided—a Catholic Bishop, Dr. O'Conner, sent to Madras and maintained by the Government, Dr. Clancy sent as Bishop to British Guinea, at the charge of the same power—Bishop Morris helped in the Mauritius—and Bishop Macdonell received similar assistance in his fatiguing and extensive mission in the British West Indies. Although, my Lord, I am by no means asserting that the government has been lavish in its favor, or prodigal in its grants, yet by constant appeals to it of the necessity of the aid, and of its utility, it has done us justice; and I am quite sure that the wants of the Catholics of Upper Canada, who are devoted and loyal subjects of Her Majesty, will not be unattended to if zealously and respectfully urged. Behold, my Lord, the revulsion to Paganism in those parts of India which were formerly supplied with missionaries from Portugal—the two Bishoprics of Cochin and Cranganon having been vacant for the last forty years, from want of the same assistance from the British Government which was formerly supplied by the Portuguese. If your Lordship will look to the writings of that ornament of the Anglican Church, the late elegant and pious Bishop Heber, you will find how pathetically he deploras the small assistance ren-

dered by the British Government to the cause of religion. He draws a powerful contrast of the liberality with which the Portuguese built and endowed places of worship, with the parsimony and apathy evinced by the British; and concludes by saying, "If the English lost dominion of India to-morrow, what very poor monuments they would leave to show that a Christian nation had therein held rule." But, my Lord, we are referred to the United States of America, as a convincing proof that the voluntary system can work advantageously for the cause of religion, and the spiritual welfare of the people. To this I reply; firstly, there is much more wealth in the United States that may be reasonably expected to be devoted to the purposes of religion, than can be, in a country so new, thinly peopled, and partially settled as Upper Canada: secondly, many churches in that country are very amply endowed; and the surplus is employed in assisting those that are needy: thirdly, it is quite notorious, that the most powerful exertions are, every now and then, required to be made, to arouse the people from the lethargy into which they fall; and new excitement is produced by "revivals,"—"camp meetings,"—"public discussions,"—"baptism in rivers,"—bigotry and fanaticism aroused by tales of "Maria Monk," &c. &c., in order to prevent that apathy on the subject of religion which would otherwise ensue. From a sermon published by the late Bishop Debon, Bishop of the Episcopal Church in South Carolina, it is clear to perceive that the most laborious and indefatigable exertions are required to maintain the ministers of religion—indeed, he attributes much of the external appearance of religion to a general principle of dissent, and the pride which is enlisted amongst the several antagonists to maintain their respective superiority, Bishop Doane, of New Jersey, in his Episcopal address, says, "I venture to say that there is, in our political and civil institutions, too little reference to HIM who is the only source and security of what is good in them. I enter into no discussion of the causes of this deficiency, or of the apologies for it. The fault exists, and is to be regretted. What is still more to the purpose, it is, so far as may be, to be obviated. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people," and will be their destruction. Already it begins to be felt that, from the want of a pervading religious principle, the institutions which have cost so much, and promised so well, fail of their expected result; and wise and good men of all parties, and of

every name, unite in the conviction, that, unless, *as a nation*, we seek the blessing of the Most High, the best hopes of humanity must suffer disappointment. A *public* Christian recognition of our dependence on him as a *nation*, and of our duty, as a *nation*, towards Him, will have its weight with others." I could go on, my Lord, multiplying extracts, but these, perhaps, for the present may suffice. I have endeavored to prove the wisdom and good policy of the Government aiding and assisting in the extension of religion—I have pointed out the nature of our claims; I have readily admitted the claims of others—I have shown that the best and brightest luminaries in our Church desire this assistance—I have shown that the British Government have generously aided our Missions and Clergy in other parts—it remains for me to urge the Catholics of this Province to imitate the conduct of the Scotch Presbyterians—assemble in every part—make a simultaneous movement—and not remain contented until they are equally protected as their Protestant Brethren. It is certain that the Government, if properly applied to, will not refuse to its North American Catholic subjects, the same support it gives to those residing in the East and West Indies, and in New South Wales. But to conclude, my Lord, I doubt not but that I shall be assailed for this letter, on the ground that I have always been an uncompromising antagonist of the tithe system, and a State Church! If so, I shall not be wanting in my vindication. That some of those unwearied enemies of the public peace, whom, perhaps, I shall have to describe more fully and particularly; who have misled many well meaning persons on the subject of the voluntary system; and whom, as Bishop England eloquently describes as "men who, with liberty on their lips perpetrate the most outrageous despotism, and who, in mockery of equality, would destroy every semblance of order," may make me the object of their attack, is probable. I believe the public sentiment has been mistaken on the subject, and that many who are opposed to a State Church, are still desirous that the State should make a decent provision for the religious necessities of the people. I reverence public opinion too much to defy it needlessly. The fear of its censure is most salutary, but there should be bounds to its influence, and many occasions may arise wherein we ought to have moral courage enough to disregard it. Any one may defame me and my motives, but no one can make me infamous but myself, and while I have

the approbation of my own heart, I may well despise the calumnies of those who judge of others, only, by themselves.

I have the honor to remain, my Lord,

Your Lordship's faithful,

Humble and obedient serv't,

THOMAS ROLPH.

