

P A P E R ,

CONTAINING A

PROPOSITION ON THE EDUCATION

OF

MEN FOR THE MINISTRY

IN THE

DIOCESE OF ONTARIO.

READ BEFORE THE COMMITTEE, APPOINTED AT THE
SYNOD IN BROCKVILLE,
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PROPOSITION ON THE EDUCATION OF MEN FOR THE MINISTRY.

Not without some misgiving do I venture to lay before the Committee *a scheme for the Education of men for the Ministry in this our Diocese of Ontario*. Comparatively a stranger in the country, I am therefore liable to fall into error regarding the peculiar condition of both the Church in and the church-people of Canada. Still, with twelve months practical experience as a Missionary Clergyman, going in and out among a class to which I shall presently call your attention, this, added to considerable discussion of the subject, for several months past, with those whose ministerial life has been passed, for a much longer period, in various parts of the country, has, I trust, in a degree, enabled me to understand the chief difficulties that lie in the way of meeting the exigence of the position in which the Church is now, or will very soon be placed. If I have anything further to say by way of apology, it is, to express a hope, that this Committee, granted at my request by the last Synod, and any others who may be inclined to view unfavorably my taking the initiative in so weighty a matter, will attribute my doing so, not to presumption, but to an honest and earnest desire to provide as speedily as possible a remedy for the deplorable dearth of ministration among our people. That I am here to-day, as a humble missionary, after a long apprenticeship in a prominent post in Ireland, is a test of my sincerity, and having come and seen with my own eyes the sad contrast, so forcibly described to me by the Bishop, between the state of things there* and here, I am more than ever incited, with God's help, to devote my humble powers to the building up of His Church in this new and great Diocese.

OUR PRESENT NECESSITY.

There can be no question that the chief weakness of the Church here lies in the want of Ministers. Our authorities tell us that there are in the

*The annual net rent charge of the Irish Church is over £400,000 stg. The gross income in 1861 was £580,418 stg. The Clergy numbered 2,281; the churchmembers 691,509. In the Diocese of Cork the Church has an annual revenue of about £75,000, with *four times as many Clergymen, and half as many lay members* as are in this Diocese of Ontario.

Diocese over thirty thousand souls of professed church-members either without pastoral ministration at all, or at least, with but such irregular and casual ministration as may be given by a Clergyman taking charge singlehanded of a district so extensive that it should employ four men instead of one. Scattered here and there in the back country, "remote, unfriended," are families of our people sometimes in little clusters, sometimes far apart, born and brought up in the Church, who are fast being decoyed away by the agents of dissent, whose emissaries are most active where they find least opposition. Within a few years past we have lost thousands. I am informed by credible persons in my own district, that within the last twenty years the church-people there have diminished to half their originally proportionate number.† There is, therefore, an imperative call for men not only to educate and keep in the Church those remaining within her pale, but to try and win back those who have so recently forsaken the faith of their fathers. And there is a danger at our doors still worse than Dissent. INFIDELITY is laying hold on many whose parents, once staunch churchmen, refused to be charmed by sectarian teachers, and having none others, in process of time grew negligent and irreligious, and so have suffered their children to grow up, many unbaptized, all untaught, without a belief in a Heavenly Father, a Saving Brother, or a Holy Spirit. Surely we should lose no time in making an effort to counteract the insidious inroads of error, and reclaim the lost sheep to 'the fold of Christ's Church. It should be remembered that we Churchmen, Clergy and Laity in this Diocese, are a body, perfectly free to do what we believe to be right in the sight of God. Untrammelled by State influence, unincumbered by an abuse of lay-patronage, and of a grossly unfair, as unequal, distribution of property—abuses which custom alone renders sufferable—we have the helm of our ship in our own hands, and are responsible to none save the Lord and Master, who has committed to us so solemn a charge, and who doubtless will guide and govern our noble vessel in safety, when, and perhaps when only, we use our utmost exertions to steer aright, and keep a watchful look out for all possible surrounding dangers. I do not deem this remark irrelevant, for it may meet an objection.

ORDINARY SOURCES TWOFOLD.

With such feelings as how pressing our necessity for men, and how great our responsibility, let us see what are the ordinary sources of supply. They may summarily be said to be two-fold. The Universities and Collegiate Institutions at home, and in Canada. Now, in regard to the prospect of having educated men from England or Ireland it seems to me perfectly hopeless. No doubt it is as strange as sad that so many

†Farmersville, the most rising town between Brockville and Perth, once had a large Church which was filled every Sunday. The Church was burned, and now there are not five church families in the place.

sons of the Church there should disregard the urgent claims of the Household of Faith. The fact is so. Our Diocesan, to whose eloquence and zeal both in England and Ireland I can bear testimony, visited the mother country last year with the express purpose of enlisting men for this interesting field of labour. After some months, with all the prestige that met his Lordship in his own University, where he had a full opportunity of explaining his mission, and the claims of his countrymen in Canada—claims specially on the Church in Ireland ;—and while in England having secured the co-operation, if not the sanction, of the most eminent prelates, together with the practical support of the S. P. G., and S. P. C. K. ; notwithstanding all these advantages, his Lordship succeeded finally in obtaining the services of only two ordained Clergymen. No further comment is needed to assure us that we must not expect the *educated* pious young men of England and Ireland to come over and help us in Canada. The truth is, there is employment at home for every one of them. Little more than a month ago, the Ven. the Archdeacon of Surrey, in a charge to the Clergy of the Deanery of Southwark, alluded to the failing supply of men. His words afford the best evidence in support of what I have stated :

“ At the present time there was an absolute decrease in the number of candidates for holy orders, and especially of candidates from the highly-educated classes of society. Whatever might be the cause of this, it was a subject to which they should direct their serious attention. Never did the Church require a larger supply of intellectual and judicious ministers. The spread of knowledge, the propagation of infidel opinions, all rendered it more than ever important that candidates for the ministry should be well trained and taught and fitted for their work. Here, then, was the first duty of the Church—to raise up ministers for her worship. An appeal must be made to parents to devote their sons to the ministry, but, more than this, perhaps one of the chief duties was to raise a larger fund for the maintenance of the clergy, for parents were deterred from sending their sons into the ministry, because there were no means of support now, nor any prospect for the time that is to come. At present, the Universities did not afford means for pastoral training, and it was absolutely necessary that a candidate for holy orders should enter upon a different course of training from that which too often characterized an undergraduate's career. Theological Colleges had done much good, but they did not afford the means for parochial work, they were few and far between, and they were too frequently connected in the public mind with a peculiar school of theology. He thought the cathedral establishments might be made more useful than they are in training men for the ministry ; but perhaps the best plan immediately available would be for a young man, on going through the usual curriculum at the University, to be trained for a few months by a diligent, earnest minister.”

What is true of England is equally true of Ireland. To my own knowledge nearly all the young men of any talent, who do not happen to enjoy Crown patronage, or Episcopal affinity, have for the past few years

gone to England.† We may, therefore, set it down as a fact, that if the churches at home do not supply themselves with men, much less can they supply us.

Neither can our own Universities in this Province: I mean those of Trinity College, Toronto, and Lennoxville. I believe I am correct in stating that the comparatively few students at present in these institutions will barely meet the requirements of the Dioceses in which they are respectively situated. From either of them we may now and then get a clergyman or two, but it is evident that they will always be mainly nurseries for their own localities; and further, they will be availed of only by those who can afford to pay for their sons' non-residence at home, as well as the university expenses. Have we many such men of wealth in this Diocese? I do not wish to say a word that may disparage either of those excellent Institutions. Nay, I presume and trust that our gentry who have sufficient means will always give their sons a University education, and the more of such men we get the better. With that nothing that I have to propose can interfere. But the very fact that both these colleges are at such a distance from our Diocese in itself is an obstacle to the young men of our middle class seeking through them admission to the Ministry. In the time to come, when our population increases (which is doubtful, from the constant tide of westward emigration) we may perhaps have a Collegiate Institution of our own attached to the Cathedral Church. Meanwhile, for the ensuing twenty or thirty years, where are we to procure ministers for our thirty thousands of church-people, to say nothing of filling up the ranks as places are left vacant? To this important question the proposition I lay before you gives an answer.

THE REAL SOURCE OF SUPPLY.

FROM OURSELVES. From ourselves—the young men, sons of our respectable yeomen, extensive land-owners, a numerous class with us in this Diocese, and all comparatively well off. These young men, many of them have received and are receiving an excellent elementary and general education in the Grammar and Common Schools, where, by gaining such distinctions as may be obtained there, they evince a capacity for a higher order of instruction. My own experience, as well as that of many clerical brethren, gives the assurance that we have an abundant material from which to take our supply—a material of no mean character. Many of these young men are at present engaged in school-teaching, an employment in which they have leisure to prosecute their own private studies. Being well acquainted with the Common School-teachers of the

†For ten or twelve years past the theological standard in Dublin has been raised so high, that while it has debarred numbers from studying for orders, it has produced a class of men who can compete successfully for the rich endowments of English lay munificence.

National Board and the Church Education Society in Ireland, I can state that those *trained in Canada* are of a far higher grade in Society, with infinitely superior manners and address. All that is needed is to afford these young men facilities for learning a certain amount of classics, and something more of theology. They can themselves acquire, or have acquired, a useful and practical general knowledge of English Literature and Mathematics. And these facilities are just such, I think, as may be given by the *existing Clergy of the Diocese*. In the Grammar Schools scattered throughout the country all the elements of classics and mathematics may be acquired. Cannot the *Clergy themselves* supplement these elements, and impart a serviceable knowledge of Theology?

The question has been pressed on me by a valued and thoughtful friend, whose favourable opinion as to the proposed plan I was glad to have received—as to what amount of classical knowledge I should deem sufficient in a candidate for Holy Orders. To this I answer, *such a knowledge as would enable any young man of ordinary capacity to prosecute his studies by himself*. In Theology, a thorough acquaintance with the Greek Testament, added to a liberal training in the *Evidences of Christianity*, *Eccelesiastical History*, *Biblical Criticism*, and *the Bible itself*,—this, as a foundation, should be expected of every person about to act as teacher in the Church, and this, I believe, may be imparted to our intelligent young men in the method to which I now invite your attention. To begin with the DIVINITY STUDENTS.—

THE PLAN PROPOSED.

1. I would permit young men who have attained a certain age, say twenty years, or eighteen, and who can produce a sufficient evidence of their having received a good elementary education—such as a *first-class Teacher's Certificate* or a Certificate of constant attendance for five years at a Grammar-School—to be eligible for instruction as *Divinity Students*. They should of course be young men of good repute, as having been confirmed, and regular attendants at Church for three previous years.

2. I would have these young men, under the title of DIVINITY STUDENTS at once enter on a course of reading in Classics and Theology; that course to extend over three years, with however a permission to the student to present himself at the final examination at the close of his second year's study.

3. Each student should send in to the Clergyman of the Parish, his name, residence, age, &c., according to a printed form, to be transmitted to the Bishop together with a Certificate of character, and on his Lordship's approval, the student might then present himself before the Local Board of his District.

4. In the intervals between the examinations, the student might reside wherever he pleased, always notifying the Clergyman of the Parish.

5. These Examinations to be *three local*, at two of which attendance should be compulsory,—held say in Hilary, Trinity and Michaelmas Terms,—besides one *general annual* examination at Kingston, which latter should be passed, before the student could advance to the next year's course.

6. The Annual Examination, at which rewards for distinguished answering should be given, to comprise all the subjects supposed to be gone through in that and previous years, and after the third and final examination, the student to receive a Testimonium and be presentable to the Bishop for Deacon's Orders.

It is not intended that this shall interfere with his Lordship's usual examination of Candidates.

7. Each student should pay a fee, say of £5 *per annum* to defray necessary expenses, and an additional £5 *per annum*,—this latter to be returned to him at the expiration of the course, for the purchase of vestments, &c., &c., on his entering the ministry, and *only in such an event.* [*Some payment I believe to be indispensable. The best gifts are little valued if they cost nothing; and there should be some small guarantee of good faith on the part of those who engage the time and labours of the Clergy that they will prosecute their studies to a close.*]

I now come to what is perhaps the most important feature of the proposition:—THE EXAMINERS.—

1. I propose that there should be LOCAL BOARDS in different districts consisting each of three Clergymen, Graduates of some University, and as many Boards as seemed fit to the Lord Bishop of the Diocese.

2. These Local Boards to be nominated by the Bishop, and at the first meeting to elect each its own President for the year.

3. The Local Boards to meet in the respective districts and hold an examination in the course prescribed three times in each year as above proposed.

Beside the Local Boards I propose that there should be an EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL OR COLLEGE—

1. Composed of the Bishop, the Archdeacon, Dean, and the Presidents of the Local Boards. This College should manage the Divinity Students' Fund, one of its members being elected *Bursar*, another *Proctor*, and another *Registrar* to perform the respective duties of such officers.

2. This Educational College to draw up a Classical and Theological Curriculum for the Term, and the annual examinations.

3. To meet in Kingston once in each year and hold a General Examination as above proposed.

4. Their expenses to be paid out of the Students' Fees.

THE ADVANTAGES OF SUCH A PLAN.

The above is a rough outline of the plan I propose. Of course the

details may be modified, and must remain for future discussion. Permit me to say a word or two on the advantages [as they seem to me] of thus preparing our own young men for the ministry.

1. We shall have those whose preliminary education will be a guarantee that *they belong to the highest grade of our Agricultural population*:—who will be *useful*, for they will be fully acquainted with the habits and circumstances of the country,—far more ready than strangers to accommodate themselves to a rude and rough mode of living, and who, I maintain, will be far better trained for the pastoral office than English or Irish neophytes, coming out to a strange land, with a few months' Theological study and no parochial experience whatever. They cannot fail to be *respected*, for they will have acquired before the eyes of all a character for piety, industry and steadiness, and they will be all the more thought of as they pass through their studentship with distinction.

2. We shall have *men all of one school in Theology*,—a great advantage now enjoyed by our Diocese, and which we should endeavour by all means to maintain.

3. *The whole body of the Clergy will feel a double interest in the progress and training of those with whom they are shortly to be associated.* In their respective parishes every assistance will be rendered by the Clergyman, who will have known the young man perhaps for years, who will still watch him now with an increased regard,—and thus every possible precaution will be taken that none enter the sacred office with a stain on their reputations.

4. *Will not our people contribute more liberally and cheerfully to the Students' Fund*, when they know that it is directly for the benefit of their own children as well as for that of their own church? Will not the wealthy farmers—in whose families there is usually some lad to whom Providence has given a brighter intellect, as to others a more robust frame, and who cannot leave to every child an inheritance of land—will not these farmers be glad to contribute liberally to that fund, that comes back to aid them in raising their own sons to the noblest position, the highest profession on earth?

5. We shall have *at once* a machinery at work that will accomplish our object at a *minimum cost*. The chief expense will be that of Classical and Theological books, of which latter every Clergyman requires a certain number. But even this expense to the Student may be diminished, if there were a good DIOCESAN LENDING LIBRARY (the nucleus of which is already formed) in which might be many copies of the Standard Divinity works, so that for a small annual subscription Clergymen and Students, or for that matter any lay members of the Church, might, under certain regulations, borrow the books for reading at home.

6. If such a system as I have proposed be carried into effect, it may

bring us near a *solution of the Diaconate question*. It is evident how young men recognised as Students for the Ministry, if otherwise qualified by age and attainments, may at a certain period of their course, say in the second or third year, be employed advantageously as assistants to the Clergy; and even receive a small stipend, if the Student's Fund permitted. Originally it was my intention to have introduced this matter into the proposition itself as part of the reward for diligent Students. On reflection, it seems to interfere with the Episcopal prerogative, and I have therefore left it with other things for future consideration. No doubt the Bishop himself will hold out every encouragement to those young men who are likely to bring honour to the sacred office, and advance the cause of the Church.

And now I leave this proposition in the hands of the Committee. If I have stated too many details it has been simply with the object of giving to the scheme some distinctive shape. All these can be subsequently modified. The Preliminary Qualifications, the Terms, the Duration of the Course, the Subjects of Study, the Fees, the Number of Local Boards, are matters that will require serious deliberation hereafter. At present my object is to invite discussion on the main features of what I have proposed. The two questions, in answering which I presume the Committees will have no difficulty, and which I have taken as postulates from which to start, are,—

1. *Where are we to look for our permanent supply of Clergymen, abroad or at home?*
2. *If at home, have the existing Clergy the means and ability to take in hand the preparation of candidates?*

These questions having been answered in the only way in which I conceive it possible, we may then discuss the *best method* of preparation, and the proposition, above suggested, or any other, may be considered. That there are many difficulties in the way I do not pretend to deny. But to be deterred from some prompt action by difficulties while our necessities are so pressing, is to be unfaithful to the Church, and negligent of those precious immortal souls that are perishing before our eyes. May we not hope that this new Christian year shall not close without our seeing in operation some well-organized plan for providing men for the Ministry And in preparing and carrying out that plan, may the Head of the Church give us grace and wisdom to do all things for the glory of His Holy name, and the edification of His redeemed children.

T. BEDFORD JONES, M. A.

Incumbent of Mission of Kitley.

FRANKVILLE, COUNTY LEEDS, }
December 1, 1863. 6

P. S.—Owing to no fault of the writer the publication, and therefore the circulation of this paper has been delayed. It was hoped that it would have been in each Clergyman's hands before the close of 1863, and a reply might then have been forwarded to the committee meeting in March, 1864. As it is, each Clergyman is requested to give the proposed plan his best consideration, and communicate with the writer as soon as convenient, stating how far he approves or disapproves of the principles laid down. Any suggestions will be received with respect and carefully considered.

February 24, 1864.