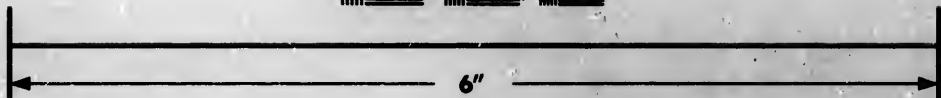
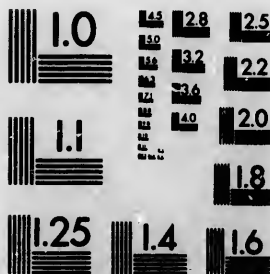


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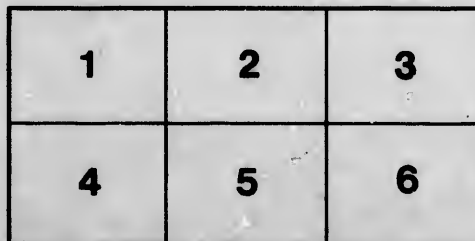
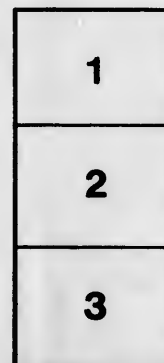
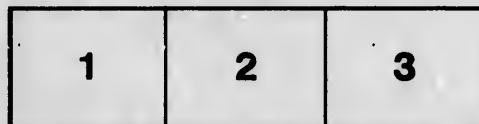
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A CHARGE

DELIVERED TO THE CLERGY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF TORONTO,

AT THE

PRIMARY VISITATION,

Held in the Cathedral Church of St. James, Toronto,

ON THE 9TH SEPTEMBER, 1841.

BY THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN STRACHAN,
LORD BISHOP OF TORONTO.

TORONTO:
H. & W. ROWSELL, KING STREET.

1841.

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A CHARGE, &c.

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

Though this be my first Visitation, we meet not as strangers.

I feel myself in the midst of the friends and associates of very many years.

Being, with one honoured exception, the oldest Clergyman in the Diocese, it is natural for me to consider myself like a father among his children, and in this paternal relation I rejoice to address you.

But first let me intreat your prayers, that I may be sustained and directed, in the discharge of the important duties committed, by Divine permission, to my feeble hands. Deeply sensible of my own deficiencies, next to the grace of God and the presence of our blessed Redeemer, who has graciously promised to be ever with his servants, I look to your cordial support and active co-operation for promoting the advancement of true religion in this extensive Diocese. When the Bishop is seconded and encouraged in his labours by the judicious and untiring exertions of his Clergy, he is warranted in expecting that the result, through the Divine blessing, will be the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

Glorious is our privilege, my brethren, thus to be set apart, as instruments in the hand of God to prepare his people for their heavenly inheritance, and messengers of that redemption and reconciliation which our Saviour has purchased with his blood.

I. The History of the Church in this Diocese, though doubtless resembling that of many other Colonies, is not without peculiar interest. For many years after its first settlement, as the favourite asylum of suffering loyalty, there was but one Clergyman of the Church of England within its extensive limits. This highly revered individual came into the Diocese in 1786, and settled at Kingston, in the midst of those to whom

he had become endeared in the days of tribulation,—men who had fought and bled and sacrificed all they possessed in defence of the British Constitution,—and whose obedience to the laws, loyalty to their Sovereign, and attachment to the parent state he had warmed by his exhortations and encouraged by his example. The Reverend Dr. Stuart may be truly pronounced the father of the Church in Upper Canada, and fondly do I hold him in affectionate remembrance. He was my support and adviser on my entrance into the ministry, and his steady friendship, which I enjoyed from the first day of our acquaintance to that of his lamented death, was to me more than a blessing.

In 1792, two Clergymen arrived from England, but so little was then known of the country, and the little that was published was so incorrect and so unfavourable, from exaggerated accounts of the climate and the terrible privations to which its inhabitants were said to be exposed, that no Missionaries could be induced to come out. Even at the commencement of 1803, the Diocese contained only four Clergymen, for it was in the spring of that year that I made the fifth.

It might have been expected that, on the arrival of the Right Reverend Dr. Mountain, the first Lord Bishop of Quebec, the Clergy would have rapidly increased; but, notwithstanding the incessant and untiring exertions of that eminent Prelate, their number had not risen above five in Upper Canada so late as 1812, when it contained upwards of 70,000 inhabitants. In truth the Colony, during the wars occasioned by the French Revolution, seemed in a manner lost sight of by the public. It was still considered another Siberia, to which no man of education, and possessing the slightest hopes of obtaining a competency at home, could be persuaded to emigrate. Nor was it till after the termination of the war with the United States, in 1814, that the natural advantages of Canada began to be understood, and the errors entertained respecting its climate and productions to be slowly corrected by the testimony and experience of that portion of the army and navy which assisted the inhabitants in its defence. But when, in addition to such evidence, it became known that our Venerable Bishop did not hesitate, in the very midst of the war, to traverse the whole of the two Provinces, a desire of emigration was encouraged, and the privations, and difficulties, and perplexities of a Missionary life, in a great measure, ceased to be matters of apprehension.

It was now that the Bishop's unwearied zeal, in bringing before the British public the spiritual destitution of his vast Diocese, began to call

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forth sympathy and attention. At his instigation, noble contributions were raised,—Churches built,—and Clergymen placed in the more prominent settlements. The great impulse thus given was continued and increased by his amiable, pious, and indefatigable successor, Bishop Stewart, and under far more more happy circumstances; for a great and salutary change, in favour of spreading the Gospel not only in the Colonies but throughout the world, had come over the minds of the religious in the mother country—a change which, blessed be God, is still rapidly increasing in strength and energy, and in that skill in the application of the means which is the fruit of experience. From this period the prospects of the Church in Canada have steadily brightened. In 1819, the Clergy in this Diocese had increased to ten. In 1825, they had arisen to twenty-two,—in 1827, to thirty,—in 1833, to forty-six,—and our numbers have now reached ninety. Still our spiritual wants are many. More than forty Missionaries could at this moment be most usefully employed, and earnest applications are daily being made to me, from various villages and townships, for resident Clergymen. But, if much remains yet to be done, let us thankfully acknowledge that much has been accomplished. My primary visitation through the Diocese occupied from the latter end of May to the middle of October of last year. In my progress, I was able to go to every Parish at which a Clergyman resided, with the exception of one or two which it was impossible for me to reach, on account of their peculiar situation and difficulty of access, without a greater sacrifice of time than I could then spare.

I began my first journey on the 24th of May, and travelled through the Niagara District, visiting eleven Churches and congregations, scattered over a surface of more than one thousand square miles. This may be considered the southern division, and, though by no means so destitute of spiritual ministrations as some other parts of the Diocese, it numbered at the time only eight Clergymen. Now, I am happy to say, they are increased to ten. The number of persons confirmed amounted to one hundred and thirty-nine.

I returned to Toronto early in June and, after a few days' interval, proceeded on my journey through the northern division. My visits embraced nine places under the pastoral care of eight Clergymen, to whom I have since been able to add three more; yet what are eleven Clergymen in a country of many thousand square miles, and containing upwards of sixty thousand souls? The young persons confirmed were one hundred

and fifty-two; and two Churches, with one burial-ground, were consecrated. We had to coast round Lake Simcoe, the highest in elevation from the sea of our larger internal waters. The islands interspersed on its bosom, and the patches of cleared land that dot the woods on its shores, presented scenes very pleasing and interesting. This lake will, in a few years, be surrounded by a dense population, as the land on its banks is very fertile and rapidly settling.

After resting five days, I commenced my journey eastward on the 8th of July, and visited about forty parishes and stations. The most distant point from Toronto to which my travels extended in this direction is about three hundred miles; but having frequently to diverge from the main road, in order to reach the different congregations, the journey was very much lengthened. In this division of the Diocese we have only, as yet, thirty-two Clergymen scattered over its vast surface, few in number and far between. Yet their labours appear to be blessed, for they presented about eight hundred of their youth for confirmation. This journey occupied two months. Part of the time was extremely warm, but it pleased God to preserve my health and enable me to keep all my appointments without inconvenience.

On the 7th of September, I began my travels westward, and visited thirty-six stations, and confirmed nearly seven hundred persons. Thirty-four Clergymen are settled in this division of the Diocese, and are discharging their important and arduous duties with great success. Here it may be proper to remark, that the Clergy throughout all the Diocese have each two or three, or even more stations, at which they minister; but I was seldom able to visit more than the one at which the candidates for confirmation were collected. We have, in the western portion of the Diocese, six Indian Missions,—three of which I was able to visit, and found them in a very prosperous condition. To these we have now added a seventh, at the mouth of the River St. Clair, where a large assemblage of Indians are congregated, who desired that a Clergyman of the Established Church might be settled among them. Since my return from my visitation of the Diocese, I have confirmed the youth of this and the neighbouring parishes, and find the whole number of persons confirmed throughout the diocese to be about two thousand. As two years have scarcely elapsed since my friend and brother, the Lord Bishop of Montreal, passed through the Diocese on the same errand of love, I have reason to believe that the number would have been much greater, had

the usual period of three years intervened. At every station I preached once, and sometimes twice, and after confirmation addressed the candidates from the altar.

In passing through the Diocese, I beheld the Clergy every where active and laborious, living in good feeling and harmony among themselves and with their flocks, seeking out our people in the wilderness, forming them into congregations and parishes, and extending on every side the foundations of our beloved Zion. Is it not a blessing of inestimable value that already more than three hundred places of worship are opened every week in western Canada, in which the Clergy discharge their high and holy functions in offering up prayers, reading the Scriptures, preaching the Gospel, administering the Sacraments, and Catechising the children? Such ministrations are beyond all price!

The visit of a Clergyman among our scattered population is a joyful and welcome event to young and old. His counsel and encouragement, amidst all the difficulties and hardships of a new settlement, and his friendly sympathy in their concerns rouse them to fresh exertions, by which they are frequently enabled to surmount, with growing patience and contentment, the great obstacles which surround them. From temporal he leads them by degrees to loftier objects than this world can offer, and directs their views from time to eternity. Are they in distress? he approaches in gentleness and love the bed of sickness and of death; he deals in mercy with the afflicted and the dying, and becomes to the whole of the family a messenger from heaven. At such times they feel the consolation of communicating to this their only friend, their sorrows and disappointments, their hopes and fears. Far removed, perhaps, from their native land,—living often in the thickest of the forest, without a single relative or even an acquaintance, much less a friend,—a withering sense of solitude and desolation at times comes over their hearts, which the Clergyman alone can soften or remove. Such bitter trials open their souls to the truths of the Gospel,—they give to their Clergyman their whole confidence, and this he improves by bringing before them the fleeting nature of present things when compared with the realities of a future world. Hence they learn resignation to the Divine will under passing evils, and become convinced, from sad experience, that this is not their home, but that we have an inheritance which passeth not away, eternal in the heavens.

II. During the last year the perplexing question of the Clergy Reserves has been finally settled. Whether the best course was or was not taken

in that settlement, it would be of little importance now to inquire. It was, beyond doubt, most desirable that an end should be put to the unhappy controversy which had arisen on the subject. Those who have desired to see the interests of the Church protected and her efficiency increased, have, at least, the satisfaction of reflecting that, before the decision was come to, every consideration, which it was just and necessary to keep in view, was zealously and anxiously brought under the notice of Government and of Parliament. It only remains for us to urge, in a just and Christian spirit, whatever may seem best for turning to the greatest advantage, in support of what we believe to be the true religion, such privileges and provisions as are still left.

It is matter of grateful remembrance to us, that during the controversy growing out of the Church property, which continued nearly twenty years, we never permitted the bitter and unchristian treatment of our enemies to betray us into the like unworthy conduct. Our people, as well as the Clergy, continued patient and tranquil. No exciting meetings were held. No appeals to the passions were made; but, quietly placing our claims before the constitutional authorities, we declared ourselves, at all times, ready to bow to their decision, however severe it might be deemed. We never permitted ourselves to forget that our Lord's kingdom is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

If, in a great measure, deprived of the means destined by his late Majesty, King George III, of pious memory, and his Parliament, to support and extend the blessings of our Church in this Diocese, we must not be discouraged. What has been thus lost will, if we continue zealous and faithful, be over-ruled for our good, and may perhaps be more than made up in the affectionate liberality of our people.

The law, thus passed by the Imperial Parliament, in August of last year, to provide for the sale of the Clergy Reserves in the Province of Canada, and for the distribution of the proceeds thereof, assigns seven-twelfths to the Kirk of Scotland and other Christian denominations, and five-twelfths to the United Church of England and Ireland. Even this portion, manifestly inadequate as it is, may, under good management, greatly assist in spreading the blessings of true religion through the Diocese.

The first enactment is one of extreme importance, as regards the future support of the Church. It directs that the Clergy Reserves shall be sold, with this restriction, however, that not more than one hundred thousand acres shall be disposed of in any one year, without the express sanction of

the Secretary of State. To push the sale of the Reserves, and convert them into money, in the present state of this Colony, must diminish, to an alarming extent, the value of the endowment; and it is obvious that this enactment, hastily and imprudently carried out, may render utterly insufficient the provision for the support of religion, which was surely intended to bear some reasonable proportion to the object in view. The Act, indeed, wisely places it in the power of the Government so to modify and direct the measure in its execution, as to mitigate the evil which must otherwise ensue; and I am disposed to believe that, upon proper representations being made to the Secretary of State, such regulations on this point will be adopted as may avert a ruinous sacrifice of the property, which is still applicable to the support of the ministrations of religion.

The statute provides for the investment of the proceeds of the sales in the Funds of Great Britain, or in the Consolidated Funds of Canada, at the discretion of the Governor in Council. I need hardly tell you, my brethren, that the manner in which this provision shall be acted upon is of the greatest possible consequence. It is much to be desired that such investments should be made as shall afford the highest rate of interest compatible with perfect security. And I cannot but venture to hope that, in exercising the power given by this clause, the Government will naturally desire to have the concurrence of those more immediately concerned in the maintenance of the Church, and, if this be kept in view, the risk will be avoided of compromising the endowment by an imprudent confidence in such colonial securities as might happen to turn out unproductive.

I feel it unnecessary to remark upon the other details of the Act, because they are final in their nature, and leave nothing in the discretion of the Government so far as the Church of England is concerned. Whatever it might seem material to urge in respect to these details, if the measure were still pending, it would be to little or no purpose to urge now. The statute has passed and become the Law, and it is our duty to submit to its provisions with patient resignation, and this the more especially, as we have, during the whole contest, professed our readiness to acquiesce in any measure which Her Majesty in Parliament might see fit to adopt for its settlement, provided it were final. This has now been done, and such arrangements have been made as appeared to the proper authorities most

consistent with a due regard to religion, and the permanent welfare and tranquillity of the Province.

Your assent will be the more readily given on learning that the scheme of settlement was in a great degree suggested by that most excellent and highly gifted prelate, the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose elevation to the Primacy, in these trying times, has been so great a blessing to the Church and the best interests of religion. The Act may be viewed as in substance a measure declaratory of the Statute of 1791, embodying such concessions for the sake of peace as those entitled to claim under that statute were willing to make. From every circumstance, therefore, it becomes our duty to receive the settlement with complacency, and not without thankfulness, since it is a manifest advantage that the Imperial Parliament has brought the question to a close, and not left it to perplex and agitate the United Legislature.

In regard to the Union of the Provinces, whatever difference of opinion there may have existed as to its wisdom or policy while under consideration, it has now been solemnly enacted and proclaimed by the Constitutional authorities; and, so long as it remains the law of the land, we are bound, by all the principles of reason and duty, not merely to yield it willing obedience, but to use every honest exertion to make it work beneficially, and produce the good results anticipated by its promoters.

III. As the Reserves, had they been wholly left to the Church of England, would not have at any time yielded more than a very moderate provision for the number of Clergy which the Diocese will in time require, —it is quite evident now, when more than one half is taken away, that the remainder must be altogether inadequate to their maintenance. The period has therefore arrived, when the Parishes and Congregations must be appealed to on the necessity of contributing towards the support of their respective Ministers. And I trust there will be no backwardness in answering such appeal. How can the Clergy furnish, so freely as they ought, the sweet waters of Salvation for the present comfort and eternal welfare of their people, while they themselves are labouring under cruel embarrassments, and drinking the bitter draught of hopeless poverty and family distress? We ask not wealth—this would not be the case were your stipends more than doubled, for the greater portion of our people would still be living in greater comparative ease and comfort. All we ask is a bare competency. To attain this, the members of the Church must contribute freely, that you may be able to discharge your sacred

duties with minds not beaten down with worldly cares, unavoidable and continual.

Besides steady contributions, our people should think of their Clergy and share with them, when appropriating to their own use any of the bounties given them by a kind Providence; for such unexpected and voluntary acts of kindness create new links of mutual love and confidence, and establish a local affection that makes your Parish more than an endeared and welcome home.

Were it not for the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which has cherished the Church within this Colony from its first settlement, your number, small as it is, in comparison of the spiritual wants of the Diocese, would be reduced to nearly one half.— But that blessed Institution hath, under the Divine mercy, fostered the Church, not only in Canada, but through the whole of the Northern portion of this Continent. It is not, however, the object of this noble Association to supersede the exertions of our people, or to supply a competent support to the Clergy in the Colonies, or to promise continued assistance, but to encourage and cherish the poorer and more destitute settlements till they can do something for themselves. For a time, the Society is satisfied, where an earnest desire for the Ministry is manifested; and when settlements, which have been long assisted, become strong and prosperous, it expects to be relieved, in order that it may transfer its exertions to new and rising neighbourhoods, yet struggling under all the difficulties and privations of the wilderness. In this manner the Society, like a ministering angel, walks along the confines of civilization, till the Church, which it has planted, becomes able to support itself, when it proceeds to other regions, and again commences the same labour of love.

When it is considered how much has been done for our people, with little or no charge to themselves, and how plainly it is enjoined, in the Word of God, that men should honour the Lord with their substance, and suffer them to reap of their worldly things who sow unto them spiritual things, I indulge the hope, that no difficulty will be found in carrying these principles into effect among all our congregations. Every member of the Church in this Colony ought to feel a double obligation laid upon him, to co-operate most cordially in the work which seeks the promotion of his own eternal welfare. Even the poorest settler, if animated by the spirit of the Gospel, will feel constrained to give of his poverty, and offer up his fervent prayer for a blessing upon his gift, small as it may be, when he

learns that the poorest members of the Church in England are called upon, and readily give their weekly pence, that they may have a part in sending forth the Gospel of the Son of God to distant lands, and extend the blessings of the Church, which He founded, to every quarter of the world.

But, in addition to temporary contributions, a permanent provision for a Church Establishment must now be thought of. It is believed, that there are in this Diocese thirty thousand families belonging to our Apostolic Church, most of which possess landed property. But supposing only ten thousand thus gifted, and each to devote one hundred acres of land, some more and others less, according to their possessions, but averaging that quantity, such an endowment would be formed, including what is left of the Reserves, as would gradually enable the Church to extend her ministrations without cost to all parts of the Diocese. Were every person possessed of land to give only a few acres, the independence of the Church would be in a great measure secured, nor would such donations be slow in being made, were all, both Clergy and Laity, thoroughly imbued with the principles of the Gospel. In that case the same generous spirit and enlarged views which animated the first Christians, in every country of their conversion, would produce the same fruits, and a portion for the Lord would be first set apart. Land so bestowed has the great advantage of becoming a source of durable income, and fluctuates not according to the varying tempers and dispositions of the people. We freely admit that such an endowment, though well managed, might not yield much till after a long series of years, but it is our duty to provide for posterity, and if at any time it yield a decent support to the Clergy, however frugal, it will be free from those corroding anxieties which are found to palsy the energies of the stoutest hearts.

In the present state of property in this Diocese, it cannot fail to strike you most forcibly that this is the most ready, feasible and effectual way of laying a permanent foundation for the religious instruction of the people through future ages, and is certainly easy of accomplishment, for there is scarcely a male communicant who cannot spare a few acres of land, or the means to purchase them, for the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom.

And how feeble would all this be, when compared to the generosity of the members of the Primitive Church, of whom, it is said, that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed, was his own ;

for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things which were sold;" and threw them into the treasury for the relief of the brethren, and the furtherance of the Gospel! Generous, therefore, as the benevolence which I am urging upon the members of the Church may appear to be in this selfish age, how contracted is it, when contrasted with that of the first Christians, when walking in the spirit of that holy love which was poured upon them without measure!

But, though we dare not compare our liberality with such manifestations of love and devotion, yet we are not to despise the day of small things. The rapidity with which our Church has, of late years, extended her borders, sufficiently proves that something of this spirit of holy love still remains, to which God's blessing may add double vigour and effect. As Churches are built, Clergymen settled, and Parishes formed, new fields of labour open, requiring fresh supplies of the means of grace. The destitute are excited to more urgent applications for the Ministry and the solemn ordinances of the Church. The attachment of those who were educated in the bosom of the sanctuary, but who had penetrated into the wilderness, where neither sanctuary nor Clergyman is to be found, breaks forth with more than its first warmth, and embodies itself in affectionate and earnest appeals for the supply of their spiritual wants.

IV. What the Church is doing here, she is doing in all parts of the world; for to Great Britain, from her extensive dominions and colonies in every clime, seems, by Divine Providence, to be in a great measure allotted the conversion of all nations to the Christian faith. At home, a great and salutary change has been effected in favour of the Church by the vast increase of fervour and activity in her members, by their rapid multiplication, and the revival of that holy and affectionate feeling towards her which characterised her early children. The practical result has been a remarkable increase of Churches, Church Schools, and Church Societies, and in the number and exertions of the Clergy. The people have been recalled from the dangerous theories of the age, falsely called liberal, which produce division in religion and anarchy in Government, to the sound principles of the Church as committed to her by the Apostles. Nor is this all. The desire to carry the Gospel to every creature, which has been always cherished in the Church, and not to confine her labours within the limits of British rule, is daily becoming more intense and more eager to evince her glorious destination to plant the cross in every land.

At this moment the Church of England presents, both at home and abroad, the most astonishing spectacle that the world ever beheld since

the first preaching of the Gospel. Not only does she stand opposed to heathens and infidels, as has been the portion of the Ark of God in all ages, but her most bitter enemies are those who profess the same faith, and, the more she strives to promote the cause of Christ, the more vehemently do they seek, by calumny, deception, and misrepresentation, to accomplish her destruction. Such a marvellous combination exhibits human nature in its most degraded state, for it shews thousands labouring with their utmost might to bring the Church of England to the ground, who are ready to confess, when the evil spirit is not immediately upon them, that she is and has ever been the principal asylum of the Catholic Faith,—the hallowed sanctuary of true religion, and of all the virtues upon which individual and social happiness depends.

When in former times she stood forward the acknowledged bulwark of the Protestant Faith against Papal encroachment and superstition, she was cheered, if not assisted, by the Reformed Churches abroad and the Dissenters at home. The latter had indeed left her communion, but they still recognised in her their best protection against the return of Roman darkness.

But what do we see now? The descendants of the same Dissenters despising the practice of their fathers, and joining themselves to the Popish Schism, to crush the noblest trophy of the Reformation, and extinguish the purest light of the Christian world.

And can we trace nothing of the hand of a directing and controlling Providence in this strange and unholy alliance? The ways of the Divine Government are, for the wisest purposes, generally dark and mysterious, but they are also at times like the light that goeth forth by which causes and intentions are dimly shadowed out, and sometimes more distinctly perceived. Something like this is now taking place. The fierce war carried on against the Church by the united force of all sects and divisions of nominal Christians and infidels, unnatural and criminal as it is, already gives more than doubtful indications that its result will be the more general diffusion and reception of Christianity.

Has it not placed our holy and Apostolic Church in direct opposition to Romish tyranny and corruption—to the melancholy superstitions of the Eastern Church—the reckless and deadly innovations of modern Dissenters, and all that is opposed to Gospel purity and truth? She seems like a city on a hill, conspicuous to the whole world, assailed by millions of enemies unable to prevail, exhibiting a spotless model of the primitive Church, and holding the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints. She will

never grow old, but will stand alone in the world—immutable amidst every vicissitude—immoveable amidst every fluctuation—one constant star in this universe of growth and decay—unfading and the same—one august, incorruptible, and glorious verity, shining with celestial light over the ocean of uncertainty and change. This model of the primitive Church, so beautiful and perfect, cannot fail to suggest that a departure from Apostolic usages and principles is the prolific cause of all the heresies and divisions which deform and disgrace the Christian world. This truth hath long slumbered, but is now coming into light, and, as it prevails, so will error and schism disappear. Some progress it hath already made in the hearts of those who are sincere inquirers after primitive truth, but its progress must be slow, for it is opposed to the pride of the human heart and the delights of the world. Even, after it carries conviction to the mind, the practical lessons which it teaches, and the changes which it demands, are too distasteful to our corrupt nature to be speedily adopted, or to admit of its infinite value being felt and acknowledged by the generality of mankind.

But the children of God can wait in patience for its gradual development—their faith tells them that it must, but not perhaps in our day, become the great question which shall engage the attention of the Christian world, instead of the ten thousand disputes by which it is at present torn. It may as yet appear little bigger than a man's hand, and few may distinctly perceive the overwhelming influence which it is destined to attain, for it will cover the whole earth, and bring back the disciples of Christ to primitive truth and order, unity, and peace. But, before this happy consummation can take place, many ages must pass away, for the powers of darkness will oppose in all their might the progress of this healing principle which is embodied, in all its ancient freshness, in the forms and doctrines of our beloved Church. And what shall we do as Ministers of a Church so favoured to promote this blessed consummation? The answer is plain. We are to cultivate, to the utmost of our power, and in all humility and godliness, the field of labour which a kind Providence has assigned us. For, though it be our duty, as far as in us lies, to extend Christianity over the world, and to make our Church the Church universal, yet we discharge this duty best by carefully imbuing our flock, both young and old, with her principles and practice, and that pure form of worship which she has adopted and sanctified.

V. The Church of England is essentially Missionary, and enjoys powers and facilities for the exercise of this attribute never possessed before by any other national Establishment, and, if in this Diocese we put forth her distinctive principles in gentleness and candour, but with uncompromising firmness, her rapid progress is certain, while the errors and superstitions of the Church of Rome on the one hand, and the crude and inconsistent heresies of the Dissenters on the other, will be strikingly exposed to every thinking mind.

Our Church, my Reverend Brethren, recognises in the truths of Revelation a most invaluable gift from God to man,—not the discoveries of science, but communications from heaven,—and she understands them as they were understood by the primitive disciples to whom they were at first revealed. She pronounces every novelty in their interpretation as at once condemned, because unknown to the first recipients of God's holy will—and she admits of no sure way of getting at this interpretation but by tracing it backwards to the first witnesses. Hence the writings of the Fathers, or early Christian authors, are valuable not so much for the opinions they contain, as for the facts which they attest. Matters of fact are capable of historical proof, and therefore each particular doctrine is susceptible of this test, by which we ascertain whether it was received in the Church from the beginning. If so received, it becomes our duty to submit our private judgment to the Catholic voice of antiquity. Now the Book of Common Prayer contains all those doctrines of Scripture which were acknowledged and believed by the Church universal in the primitive age, and rejects any other as spurious and unsound, or supported by insufficient evidence,—and in this we perceive the just and reasonable limit which she places on private judgment,—a limit readily admitted by the most scrupulous in all other matters. To ascertain the customs and manners of the Romans, for example,—their policy, jurisprudence and principles of religion, we have recourse to their ancient records and historians, and we would hold in contempt the man who preferred to such authority his own vague and foolish conjectures. And is it not still more necessary, in order to guard against error in our religious inquiries, to have recourse to the Scriptures, which are the early records of Christianity, and to their most ancient expounders? The Scriptures possess an authority of their own wholly distinct from, and superior to, any other records of former times. They have been from the first deposited in the Church, and their true interpretation, as regards their great doctrines, must of necessity be

that which she has declared in her authorised formularies and creeds. These creeds, and a great portion of the formularies of the primitive Church, have been adopted by ours so far as they can be clearly proved by Scripture. For the Church of England requires nothing to be believed as necessary to salvation but that which is either plainly contained in the revealed Word of God, or may be clearly proved therefrom. She gives countenance to no loose fancies, whether termed Evangelical or Catholic, but appeals to the Bible, and insists only upon such doctrines as may be proved to be historical facts derived from the Apostles, and retained in the Church from the first. Such is the acknowledged basis on which the Church of England establishes her principles, and proves herself Catholic and Apostolic. Nevertheless her true nature and character seemed, till lately, to have been in a great degree forgotten or very little understood, even by many of her professed children. The writings of her Reformers and martyrs, who constantly refer to primitive antiquity for the truth and soundness of their doctrines, were little read, and hasty and indistinct views on many important points began to be adopted, even by many of the Clergy, who ought to have been better instructed. Low views of the Sacraments, and of the priestly office were, publicly avowed and taught from the pulpit. A fearful neglect of obedience to the Church had become so very general that it ceased to be considered a duty. Erastianism was openly asserted by many of our rulers, and too frequently acquiesced in by the Clergy. There was also a faint-heartedness among sincere Churchmen—a disposition to sit still and await the storm,—a want of that bold and faithful spirit which fearlessly proclaims and fights for the truth. These evils were making great and alarming progress, when a few devout and learned men manfully and heroically came forward to stem the torrent, hopeless as the attempt seemed at first to be. Nor have they failed in succeeding to a great extent in the attainment of their object. They have been instrumental in reviving most important and essential truths, and in awakening the members of the Church to a higher estimate of her distinctive principles. They have called forth new and increasing energy in both Clergy and Laity. They have animated the luke-warm, regulated the course of the more zealous, and rescued the works of the ancient Fathers from the scorn of ignorance, and the pillars of the Reformation from oblivion. The tenor of their teaching has been like their lives, holy, meek, and consistent with the spirit of Christianity;

and they have, by their writings, caused the voice of the Church Catholic to be heard through the whole of the British dominions. But while I readily accord a high meed of praise to men who have been thus active in producing a change so salutary in our Church, I by no means consider them perfect, or possessing any other authority than that of individual writers. Nor do I profess to agree in all their opinions, much less in some of their expressions. To avoid one error, they have not at all times steered sufficiently clear of another; but it is our duty as Christians to judge by general effects and intentions, and not by incidental observations; and, in the present case, after making all the deductions which the most rigid justice can demand, an amount of merit still remains to which few writers can pretend.

Such members of our communion, if indeed they can be called members, as are opposed to the recognition of any authority in the Church,—to any divine title in the appointment of her ministers,—to any deep and awful views of the sacraments,—to self-denial, discipline, and obedience,—will condemn the writers to whom I have alluded, as promoters of unheard-of novelties and idle disputations: but those who believe and value the principles of Catholicity, will guard themselves scrupulously against general censure, even when lamenting and opposing particular faults. They will speak of such authors kindly and respectfully, as men engaged in the same good cause, and be more disposed to dwell upon their excellencies than their deficiencies.

In the present perilous times, my brethren, it is necessary for all of us to have our minds deeply and affectionately imbued with the distinctive principles of our Church, and to be armed with her creeds and articles, that we may be prepared against her foes, and, through the channels of her beautiful ministrations, to bring home with effect the truths of the Gospel to the hearts of our people. In doing this, we may safely appeal to the law and the testimony,—to the direct authority of the New Testament,—and the analogy of the Old,—to the writings of the Fathers,—and to the invariable practice of the Church Universal throughout the first fifteen centuries. Thus understood and brought forward, the Church of England will in time become the centre of unity of all that is good and wise, pure and holy,—the city of habitation, not only to those who make their escape from the Roman Babylon, and the thousand sects who are wandering in the wilderness, but to all the nations yet immersed in Pagan Idolatry.

VI. Time would not permit me to enter, with any degree of minuteness, into the system of the Church in her daily and occasional services,—her frequent communions,—weekly fasts,—holy anniversaries,—and the supply which she constantly provides of nutritious food to those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and which, if carried out to the full extent that she wishes and directs, appears to be an attempt to realize heaven upon earth,—to make God all in all,—to bind men together by the ties of Christian brotherhood,—and to promote those tempers of child-like submission, humility, and unselfishness, which no believer in Divine revelation doubts to be the peculiar features of the evangelical character.

The provision which the Church has made for public worship, is one of her chief merits. The confessions,—the prayers,—the songs of praise,—the regular reading of the Scriptures, insure a degree of edification and instruction which no other branch of the Church of Christ can at this day furnish, and which, even in the worst of times, becomes an effectual barrier against division and error. The Book of Common Prayer is a substantial and permanent witness to the truth as it is in Jesus. It is, in a great measure, derived from the actual forms of Christian antiquity, and bears in all its parts the feeling and spirit of the primitive liturgies. Its regard to Apostolic faith and piety is manifest in every page, and we may boldly challenge our enemies to produce a single article of faith, in any of its parts, which is not, in substance, fully authorised by Scripture, and sanctioned by the authority of the Primitive Church. In our service, the people are actively engaged, as well as the minister, expressing their assent in the collects, prayers, and adorations, with a devout and audible voice; and in the Litany, where the minister offers the supplication, the people take the words, as it were, out of his mouth, and a scene is exhibited of simple and united worship, beautiful, affecting, and sublime. The priest and people become one in making their petition to the Lord,—and this not in two or three, but in ten thousand temples of our Church scattered throughout the world. Hence the propriety of a strict observance of the Rubrics among the Clergy, for, were the slightest deviation allowed, the beautiful unity and order of the service would be marred, and, instead of our congregations, in every part of the world, worshipping in the same words, with one mouth and one voice, this sublime harmony would be broken and destroyed.

Our preaching must consist of a faithful exhibition of the truth as it is in Jesus; the whole counsel of God must be declared to the people.— For “how shall they call upon him, in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent?” The end of preaching is, to beget and cherish, in the minds of our people, a sound faith as the ground of their obedience to the God of their salvation,—its subjects, the fall and sinfulness of man, the incarnation of God for his recovery, the humiliation and crucifixion, the resurrection and ascension, our weakness without the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the fleetingness of this life, the insufficiency of man to merit heaven by his own works, justification by faith, the need and nature of the Divine influence, the great importance of the Christian Sacraments, the social, moral and spiritual duties, the principles of love to God and faith in Christ, death, judgment, heaven and hell. Such are the wonderful and important topics of the preacher of the Gospel, and, if taught honestly and zealously, as the Church directs, they will not fail of promoting Christian holiness in every land. Nor do the truths which the preacher brings forward refuse the aid of human accomplishments in their enforcement and illustration. The Scriptures present truth in language worthy of her majesty and beauty. The choicest figures of speech, and those the most delightful to the taste and refreshing to the soul, may be selected from the parables and discourses of our Saviour.— The accomplished preacher views man in all his wants, wishes, and difficulties, and, in expatiating on the doctrines, precepts and examples which the Scriptures offer, he avails himself of all that is excellent and suitable to his purpose, that history, literature, or science can present.— It is thus that the preacher enlightens his hearers with the rays of heavenly truth and those sacred effusions which penetrate and delight the soul.— His doctrine, when duly prepared and sanctified, drops as the rain, and his speech as the dew, so that the souls of his hearers become like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not,—indeed the nature of our Lord’s kingdom on earth,—a dispensation of mercy and forgiveness, calling forth the virtues of penitence, faith, thankfulness, humility, and increasing love to the Saviour,—cannot be exhibited in faithfulness by any minister of the Church without producing visible effects on the lives and hopes of his congregation. Your whole energies must be employed, so far as the influence of precept and example can effect, to

gather within the pale of the Church the population of your parish or district,—to make the sons and daughters of the land the sons and daughters of the Church, the members and children of the same religious family,—and to carry the living spirit of the Gospel into every cottage, hamlet and town, within your missionary bounds, that the whole Province may be imbued with the spirit of Christ. Till this is in a great measure done, the people will, in a religious view, continue wretched and feeble: for the laws are negative in their effects: it is religion alone that instils positive good, and breaks the sceptre of selfishness. It is only the practical influence and operation of faith and piety that can soften the heart, and introduce those sacred charities and protecting virtues which are ever blessing and ever blessed. Nor ought we to forget, in the pulpit ministrations, that our people are members of society and the subjects of government. Hence the propriety of enforcing the spirit of true loyalty, contentment and obedience, of industry, frugality and self-denial,—the spirit of kindness, generosity and beneficence, of gentleness, patience and forbearance,—the spirit of meekness, soberness and chastity, of courage and magnanimity,—in short, all the qualities, virtues, and principles which become the man and the Christian in his individual, domestic, and social relations, and which naturally flow from love to God and love to our neighbour. Nor ought we to forget that it is our duty, by our exertions in the pulpit and out of it, to afford support and encouragement to those pious and virtuous men who are inclined to strengthen the hands of our Church, by keeping her noble and righteous objects steadily in view. We have received from England the principles of civil freedom and the frame-work of a liberal constitution, but such a gift, in order to be valuable, must be intimately joined to another gift, also received from the father-land, our pure and Apostolic Church. These gifts, if infused into one another, will become of the utmost value, for that man is little versed in the history of nations who is not aware that, unless disciplined and improved by religion, we are unfit for the enjoyment of true liberty. Universal experience teaches that impiety leads to anarchy,—superstition to despotism,—and Christianity alone to the establishment of rational and substantial freedom. It was my intention to dwell somewhat minutely on the great importance of a due preparation for the pulpit, but so many subjects crowd upon my notice that I must be very brief.

In a new and growing country like this, it is almost indispensable that our Ministers should be able, on the shortest notice, to address, with effect,

a congregation on the leading doctrines and duties of Christianity. We are called to officiate in log cabins, sometimes with little or no light, frequently in the open air, and often in situations where it is impossible, from the intervention of many circumstances, to make use of a written discourse. Now, in all such cases, it is desirable that the preacher should be able to edify and instruct the people. Such emergencies are sure at times to occur, and ought to be anticipated and prepared for. Nor ought the preparation to be slight and careless—a few subjects should be selected and carefully studied, and, if tolerable fluency and command of language be wanting, it will be wise to write out the sermon correctly and commit it to memory. It would indeed be prudent, especially on the part of the younger Clergy, to have several such discourses committed to memory, to be used as occasion may require.

As a general practice, my experience inclines against extempore preaching. If not attended with painful hesitation, it is commonly vague and powerless—accompanied with wandering—want of arrangement in the argument, improper use of terms, and tedious repetitions,—and, what is still worse, mis-statements of doctrine, and the rash outpourings of over-heated and irregular imaginations. Add to this that men of some fluency of speech, who have fallen into the habit of extempore preaching, seldom study their discourses with any degree of care; consequently they become indolent, and get into a sameness of expression and a narrow range of topics, on which they continually, as it were, ring the changes without profit or edification. I would therefore counsel every Clergyman to study and carefully compose his sermons, whether he take them with him when they are to be delivered, or not. Perhaps he may possess a great facility in committing them to memory; but it is a fearful presumption to go into the chair of verity, and attempt to deliver God's message to his people, without being convinced that we have done our best, by anxious study and meditation, to deliver it correctly. There are no doubt some men gifted with a natural eloquence, and who, from long habits of reading and reflecting on God's holy Word, are able to take out of their treasures things new and old, and deliver them with great unction and effect. But the great majority of ministers require all the helps which they are able to command, in order to prepare in a becoming manner for this part of the service of the sanctuary.

VII. That all your ministrations may be done in decency and order, and according to the uniform practice of the Church, you must be carefully

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observant of the Rubrics. Even in your dress you must never forget that you are a Minister of the Church of England, and that you are required to use your clerical habit in the discharge of all your duties. The slightest deviation not only offends against the regulations of the Church, but against all those of your congregation who are acquainted with the prayer-book. You are lights on high which attract attention, and errors and inadvertencies, which would not be noticed in others, will not be excused in you. Remember that the vows of God are upon you, and that they are equally binding in small as in great matters, and that from these vows there is no discharge. Having adverted to the Rubrics, there are two which are, I fear, often neglected, and, so far, uniformity in the performance of our services is destroyed. I allude to private Baptism and the Churching of Women. As regards the first, any departure from the rubric is very censurable. I am aware that, in large congregations, it has sometimes been considered tedious to baptize children after the second lesson; but I feel persuaded that no congregation, rightly instructed in the Word of God and in the meaning of the baptismal service, would think the short intervention of an innocent candidate for the membership of Christ's Church a tedious or even an uninteresting ceremony. There is another excuse not unfrequently made which has, at first appearance, somewhat more of substance. You have, most of you, different stations at which to minister on the same day, and it is supposed that to administer Baptism, in the presence of the congregation, takes up more time. But this will not be the case, if the service, at other times, be performed in the solemn manner that the office requires, and the Church directs, and therefore it is to be feared that those who make this objection are in the habit of shortening or hurrying over the service. But, casting aside all such excuses as untenable, it may, on many accounts, be expedient to hold a public baptism every month after the second lesson, either at evening or morning prayer. The ceremony will occupy about twenty minutes, and the sermon or lecture may, if judged proper, be somewhat shortened. By this arrangement the congregation will not be detained much beyond the usual time. In the adoption of some such plan the beauty and solemnity of this sacrament will be restored, and, if it be considered an advantage, much time will be saved.

There should be no private Baptisms in houses, except as the Rubric directs, for parents will prefer bringing their children forward on such public days to any other season; and, in all such cases, the child, if it

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live, should be brought into the Church, in order to be received as one of the flock of true Christian people. I am aware that the severity of our climate, during a great part of the year, renders a strict and literal compliance with the administration that parents defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday after their birth, often impracticable: but here, the anxiety of the parents to have their children baptised, and the danger of exposing tender babes to the winter cold, and the difficulty of finding the Missionary, whose field of labour is so extensive, in case of any sudden illness, will justify the administration of private Baptism, at the Clergyman's discretion, on express condition that the infant be afterwards presented at Church according to the Rubric.

The other service which I desire to bring under notice is the Thanksgiving of women after child-birth, which is sometimes administered in private houses. Such a practice is destructive of the pious intention of the Church, whose object manifestly is that, when the woman has sufficiently gained her strength to go to the temple of the Lord, she should there resort, and make public acknowledgement of His late mercies vouchsafed to her, and, with the congregation of which she is a member, return thanks for her great deliverance. That the house of God is the first place to which every woman should go on her recovery, is the suggestion of true piety as well as the ordinance of the Church, but to repeat the service in a private room and call it churching, is a misapplication of the term; and to substitute it for the public service of our Church is to mar one of her chief beauties,—namely the interest which she expresses for all who are within her pale, on every occasion when they especially need her prayers. Yet, in those parts of the country where we have no churches built, the school-houses, or other places in which the congregations usually assemble for public worship, may, without impropriety, be used for the Churching of women.

VIII. The present state of the Province, my Reverend Brethren, calls upon you in a special manner to feed the lambs of your flock and to instruct them carefully in the truths of Christianity, and the principles of the Church. The Catechism, short as it is, contains in substance all that is necessary for a Christian to know, believe and practise, in order to salvation. But the Church is not satisfied with the bare rehearsal and remembrance of the words—she intends the Catechism to be an instruction to be learned and thoroughly understood—a text for the Clergy to comment upon, and branch out farther and farther, according to the growth and

advancement of those who are to be taught. Catechising is a work of great benefit to the Church of God,—a duty required to be anxiously performed by every Clergyman under canonical obedience. An excellent help, in promoting its success and efficiency, will be found in the establishment of Sunday Schools, one of which ought, if practicable, to be attached to each congregation. I say if practicable, for I am aware that in some places it may for a time be impossible to find competent teachers, and it is not in the power of the Clergyman, with so many engagements on his hands, to give more than a general superintendance. Yet much may be done. The children may be collected and brought regularly to Church, where they are taught to reverence the Sabbath, and, with their parents, friends and neighbours, to worship God, who is every where present, and particularly in the Church. They may be accustomed to join in the services, and thus verify the prophecy, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." And if the truths of the Catechism be judiciously illustrated from sacred history, a thing by no means difficult to be done, life and body will be given them, and thus, connected with facts, they will be more deeply impressed on the hearts of the young, and more readily recalled to practical application. In every age, the Church has held Catechetical instruction to be of the first importance to the growth and progress of religion. In early times, schools were established in every city, expressly for Catechumens, over which men of the greatest talents and learning were appointed to preside. Each particular Church had its Catechists, and it has been often said that, next to an Established Liturgy, Catechetical instruction, carefully performed, has, under Divine Providence, been the great preservative of the Catholic Faith.

In addition to Sunday Schools, it is desirable, wherever it can possibly be done, to attach a Day School to every congregation, in which religion shall form the basis of all instruction; for nothing can be more senseless than the notion that learning to read, with a little arithmetic, geography and writing, is education. Is it not a fact, notorious in itself and admitted by every person of experience, that the experiment of making men good in proportion to their knowledge has hitherto failed, and that nothing short of that enlargement, elevation, and purity of the affections and moral feelings, which our holy religion is alone fitted to impart, can be reckoned upon as an effectual renovator of a nation or of the world?

Such schools present the most convenient and effectual means of instructing old and young in the distinctive principles of the Church, an

accurate knowledge of which is our chief safeguard against schism and dissent. They may be taught the glory of the visible Church, and the blessings promised to her, and which can only be conveyed, through her, to her members. They may be enlightened respecting the nature and duties of the ministerial succession, which is by many in the present time so lightly esteemed, and it may be shewn to be the natural channel for those gifts and promises which our Saviour offers to faithful believers.—With respect to the doctrine of the Succession, it is a fact which can easily be proved from history to the full satisfaction of every reasonable mind, and as our Church enjoys this high privilege, she is the only Protestant one in the British dominions which can be quite sure that she duly administers the Sacraments of the Lord. The youth may farther be taught the entire compatibility of Christian obedience with Christian liberty, and that the authority claimed by the Church is, from its nature, reasonable and essential to her healthy existence. When such principles are sincerely received by the young and old of our congregations, the sin of division, as it is stated and characterized in the New Testament, will no longer appear venial, but a serious offence. To bring forward these things prominently in your schools, and at seasonable times before your people from the pulpit, may at first seem strange and new, but, as their importance is perceived, the novelty will wear off, and their inculcation is absolutely necessary to restore a proper knowledge of the Church, and that veneration which she merits as the Spouse of Christ. Nor will the frequent enforcement of such principles be less advantageous to you, my Brethren. They will incline you to think more of the nature of your office in its highest relation, and to draw your thoughts from dwelling too much on its social, secular and civil duties, and you will become more deeply impressed with the truth that you speak as the Ambassadors of God—that you have a responsible charge over your flocks—that you have been regularly commissioned to that charge, and have not only received authority, but the pledge and promise of Divine aid, for its exercise—that this sacred gift has been conveyed to you through means appointed by the Apostles. Matters so important, thus frequently brought before you, are such as to fill you with humbleness and fear at your own (at best) unworthy discharge of them, and to impress more deeply on your minds the necessity of vigilance and circumspection as to your own conduct, even on points which, in other persons, are deemed immaterial.

The certain consequence of such teaching of the young and old of your congregations, will be to check them from attending dissenting places of

worship, where they can only hear a partial view of the truth, and to attach them more steadfastly to their own Church, which keeps nothing back, but delivers the whole message of God in its Apostolic purity and fulness.

Nor will Clergymen, who thus follow out their duty unwaveringly among their people, asserting what they believe to be the truth on these important subjects, publicly and simply, but without asperity or ostentation, fail, eventually, to be respectfully regarded by all conscientious Dissenters as honest and zealous men, though, in their opinion, perhaps, maintaining narrow and untenable views. Nor will you meet more opposition from the denominations around you, than others who are far less scrupulous, because your lives will be a proof that your opinions are no party matter, but the expression of a practical and deep-rooted conviction.

Your judicious exertions in these matters are, at this season, inconceivably important, when attempts are making to introduce in this Province that vicious system of education which has been repudiated in England. A bill for the establishment of Common Schools has been submitted to the Legislature, which, in its provisions, seems studiously to avoid all reference to religion, and by which the Clergy are virtually excluded from any control over the education of the children of their respective congregations, while it invites ministers of various denominations to participate in their management and direction, and thus to sanction a system destructive of all principle.

In order to prevent the passage of a law so injurious to the best interests of man, I considered it my duty to petition, in my own and your name, that the education of the children of our own Church should be intrusted to their lawful Pastors, subject only to such regulations as may insure uniformity in the secular branches of study; and that an annual grant from the assessments raised, proportioned to the number of children ascertained to belong to our communion, be awarded for their instruction.

Should this reasonable prayer be granted, we shall be able, by what our own people will do, and assistance from the religious in the mother country, to establish Schools far superior to those now existing in the Province.— But, if refused, we must not faint but persevere in our application every session. The modification we request is so just and reasonable that it cannot be long withheld, since it has been already acted upon both in England and Australia. In the mean time we must increase our vigilance in promoting the religious education of the children of our people, and in opposing a system which we conscientiously believe to be anti-Christian,

and whose tendency is to degrade the religion of the Cross, and banish the Bible from the country. I need scarcely add, that attention to the religious instruction of the young, must ever be identified with our profession; nor will such attention add much to our labours; on the contrary, it will, in a short time, diminish and render them more agreeable. To aid the feeble efforts of childhood, when innocence and love are yet in their purest state, cannot fail to produce great delight,—for it is in perfect accordance with the benign dispensations of God, who, to the performance of our greatest duties, annexes the greatest pleasures. And is there any duty more necessary and important, than that which requires each generation to train and lead forth its successor in all righteousness? It is true this duty, which naturally yields the highest gratification, has been, from the want of consideration, and the selfishness, and the folly of mankind in general, so lowered as to be in most instances a task of extreme drudgery, and this shews the lamentable ignorance which still prevails in regard to a good education. Nor will it be altered till little children are brought to Christ, and their confidence and love, of which their mother is the first object, and which rest not on the convictions of the understanding, but on the instinctive faith of the heart, and are the gift of Him in whom we live and move and have our being, shall be made to pass through the mother to their God and Saviour, and embrace all the verities of the Christian religion, and carry them into living practice.

In contending that the youth belonging to our own people should be brought up in the bosom of the Church, and that there can be no sound education in a Christian land except it be founded on the principles of the Gospel, you must be prepared to meet with the most unjust reproaches and accusations. For that spurious liberality which patronises such systems, is totally without true liberality, and is intolerant of all honest and religious principles. By its adherents you will be treated as bigots, and the enemies of free inquiry and intellectual progress. But let not such calumnies disturb you, or produce a moment's hesitation as to the course you ought to pursue. Bigotry, or blind zeal, is not more inconsistent with Christian charity, than it is at variance with the spirit of the Church of England. Her zeal is neither blind nor unreasonable, neither fierce nor uncharitable. She seeks, in that meekness and sobriety which proceed from a deep conviction of the truth, to bring up her children in the admonition and nurture of the Lord, and to teach them Christianity as Christ and his Apostles proclaimed it. And are we to depart from her

prescribed form in this important matter, because we may subject ourselves to the imputation of bigotry? Are we not bound, under the most solemn obligations, to feed the lambs of our flocks who have been received into the Church by baptism, and whom she watches over and cares for in all holy tenderness and love from the cradle to the grave,—and to cherish in their hearts an affection for that form of Doctrine, Ministry, Sacraments, and Worship which she has received from her Divine Head? Nor, if accused that by entertaining such views and sentiments we confine salvation to the Church, are we to be moved; for we charitably hope that our Saviour's merits and grace will be extended to the piously sincere of all denominations. But knowing and believing that a Church, or Divine Society, has been established by Christ and his Apostles as the regular and ordinary channel of salvation, it becomes our duty to unite ourselves, and all over whom we have influence, to that Divine Institution, that thus joined together in holy fellowship, we may become an holy temple, acceptable unto God.

IX. Another emanation from that infidel spirit which seeks to separate religion from education, and little less destructive of the true faith, is that of various denominations uniting in Societies for religious purposes.—Now, my brethren, the Church, and the Church only, should be our foundation and boundary for useful purposes, exertions, and operations. Our distinction should be Church-membership, and our Societies should be Church Societies.

The Church of England contains within her bosom two great Institutions or Societies for the promotion of Christianity, both at home and abroad. We daily feel their benign influence. To the one we are indebted for the Establishment and support of the Church in this Diocese—to the other for Bibles, prayer-books, and tracts for schools and private edification, and for the supply of many other pressing wants to which we are continually exposed. These Societies are identified with the Church, for the Bishops are at their head, and they are entitled to the support and active co-operation of all her members,—and this not from the spirit of party, but because they proceed under the guidance of the Church, and are adequate, if properly sustained, to the accomplishment of all their sacred objects. Were we therefore at liberty to divide our means and exertions among different associations, it would be unwise, because we can achieve a much greater amount of good by confining ourselves to these two powerful institutions.

There is indeed reason to suspect the sincerity of those Clergymen who prefer mixed religious Societies to those belonging to the Church, and

that they are actuated at best by a partial attachment to her doctrines and system of government. It is difficult to imagine how a true lover of the Church can abstain from belonging to her Societies, or remain regardless of their existence. We are surely justified in entertaining a doubtful opinion of any man who professes to belong to a Society, and yet evinces an indifference to its interests, and an opposition to its doctrines and institutions. There is, in such conduct, a disregard of solemn obligation,—a culpable inconsistency,—even a want of that common integrity which is necessary to the prosperity of all civil and commercial associations.

To these Societies the Church imparts a power and weight which they could never otherwise possess, and in return they give aid to her action, and enable her members to do, by combination, what they could not effect so well, either as a Church, or as insulated individuals. Since no man can be a good Christian unless, having the means, he contribute assistance to Gospel institutions, so no man can be a good Churchman unless he contribute, with a decided preference, to the Societies in connection with the Church. These Institutions are maintained in order to carry the influence of our Church beyond her exact limits—to strengthen her exertions—to fortify her with new weapons for her holy warfare in the domains of ignorance and unbelief—to subjugate distant provinces to the cross of Christ,—and at home and abroad, wherever there is darkness or wretchedness, wherever there is mental and spiritual thralldom, there to speak in the accents of compassion, and to stretch out the hand of relief, and there to light up the lamp of truth, and to bear onward the mild sway of Christianity. And have we not seen some of these glorious results accomplished by our Church, when pouring the full and concentrated flood of her strength, through the channels of these Societies, against all the barriers and obstructions which resisted the waters of life?

When Clergymen of the Church are seen supporting other religious Societies, attending their meetings, and taking an active part in their management, we are bound to believe that they are labouring under a strange delusion, or have forgotten their sacred position. Such conduct argues a melancholy indifference to their professed opinions, and a lukewarmness in regard to the Church, incompatible with their ministry. The inference drawn by the ignorant or less informed is, that all denominations are the same, and their points of difference of no moment. And great is the mistake of those who think that by such laxity they become popular and win over Dissenters. On the contrary, sincere Dissenters

can scarcely fail to regard them as faithless to their own Church, and ready to desert her for temporal considerations. Nor ought it to be forgotten that such pernicious examples weaken the attachments of our congregations to our Church, and in many cases increase her opponents.

Let us never forget that the first great Protestant Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel, Promoting Christian Knowledge, and educating the poor, originated within the bosom of our beloved Church nearly a century before any other similar institutions existed,—and shall any of us neglect or desert them? The times require more than usual circumspection on the part of both Clergy and laity in regard to their attachment to the Church and her Institutions. There must be no backwardness or falling away in this part of her Unity. It is her glory to breathe the true Catholic spirit,—combining, in her creed and liturgy and government, all that is best and wisest in the doctrine and discipline of other Churches, and it is our duty to unite, as one man, in exhibiting this her true character to all inquirers, and her mighty claims, not only to the love and veneration of our own people, but to the respectful admiration of all.

As an earnest of your attachment to that Church, of which you are the chosen Ministers, suffer me to persuade you to establish branches of the two Church Societies at all your Missions and stations. Do not say, we are poor—we are scattered,—indifference and apathy prevail,—for these are obstacles which your zeal must surmount. There may not, with the greatest exertion, be the power of doing much; but, if the widow's mite be given with a willing heart, it will be thankfully received, and, with God's blessing, it will increase. The bread cast upon the waters will be surely found, though not, perhaps, till after many days; so your labours to establish such Institutions may be some time in producing much fruit; but we should never give up—it is a good work, and must come to good. Without entering into any minute details it is sufficient to remark, that this Diocese should form one great Association, acting through a central and supreme Committee under the superintendence of the Bishop. In each District an auxiliary Association should be formed with its working Committee. Lastly, each parish or congregation should constitute an Association in connexion with that of the District, for it is only from a complete organization of this kind, embracing every Churchman in the Diocese, that we can look for a full measure of success.

The parochial or congregation association is the basis of the whole, and its gatherings from each of its members will compose the funds for

accomplishing the benevolent objects of the Diocesan Institution. To every parish, or congregation, the immediate advantage will be a supply of bibles, prayer-books, and tracts for Sunday Schools, and, in time, lending libraries; but above all, the pleasing reflection of contributing, in however small a degree, to the extension of Christ's kingdom. In this way every parish becomes a Missionary Society, and its pastor the agent of the General and District Associations, and it will be his duty, and doubtless a duty after his own heart, to do his endeavours to induce every baptised person to become an active and efficient member,—first instructing, and then interesting them, in the success of the association, engaging their offerings in its support, and transmitting them when made to the treasury of the Church. The General Committee may consist of one or two members from each District, to meet occasionally as business required, appointing a sub-committee to watch over the Depository, and to carry out the plans and objects of the Institution. Such an Association offers facilities for disposing of many other matters in the present state of the Church; for instance, urging on all who are able to add to her scanty endowment, and assisting in giving it efficiency and safety. Such an institution would give utterance as it were to the voice of the Church on all necessary occasions. It would enable her to unite all her members, with one heart and one soul, in carrying out the objects of the two great Societies of which we would in that case have become an intimate part, and by which we are supported and furnished for the sacred work. Nor would it fail to be a subject of honest gladness to our members, to feel that they were acting in immediate conjunction and unity with the two noblest Societies in Christendom, whose operations embrace the whole world, and in whose sympathy, beneficence, and love, they would be partakers.

X. The advantage of annual meetings of the Clergy of the Diocese has been frequently a subject of deliberation, as tending to promote brotherly kindness and a more complete unity in our proceedings. Such periodical conventions were naturally suggested by the example of our neighbours in the United States, and appeared to be in some degree required by the remoteness of our situation from the Mother Church, and our need of mutual sympathy and support. Entering cordially into these feelings and reasonings, I made all the inquiries in my power, when last in England, respecting the nature and objects of Diocesan Synods, but with very limited success. There is no English work of authority on the subject,

and, though recourse was had to the elaborate work of Lambertini, the information that could be gleaned was meagre and imperfect. It appears that the introduction of lay members in any such assemblies of the Clergy, for Ecclesiastical purposes, is altogether without the sanction of antiquity, and was forced, I believe, on the Church of the United States by circumstances which the Bishops thought at once certain and decisive, viz. that the Laity of the Church would not consent, without that provision, to receive Episcopacy. This concession appears to those who are best acquainted with the history of the Church, and feel her sacred character as the spouse of Christ, a most dangerous innovation on her Constitution, and likely to lead in time to the most deplorable consequences.

In regard to matters of doctrine, and things spiritual, it is generally allowed by most persons professing Church principles, that the Laity ought to have no voice, yet there are many who insist that even in these the Laity should be permitted to express an opinion. On the other hand, the question, whether Laymen should be allowed a voice in the management of the temporal concerns of the Church, is not without difficulty, from the intimate union that is frequently found to exist between things temporal and spiritual in Ecclesiastical proceedings.

Diocesan Synods, whose decrees are called Constitutions, are convoked simply by the Bishop. The secular clergy are bound to attend, and such regulars as are not particularly exempted. But all may be summoned when matters affecting the whole body of the Church in the Diocese are to be considered. Laymen, according to the practice and custom of the Church, are most admissible in Ecumenical Councils,—less in Provincial,—and least of all in Diocesan Councils or Synods. In none, however, are they admitted as judges, but merely as witnesses, or as executors of the decrees that are adopted by the Convocation, Council, or Synod. Custom may sanction their presence even in Diocesan Synods, and Bishops may invite them, though not to vote, but even this only at times when matters clearly temporal and connected with the State are the subjects of deliberation. Sometimes Bishops consult Laymen before they propose their Constitutions to the consideration of the Clergy, but they need not follow their opinion or advice unless they think fit. Such Constitutions may be imposed by the Bishop to regulate the affairs of the Diocese, without the consent of the Clergy, but, in all cases, the Bishop is specially bound to protect his Clergy, to prevent any encroachment or aggression on their rights, or a trespass, by Laymen, on sacred things.

Not satisfied with this scanty information, I consulted some clergymen, of high standing and learning in the Church, on the subject of annual Synods or Convocations, as applicable to this Colony. The reply was—What particular business can you have to transact, or on which to deliberate? You are a branch of the United Church of England and Ireland, situated in a distant dependency. The Constitution of the Church has been long settled, and you can make no movement but in accordance with her principles and practice, and, consequently, after she has led the way.

A Diocesan Synod can only take cognizance of such matters as are peculiar to the Diocese, and dispose of them in a way that is agreeable to the usage of the Church, of which you are an integral part; for it has no power to interfere with any thing, directly or indirectly, that has been determined and settled by superior authority. The unity of the Church must be preserved, and this can only be done by confining the power of legislation to the head, and restraining the branches. Moreover, to hold annual or even frequent Synods in a Diocese so extensive as yours, must be attended with great expense and spiritual inconvenience, and for such evils there appears no equivalent. On the whole, it was their opinion that the usual Episcopal Visitation—the periodical meetings of the Church-Societies established, or to be established,—and associations of the neighbouring Clergy for friendly intercourse and spiritual edification—might afford, in a more convenient and effective manner, all the advantages that can be reasonably expected from annual Diocesan Synods.

XI. Some years have now elapsed since it was determined, after many doubts and scruples, to employ the press, as a means of counteracting error and diffusing religious knowledge through the Diocese, and, being connected with the Church, to remove the prejudices that were entertained against her, and to bring prominently forward her Apostolical character, the purity of her doctrines, and the great value of her institutions. A journal, entitled *The Church*, was in consequence established, and the results have been most beneficial. Though not possessing any other authority than that which has been most willingly accorded to the sound discretion and superior ability of its accomplished Editor, it has, nevertheless, been found a convenient channel for all official communications from the Bishop to the Clergy, and on this account it may serve their interest, as well as their convenience, to become subscribers. The circulation of the paper has increased far beyond expectation, and, I believe, exceeds that of any weekly journal in the Province. Still, with a little trouble,

it may be much increased, were the Clergy, as I think they ought, to give their diligence in promoting it. My reason for noticing *The Church* on this occasion, arises from a conviction of its great usefulness, and this induces me not only to suggest the continuance of your support and patronage, but your active influence in recommending it to the favourable consideration of your own people and neighbourhoods, and to forward from time to time to its Editor such notices and statistics, connected with the Church, as it may be in your power to furnish.

Conducted, as it has hitherto been, and as we have good reason to hope it will continue to be, under its new management, it cannot fail of producing much public good, not only by correcting bitter opinions against the Church, which are still sedulously propagated, but by bringing home to the hearts of many, yet far removed in the back settlements from our spiritual ministrations, the truths of the Gospel as they were taught by the Apostles, and reviving in others the blessed recollections of infant years.

XII. Now, my Reverend Brethren, I trust that you will bear in mind the important matters which I have brought before you, and that they will be the frequent subject of your meditations and your prayers. If the holy Apostles, with all their gifts and graces, needed the prayers of their fellow Christians, how much more have we need to pray for one another, that the word of God may have free course, and our ministry be blessed to His glory? In this Diocese, containing nearly half a million of inhabitants, there are many denominations more or less active in their operations—often opposed to, and rarely moving in harmony with, the Church, or with one another. In dealing with them, we require to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves,—firmly, but without offence, maintaining our distinctive principles, and clothing ourselves with all those Christian graces which belong to faith, piety, order and peace. So prepared for doing the work of Evangelists, we may, with holy boldness, look forward to the time when the whole Province will become like the garden of the Lord. Few of us, my Brethren, may live to behold so blessed a consummation as the Diocese studded over its whole surface with Churches and pious congregations, but such a time of refreshment will come, and it is our duty, in the mean while, to use our utmost endeavours that it may come soon—that the promises of our Lord respecting His Zion, may, in this country, be fulfilled,—that His kingdom may come with power,—that all blindness may be done away, and every obstacle removed which in any

way hinders our Catholic and Apostolic Church from receiving into her bosom the vast majority of our growing population.—“Now the God of Peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.”—Amen.

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