

These two points may be completely secured in the same arrangement; for instance, the expenses of the church are at present about £20,000 per annum. Now were the government to offer us a capital which when invested would yield £30,000 per annum, and make the present incumbents as secure as by the 16th Victoria, cap. 21, by ordaining them to be the first charge, we should have the residue, or ten thousand per annum, for the extension of the church. Yet even this proposition, which would no doubt secure all present interests and enable us to increase our Missions, I could only accept under protest. Nor can I in any other manner receive offers, however advantageous they may seem, which take away any portion of our property, guaranteed under the provisions of the 3rd and 4th Victoria, cap. 78. At the same time I am quite aware that the church would suffer most grievously were the bill before the House to become law in its present shape, and therefore I should acquiesce in what might appear to the clergy and laity at large a generous commutation, and while not infringing on the present incumbents, would leave us some means of extension. For myself, I proceed upon the principle, that we have no right to give up any part of the Endowment which has been conferred lawfully upon the church. At the same time the Government, by the exercise of unlawful and oppressive power, may compel us to submit to any terms which it may choose to offer.

What the Bishops desired by the Circular, was simply yes or no, as to entertaining or rejecting a reasonable commutation for the property of the Church. As the matter was pressing, they thought it would be desirable to be authorised by the Clergy at large, to receive merely for consideration any such offer, but it was no part of their plan to permit the rights of the present incumbents or receivers of pensions, allowances, &c., &c., to be touched, or to accept such offer without further reference to their people.