

sation, and were appointed to represent classes of facts which belonged to the new order of things, and to answer purposes peculiar to that kingdom which is not of this world. The Church was not a substitute for the Jewish community, but a new organization, founded on new principles, with a new polity. It has only two ordinances; the one initiatory, significant of the spirit and meaning of the Christian profession; the other simply commemorative of the great Fact with which are associated the faith and hope of all the redeemed.—*Stow's First Things.*

Christian Messenger.

HALIFAX, APRIL 20, 1859.

Apostolical Succession in Nova Scotia.

Our duty to our readers demands that we should keep them informed of the movements made and sentiments propounded, from time to time, by the various religious bodies in the province. No apology is necessary, therefore, for calling attention to the Charge which was delivered by the Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Nova Scotia to his Clergy in October last; portions of which have appeared in the *Church Record* for several successive weeks.

The portion in its last issue treats on "Matrimony," "Baptism," and the "Visible Church."

On matrimony the Bishop directs his clergy to discourage the solemnization of marriages in private houses, except where it "can only be justified by a necessity which is superior to all laws;" and very properly warns them against marrying persons under age without their parents' consent.—"although," he says "young women of sixteen or seventeen have been thus married by some of you."

On the subject of Baptism the Bishop quotes from the directions in the Rubric that people should have their children baptized "when the most number of people come together," and hopes that "ere long the present irregularities, both in baptisms and marriages, will be matter of history, and will appear as objectionable to our people as to ourselves."

We fully agree with the Bishop that baptism—being a church ordinance—should be administered in the presence of "the most number of people;" but as marriage is not a sacrament or church ordinance, we think it quite immaterial whether it be solemnized in a place of worship or a private house; nor do we think the ages mentioned any other than a merely prudential objection.

Under the head "Visible Church" we find the claim to Apostolical Succession set up in the most positive and unvarnished terms. The recent letters of "Wicliff" in the same paper, and perhaps from the same pen, in reference to Mr. Maturin's perversion, gave the most unqualified condemnation of Roman Catholic Apostolical Succession; it seems, therefore, that the objection is not so much against the thing itself, called "unbroken succession," as against the party making the claim to it. While Mr. Maturin thinks his newly found friends "the only true Church," the Bishop says "we trace our descent in unbroken succession from the Apostles." We will, however, copy the whole paragraph, that our readers may see for themselves:—

"The repeal of the Act by which the Church of England was established in this Province, has in some respects altered our relation to the State, and has removed some doubts formerly existing. Although nothing was contributed by the Province towards your support, it was supposed that all the inhabitants had the same claim as the people in England to the services of the clergy, and that we were bound to perform any offices of the Church for any person applying to us. This supposition, whether well or ill-founded formerly, cannot now be entertained. The State now regards us merely as one of many sects, consequently we are now bound simply by the laws of the Church; none but its members can have any claim upon us, and some of the obstacles to the exercise of a godly discipline are done away. We are thus relieved from some of the obligations arising from our connection with the State, which sometimes press very heavily upon the consciences of our brethren at home; and at the same time we are drawn more closely to the Mother Church, being constantly reminded that we are a portion of the Church of England in a distant land, and that we have not any independent existence. The notion appears to be generally entertained that, because we are not established here, we have no claim to higher authority than any of the sects founded in these latter days by man, it being commonly supposed that the claims of the Church are based upon parliamentary enactments. This error is held even by some of our own people, and it is your duty to beware of countenancing it in any way, and always make it clearly understood that our

position is entirely independent of any human authority or recognition; that whether we be proscribed and persecuted, or kings be our nursing fathers and queens our nursing mothers, we equally claim to be the true representatives of the Church constituted by the Apostles,—under commission from her head—from whom we trace our descent in unbroken succession."

"* One of the most common devices of the Romanists, is to encourage this false notion concerning our status, and any admission of its truth is an abandonment of the strength of our position, for every person of common sense can understand that man cannot found a Church. Our peculiar strength is derived from this, that whilst the Greek and Roman branches of the Catholic Church have grievously corrupted themselves, (the latter by the extent of her Mariolatry giving reason to suspect that she may be now at length entirely withered,) the Anglican branch having been by God's mercy purged from the corruptions which in the course of ages had adhered to her, has restrained all that was apostolical and primitive, both in doctrine and in discipline. Rome denies our existence in the early ages; we, on the contrary, maintain that the two branches were both, at first, such as we alone are now."

We are pleased to see that the Bishop gives no countenance to the idea that an Established Church exists in Nova Scotia, and repudiates the title given him by Mr. Annand in the House of Assembly a few weeks ago, when he called "His Lordship the Bishop, the recognized head of the Established Church." Indeed, his testimony agrees entirely with the statement we then made, for he remarks—"We are thus, by being free from State control, relieved from some of the obligations arising from our connection with the State, which sometimes press very heavily upon the consciences of our brethren at home."

Our Episcopalian brethren are of course perfectly at liberty to claim for themselves "descent in unbroken succession" from the Apostles, and enjoy all the immunities they may suppose arise from it. It is unnecessary for us to controvert their claim, seeing that so many of the best men in the same communion renounce it, and hold that a successful establishment of its necessity is one of the most direct roads leading to Rome, as in the case of the Rev. Mr. Maturin.

If Apostolical succession were a mere speculative opinion, there might be but little harm in it, but the consequences which must follow from holding that doctrine are as obnoxious to liberal-minded Episcopals as they are injurious to the parties holding them. In the first place, if there be genuine successors of the Apostles, and Episcopalian clergymen alone are such—then all gospel preachers must be authorized by them, and our Halls, our Careys, Bunyans, Chalmerses, and Fullers, and a host of the best and most useful men who have ever lived, had no authority for their ministrations. And in the second place, this unscriptural doctrine opens the door for Baptismal Regeneration, Human Tradition, and all the other dogmas of Rome entertained by the Puseyites, which have been so prolific in filling up the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church of late years.

It would not be difficult to shew from the pages of History, and also from the Scriptures, that Baptist ministers are no less "successors of the Apostles" than are Episcopal Bishops, Roman Catholic Archbishops, or even the Pope himself. Without going into the argument we may, in reference to their claims, bring the same proof which the Apostle Paul used in 1 Cor. ix. 2, when confirming his claim to the Apostolic office—"If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the seal of my apostleship are ye in the Lord." This is a far better succession than any which could be established by historical descent.

Protestantism versus Romanism.

In a country like ours, where civil and religious liberty is enjoyed by all parties to the fullest extent, we think it highly important that the position in which Protestants and Roman Catholics stand to each other should be well understood. Misconception on the part of either is calculated to disturb the peace of society, interfere with the progress and improvement of our social state, and raise a serious barrier to the efforts of Christians for the advancement of the kingdom of Christ upon earth.

The position which Baptists have ever occupied in resisting alike the undue demands of Romanists and all other religious bodies, at the same time that they have sought for them an equal amount of freedom to that they have demanded for themselves, places them on vantage ground in this respect far above all party spirit or denominationalism, which but few other bodies can claim. The efforts which have been made to misrepresent and malign Baptists because we have not chosen to identify ourselves with a political party have only confirmed us in the determination

to continue in our own independent course. We can discuss the merits of Romanism without the bitterness which party politics gives to the question, and without any fears that our peculiar principles are endangered by free enquiry. We can also make efforts for their conversion and salvation without abusing them for bringing forward their own peculiar views, and without wishing to interfere with their civil rights.

It may not be amiss we think at the present time, for our readers to have the true position of the subject briefly placed before them. Hostility to Roman Catholics is, by many, supposed to be the principal ingredient in a good Protestant. We fear that much of prejudice against Protestantism has been fostered in the minds of Catholics by the idea that Protestants are their enemies. We acknowledge that they have had some reason for entertaining this opinion. The ground taken by some Protestants when contending with their errors has had the appearance of a wish to uproot their faith by almost any means, rather than a desire to implant in their minds the principles of a better system. Instead of efforts being made to afford instruction in the great truths of God's Word, the object has too often been to induce them to give up their adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, and but little concern manifested about their embracing any other.

Such has not been the practise of Baptists, as a body. While some parties have chosen to band themselves together in a politico-religious Protestant Alliance having at least the semblance of a design upon the rights and privileges of Catholics; Baptists have sought rather to treat them as their rational fellow-citizens, to give them the light of gospel truth, and to seek their spiritual benefit rather than to deprive them of what belongs to every human being in a free country. It matters little by what name men are called. Protestants are, by nature, as far from the kingdom of Christ as Roman Catholics; and it is only by the influence of God's Spirit on the heart that either one or the other can be made the disciples of the Lord Jesus. A remark once made by one of our Nova Scotia Patriarchs may well apply here, he said, if he was called merely to the work of making Baptists, he would not think it a more honorable employment than that of the highwayman.

We think it but a poor business to convert men from Romanism except it be to a purer faith. Antipathy to priestly domination and distrust of fallible erring men as guides in religious matters are of themselves but poor materials of which to make genuine Protestants; where these exist alone the convert is but little better than an infidel; hence we find infidelity abounding in many Roman Catholic countries. As Baptists are not a corporation seeking political power and from the nature of their church polity can never be so, they have nothing to gain by any amount of such conversions from the ranks of Popery. Neither do we think that Protestantism has any advantage to secure by forming combinations to deprive Catholics of their civil or religious privileges. The practise common in Roman Catholic countries towards Protestants is sometimes referred to, as if that would justify us in treating Catholics in the same manner. If Protestants had the power or disposition to do this it would be no real gain, but great loss to the cause of Protestantism, to exercise it. Whenever the arm of civil power is used to aid the cause of Protestantism, it is but a triumph of the principles on which Romanism rests, under a different name. Organizations against Catholics have the effect of embittering them against Protestants, but we have not yet learned that they have ever succeeded in convincing one Catholic of his errors, or of inducing one to embrace Protestantism. Efforts such as our brethren are making on behalf of the French Acadicians on the other hand, are far more likely to make Christians and good Protestants than all the Crusades of the 11th, 13th, or the 19th centuries.

The Elections.

The announcement of the dissolution of Parliament and the issue of Writs for the election of Representatives at so early a date will of course set in rapid motion all the political machinery throughout the province. All parties seem to agree that it is well the suspense will be of so short a duration. There will be less time for the strife, which always attends these contests, to gather strength. Although we do not choose to prostitute our pages by descending to take part in the contentions of political parties we are nevertheless not uninterested spectators. Perhaps there never was a general

election in this province when it was more necessary for the electors to take, for themselves, an intelligent view of the claims of those who seek their support, and of the principles they respectively represent. It is too often the case that political clap-trap influences men rather than sound argument and real merit. It is even held by some that all morality may be set aside on such occasions. Falsehood baseness and chicanery of all sorts are by many deemed allowable and proper when used in behalf of a political party. Every truly Christian man will be called upon to discountenance and prevent if possible the evil which may be attempted in behalf of his party. The wrong which may be done by wicked men on one side, we know is a strong temptation to those on the other to make use of similar weapons. Where drunkenness is encouraged by one party it is very difficult for the other to be entirely free. We were hoping that the Prohibitory Bill would be taken to the Polls, and be an inducement for all Temperance men belonging to both parties to attend and so by their united influence in charge of, and in harmony with, that measure to prevent much of the intoxication commonly seen at elections. As however they will not now have that to occupy their attention and there will be no occasion for Temperance lectures or speeches at the hustings on that account, yet we hope they will be faithful to their obligations and none the less zealous to prevent wrong doing and mischief. It must be a bad cause which requires to be sustained by rum and falsehood. If the people permit their votes to be bought by such means they ought not to complain afterwards of corruption in their Representatives.

We regret to see any newspaper calling itself the organ, or using the name, of any religious denomination, reviling all who belong to one party whilst covering with the slime of fulsome adulation those who think it their duty to sustain the opposite side. In the last issue of a contemporary of this character we find a tirade of abuse of the government men, but little in harmony with a Christian spirit. Some of the members of the church which the editor professes to represent, although they are admitted to be most respectable and excellent men are nevertheless reviled in no measured terms. The irascible editor concludes his article with the following elegant sentence.

"But dupes are by no means confined to Pictou; you will find them in every district of every county in the Province—Baptist dupes, Methodist dupes, Episcopalian dupes, Presbyterian dupes: but we at least, expect better things of Presbyterians than of any other class of people, and hence the profound regret with which we witness the existence of any Presbyterian dupes."

We have no hesitation, and we think our readers on both sides will agree with us, in pronouncing this altogether unworthy the organ of a religious body and but little likely to promote union amongst their own people, and much less so with other churches bearing the same name, as they pretend to desire.

The wickedness perpetrated in a political contest often exerts an injurious influence in a community for a long time afterwards. The social circle and even the sacred precincts of churches are often invaded and the peace of religious bodies destroyed by the efforts of their enemies at such times, and frequently because good men are off their guard and allow their political feelings to override their religious principles. Because one Christian differs from another in opinion concerning the man who shall represent him in Parliament, is it any reason why they should look upon each other as enemies, should sacrifice their own peace, neglect their duty to the church and peril their souls welfare? Surely, surely, such things ought not to be. We need not say they are a disgrace to the Christian name.

Our brethren will we trust suffer from us the word of exhortation. Although they may in some cases see it to be their duty to vote on different sides from other brethren, yet we trust they will not allow their political preferences to sever the bonds of Christian friendship or interfere with their obligations to the cause of Christ or their brethren in the Church.

We have no idea of denouncing political life as unworthy of Christian men: on the other hand we believe it presents a wide field for the exercise of Christian principle and true benevolence. It has however many temptations and dangers.

We shall not even offer a suggestion as to the individuals or party in the Legislature with whom we would have our readers entrust their interests. The acts of the two parties are pretty fairly before the country and we presume the intelligent use of the electoral franchise will soon determine with whom is the voice of the people.