

Hence we deprecate all attempts to tamper with the Doctrine of the Church, or any of her formularies. We deprecate any tendency to add to or diminish the deposit of Faith committed to the United Church of England and Ireland as a Branch of the Church Catholic—or to narrow her terms of communion as laid down in her Book of Common Prayer and Articles, for the preservation of which we desire to express our deep thankfulness, and it is our earnest wish that Provincial and Diocesan Convocations in the Colonies, may be restrained from meddling with, much more from altering such high and weighty matters, and that they be confined to discipline and the temporalities of the Church, and such regulations of order and arrangement as may tend to her efficiency and extension.

The Constitution having secured the acknowledgment of the Royal Supremacy—the Unity and sound teaching of the Colonial Church in all things essential, and her identity as an integral part of the Church of England might proceed,

1st. To restrict the Provincial or Diocesan Convocations of the Colonial Church from entertaining any proposition for any change of the Articles, doctrines, liturgy or Offices in the United Church of England and Ireland.

2nd. To provide for the enforcing of proper discipline—the method of proceeding upon complaint against any Clergyman,—for immoral conduct,—insubordination,—habits and pursuits inconsistent with his sacred calling, neglect of duty, unsound doctrine, breaches of orders, &c., &c. The sentence that may be imposed and in certain cases the right of appeal.

3rd. To provide for the appointment and removal by due authority, and after proper proceedings, of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons.

4th. To provide for dividing the Dioceses into Parishes with proper regulations in case of future sub-division, with a view to Church purposes only.

5th. To provide for the extension and temporal interests of the Church,—by the members assessing themselves to raise funds for building, repairing Churches, Parsonages, School Houses, for the support of the Clergy and School Masters, and the maintenance of Public Worship.

6th. To provide for the regulation of fees for marriages, baptisms and burials.

These and various other matters affecting the welfare of the Church, would require to be taken up one by one and provided for—the design being to have certain things fixed by superior authority so as to be subject to no change by any legislation within the diocese.

I would more briefly recapitulate what appears to me desirable:

1st. That one Constitution be framed for the government of the Church in all the Colonies.

2nd. That the Constitution should provide:

1. For the establishment in each Colonial Diocese, of an Assembly for managing so far as may be committed to it, the affairs of the Church.

2. For giving such Assembly the most appropriate name.

3. For establishing how it shall be composed, as to the proportion of Clergy and Laity—what shall form a quorum—how questions are to be decided—what regulations as to times of session—prorogation—adjournment, &c.

4. Who shall preside—if the Bishop, shall he possess an absolute vote, or one modified, or merely the casting vote.

5. Shall there be a power in the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Crown, to disallow, within a limited period, any law or regulation of the Convocation?

From a review of these principles and details, two or three good men could, I think, in a single week, suggest a system for them all—not such as would satisfy and please every one, because that is not to be hoped for, but such as persons of good judgment and good intentions, and with some knowledge of Colonial feelings and prepossessions, would think reasonable and practicable.

In regard of Sir John Pakington's well grounded fear of diversity of regulations in different Colonies, it must be carefully provided against, since that would evidently be the effect of leaving a wide scope to Colonial Convocations or Synods, and I should much rather prefer that an Imperial Statute should lay down the system as regarded cardinal points, leaving minor points to be the subject of regulation within the Colony respecting which some diversity of system would not signify.

The great use and importance of the governing body would rather consist in their being called on to execute the powers delegated to them by the Statute. I mean in their application of them to individual cases, as they arise and which it would be their part to dispose of, not according to any system of action devised by themselves, but in the manner prescribed by the Imperial Statute.

#### THE RIGHT HON. W. GLADSTONE'S BILLS.

The Bill as at first framed, appears open to several of the objections urged against it, and such require to be removed or satisfactorily modified.

This has in some measure been done in the Amended Bill, but further alterations and amendments may with propriety be suggested.

Whether by the law as it now stands, the Bishop with the Clergy and Laity of his Diocese in a British Colony can legally assemble of their own accord and make regulations for the management of their internal ecclesiastical affairs to the extent contemplated in the Amended Bill is a point which ought not to be treated as doubtful, unless it really be so.

Surely the status of the Church of England throughout the Colonial possessions of the Empire is a matter about which we can hardly suppose that there had been no opinion or intention in all times past on the part of the Parliament and Government of England.

Would it not therefore be safe to assume that the Bishop, Clergy and Laity had not authority of themselves to lay down a system of self-government without the sanction of Parliament, or of the Crown—and if this be so, it can hardly be right and certainly not politic to recite that it was doubtful, whether they could or could not do so; because it might be that Parliament would not pass this proposed Bill, or concur in any act upon the subject, and then the admission that it was doubtful whether the power does not already exist might afford a strong argument in the Colonies for assuming an authority that might not be very discreetly exercised.

It would have been better in my humble opinion to have commenced by reciting, "That it was expedient to enable &c.,"—saying nothing about doubts.

I venture to remark that the introduction of such a Bill should be preceded by some preliminary notice, either on the part of the Government or of the proper Ecclesiastical authority in England.—it being desirable that Church affairs in the Colonies should be governed according to some uniform and well defined system prevailing throughout.

#### THE AMENDED BILL.

##### (TITLE.)

It should not be entitled "An Act to explain and amend the Laws relating to the Church in the Colonies,"—but "An Act for the better Government of the Church in the Colonies."

##### PREAMBLE.

Neither the title nor preamble explain anything—the latter expresses doubts, and then proceeds not to explain them but to make positive provisions or enactments. It does not propose to amend any particular Laws, but introduces for the first time a system for regulating certain matters which before had not been subjected to any regulation. How much better to commence by reciting "That it was expedient to enable the Bishop of any Diocese in the Colonies with his Clergy and