

Delegation of General Synod's powers to a standing commission.

Formation of Parishes, and definition of duties of Parish Officers.

Mode of appointment of Pastors in settled parishes.

And one or two measures of minor or of temporary import.

The General Synod in future will be constituted on the same principles as the present—three orders, two elective, consent of majority of each being required for enactment.

The changes are, that the Metropolitan will henceforth be *ex officio* President; and the constituency, all adult males who make the simple declaration, 'I am a member of the Church of England,' without any negation of other membership.

—contended strongly for the negative clause, but in vain.

We have got a communicant qualification for the lay representation unanimously conceded; and must be content with thus limiting the choice of our motley constituents.

The truth is, as — allows, the condition of the country goes far to justify an abstinence from negative tests. Many men who have been brought up as Wesleyans or Presbyterians join the Church, and become very valuable members; but are unwilling to give a further pledge of their final rejection of their former membership, either for want of sufficient conviction, or from the fear that, in some future contingencies, they may be driven by lack of Church ministrations, to seek them amongst their former brethren.

The Diocesan Synod will have the same constituency for its lay representation as the General Synod. The Clergy will not appear by representation. The Bishop will have an absolute veto. It is to meet yearly; the General Synod ordinarily once in three years. It will have to adopt much of the legislation of the General Synod to diocesan circumstances, and to consider and propose measures for the future General Synod.

The Standing Commission of the General Synod is to perpetuate the executive life of that body, for the management of its numerous trusts; replacement of trustees, acceptance of property, &c.

It is not to be a tribunal; but it is to act as a kind of grand jury, in cases of appeal from a Diocesan's refusal of institution, to hear them *ex parte* before going up to the bench of Bishops.

The most difficult measure, the tribunal bill, was handed over (after full discussion, but at a later period of session) to the Standing Commission, for further manipulation; the amended measure to be sent by the Standing Commission to the Diocesan Synods, and to be adopted provisionally (at their option) until next General Synod.

The principles of the measure are similar to those of the English Clergy discipline bill: a preliminary Court of Inquiry; a Court of Assessors to conduct trial with the Bishop, the Bishop declaring sentence and awarding penalty; Appeal to Metropolitan Court, *i.e.*, Metropolitan Bishop and Assessors.

The Assessors are to be a body chosen by the Synod, out of whom the Bishop will form the Court in each case.

The debatable points were what kind of evidence admissible? what penalties? provision for expenses.

These must ever be very knotty under our colonial circumstances, *viz.*, no power to summon witnesses, or funds to pay them.

In the Standing Commission, there will be more of legal weight of opinion than we had in Synod. There we had only one lawyer, Swinson, the *ex-Attorney-General*. The Judges resolved

not to come in; a resolution which they will probably cancel before February, 1862, the next proposed meeting.

With the exception of this legal deficiency, our Laity were a very satisfactory body; their tone was very conservative and respectful, and they had (with very slight exceptions) no absurd jealousy for the privileges of their order.

One great harmonizing influence was gained by the Bishops sitting in the same chamber with the other orders, and joining in all the debates. It was done on the understanding that at the request of any one member of any order, the order should withdraw for separate consultation; but the session passed without any one withdrawal, and all felt the gain of our united consultations.

There was certainly no hamper upon the freedom of debate, as was feared. Clergy and Laity spoke out without restraint in the presence of Bishops and of each other, and much to mutual advantage.

Besides the *Statutes* (the name of Canons was rejected), passed, their were several resolutions sent forth, which are to circulate in the Diocesan Synods, and test opinion, and guide, if they can, diocesan action. They will be of considerable value, come whatever may, from having elicited opinions, and brought men to think and speak alike on some important points.

We have affirmed the catholicity of our Mission, and the consequent duty of extending the ministries of our Church to every one who will receive them, even on the weakest assertion of membership; and we have declared the *equal* claim of the two races on the Church's ministrations, and also the duty of extension to the heathen beyond."—*Col. Ch. Chronicle*.

EXCURSION IN PALESTINE AND SOUTHERN SYRIA.

The Excursion in Samaria, Galilee, and Perea, published in the *Colonial Church Chronicle* in the course of the two last years, has introduced the reader to the scattered sheep of the spiritual Israel, whom the providence of God has spared from the ravages of the devastating locusts of the Arabian desert, and from the long oppression of their Saracenic and Turkish masters, to testify to the truth of Christ, even in their depth of debasement and ignorance, and to witness to the vitality of the faith before those who have been its most relentless persecutors.

It is hoped that it will not be an unthankful task to exhibit to those who are interested in the fortunes of the Church in the land where it was first planted by its Divine Head, and nurtured by the Twelve and their apostolic successors, its present state in Damascus and Mount Lebanon,—still in contiguity to various forms of error, but in a less depressed state than that in which we found it in the trans-Jordanic regions. The attention of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* was directed, not long since, by Mr. Cyril Graham, to the Druses of the Jebel Hauran, whom he represented as anxious to receive instruction, and willing to support teachers from England. It may be interesting, therefore, to investigate the history and religion of that remarkable people, in connexion with their more numerous brethren, settled in the villages at the south of Lebanon, which derives from them its modern native name of Jebel ed-Drûz, the Druse Mountain.

This Journal will lead us through some parts of Palestine which were not explored in our former excursion, and over part of ground before trodden, which last will, therefore, be passed over very lightly. Where any thing of Scripture

interest, in connexion with sacred history or geography, appears to demand it, I shall not scruple to enter into fuller details.

PART II.

DEPARTURE FROM JERUSALEM—GIBEON OF SAUL—GIBEON—SOLOMON'S VALLEY—BETHORON THE UPPER; THE LOWER—LYDDA—RAMLEH—EMMAUS—JAFFA—ANTIPATRIS.

Monday, May 1st.—Quitted Jerusalem, with a heavy heart, at half-past eight, in company with several friends, who in accordance with ancient custom, came "to bring me on the way," and whose tried friendship made it more difficult to sever the ties which bound me to the Holy City more strongly than I was at all aware until I came to quit its hallowed associations, and looked back upon its well-known walls and each familiar object with tears of fond regret. Often had I surveyed, from the ramparts of Jerusalem and from my own house-top, the peculiar conical hill, crowning the height of the ridge Scopas, now called Tuleil el-Fûl (Bean Hill,) which has been recently identified, I believe correctly, with the site of Gibeon of Benjamin; where the rights of hospitality were so brutally violated in the days of the Judges, and which met with such exemplary vengeance from the assembled tribes of outraged Israel (Judges xix. xx.). Here then I now paused to look back for the last time on the city of our solemnities, to lift up a prayer for the peace of Jerusalem, and, for my brethren and companions' sakes, to wish her prosperity.

Bean Hill is due north of Jerusalem, and here it was that Titus first encamped on approaching the city, which he could survey from this commanding elevation and make his dispositions for its investment. From this point we bore westward, and at eleven reached the poor village of el-Jib, the site of the Ilivite city of the Gibeonites, whose inhabitants practised that cunning trick upon Joshua which insured them their lives on the penalty of perpetual servitude (Joshua ix.). Shortly before reaching the village we passed through a small plain, which we were fain to identify with the "Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon," where the twelve strong men of Benjamin contended in that desperate sport with the twelve of the servants of David, whose mutual slaughter proved the prelude to a general engagement between the armies of Ishbosheth and David, commanded respectively by Abner and Joab (2 Sam. ii. 12-17.). We could not, however, identify "the pool" which had divided the combatants, called by Jeremiah (xli. 12) the "great waters that are in Gibeon," nor do I believe that other travellers have been more fortunate. Of the other cities of the Gibeonites, Beeroth only is certainly known, being still named Beeri, situated on the great Nablus road, about four miles north of el-Jib. The situation of Kirjath-Jearim and Chephirah is still matter of conjecture more or less probable.

From el-Jib a fine broad valley leads almost due west, through the heart of the mountain region into the Merj Ibn-Omeir, in the plain of Sharon, and so by Lydda to Jaffa. Great interest attaches to this valley from the fact that it is still called Wady Suleiman, a name probably derived from Solomon, the son of David, as being the highroad by which the timber for the temple at Jerusalem, conveyed in floats to Joppa, was transported to its destination; as this is still the only road practicable for heavy-laden camels between Jerusalem and the coast. Ascending the north side of the valley of Solomon, at two p.m. we reached Beit-'Ur el Foka (Bethoron the Upper), situated on the summit of the ridge which forms the great watershed between the plain of Philistia