

I not go?" He concludes with the further request for prayer, pointing out that "one of the richest promises of answer to prayer is given in immediate connexion with the full establishment of Christ's Kingdom"—Isa. lxxv. 24, 25, "It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together. . . . They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord."

PART VII.  
1862-72.  
Chap. 68.

Henry Venn never read his own Reports at Exeter Hall. His brother John, the Prebendary of Hereford, had a better voice, and therefore always performed the duty for him. In 1867, he was absent from the Meeting, for the first time, and the circumstance was sympathetically referred to by Lord Chichester and Dean Close.

It is needless to say that Venn was a great power in the Committee. But it was the natural and legitimate power of a master mind, and of an unequalled experience. He always earnestly deprecated, and avoided to the utmost, anything like secretarial dictation to the men around him, whom he regarded as the real governing body. At the same time, he repudiated the idea that C.M.S. secretaries, whether honorary like himself, or obliged to take the usual stipend, were only in the position of superior clerks, to listen silently to debates and register decisions. His view was clearly expressed in the last letter he wrote to the Committee, only a month before his death, and it was officially endorsed by the Committee ordering the letter to be entered in full upon the Minutes. He said:—

Venn in  
Committee

On the  
position of  
Secretaries

"The relation of secretaries to the Committee is not that of secretaries or clerks to a Parochial Board or ordinary Company, but rather that of secretaries to a Scientific Institution, or of Secretaries of State to a Cabinet Council. The secretaries of our Society are the originators of the measures to be passed, the chief authorities on its principles and practice, and must often act upon their own discretion in cases of emergency, and in confidential interviews with Church or State authorities. At the same time I must bear my testimony that this large confidence reposed in the secretaries is not inconsistent with the independence of judgment and ultimate supremacy on the part of the Committee. I could give innumerable instances to show that the Committee never resign their opinions in any important point without a frank discussion of the difference, and that great principles are never sacrificed in deference to the authority, age, or experience of others."

How this view worked out in practice he explained in his memorable address on entering the New House in 1862:—

"A notion often prevails that a Secretary is apt to assume an autocratic position in this room. As early as the days of Claudius Buchanan the notion arose. He used to speak of 'King Pratt,' and to argue that in an infant government a monarchy was better than a republic. But whatever apparent supremacy a Secretary may maintain, if we look below the surface it will always be found that the Secretary reflects the Committee. If the image is distorted, the defect will soon