

subject of the revival of Convocation for the good government of the Church of England, he felt it his duty to second the nomination.

The Rev. A. Gurney observed that the appeal made to the professional adviser of the Archdeacon had not been answered. The supporters of Mr. Baker had every confidence in the judgment and discretion of that gentleman, and he thought questions of this kind suggested by Mr. Buckley, if unanswered, might throw a cast of unpleasantness over the whole of the proceedings. The general feeling appeared to be that something more of living action should be manifested by the Church in her own councils—(hear, hear)—and that she was now called upon to elect dignitaries to know the course which the candidates were prepared to take in this matter. In the present state of public feeling it was very undesirable that such a question should go forth to be publicly answered. The clergy of the archdeaconry would certainly not appear to advantage if the question was not allowed to be put.

The Rev. R. Burgess said, if such a question was allowed to be put, it would open up the whole subject of Convocation, and whether all its powers should be revived. The tendency of the question was to obtain a pledge from Mr. Baker as to his future course of proceeding, and as even in election proceedings pledges were avoided as much as possible, he did not think Mr. Baker ought to be called upon to pledge himself on this difficult subject. Their wish was to elect persons who would act according to the best of their judgment for the good of the Church. Until Convocation should meet and ascertain the general opinion of the Church, it was difficult to pursue any definite course; and it is an opinion they ought to rely on the character of the individuals elected, in the confidence that they would act according to the best of their judgment.

The Hon. and Rev. Mr. Villiers agreed with Mr. Gurney in the propriety of voting for Mr. Baker, and thought that gentlemen might be asked merely to state that he would not pledge himself against any proposition which might be brought forward, but would give a fair consideration to every measure calculated to promote the good of the Church. It was not desirable to ask Mr. Baker to pledge himself on a point when arguments might be brought forward which would induce him to change his opinion. To ask such a charge was tantamount to saying that the parties requiring it are infallible, and that others are incapable of understanding argument and coming to a correct conclusion. He entered fully into the spirit of that portion of the service to which allusion was made, and must say that it would be a mockery to invoke the Holy Spirit on the proceedings of Convocation if parties went there pledged to come to certain conclusions. He thought it would be satisfactory to the meeting to hear some reply from Mr. Baker.

The Archdeacon felt great difficulty in putting the question from the chair, but said if Mr. Baker chose to answer the question of his own accord he would be perfectly regular.

Mr. Baker said he had no hesitation or difficulty in answering the question put to him, which was this—“Will you, if elected as proctor for the diocese, exert yourself by all constitutional means to obtain, as soon as possible, the revival of the active functions of Convocation?” By all constitutional means he would exert that power; but beyond the power which the constitution gave him he would not. The word “constitutional,” in the way the question was framed, gave him full power to use his own discretion, and he should consider himself bound by the term “constitutional.”

The Rev. Mr. Jennings trusted that the last nomination would be now withdrawn.

The Rev. Dr. Riber regretted that Mr. Baker had not answered the question before the nomination took place. He considered the answer perfectly satisfactory, and if a unanimous decision could be come to, he thought it would be desirable to withdraw the nomination of Mr. Page. He did not require of Mr. Baker anything beyond the constitutional means of the Church of England as now constituted.

The Rev. Mr. Liddell did not wish to act against the general sense of the meeting; but the answer of Mr. Baker did not appear so intelligent to him as it seemed to be to others.

The Rev. Mr. Page said, in his endeavours to make Convocation a reality and not a formality, he had never intended to act by any but constitutional means, and he did not suppose that Mr. Baker or any gentleman would follow any other course. He wished it not to be understood that he was put forward as a candidate who would take any unconstitutional means; but by every constitutional means he would endeavour to get rid of the delegates to which Dr. Riber had alluded, of invoking the Holy Spirit in such a manner as to make the proceeding a mockery.

The Archdeacon then proceeded to take a show of hands. For Dr. Spangley every hand was held up, for Mr. Baker 32 hands were held up, and for Mr. Page 11. The two former gentlemen were then declared elected, and the proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

In the course of the proceedings the Reverend James Skinner, senior curate of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, attended the meeting with a view to bringing to an issue the question as to whether or not licensed curates are entitled to a voice in proctorial elections. Mr. Skinner accordingly voted in the election which took place; and, having done so, stated to the Archdeacon his position as a stipendiary curate holding a license from the Bishop of the diocese, and that he had, in right of that position, and in accordance with the opinion conveyed in the late charge of Archdeacon Wilberforce exercised the franchise conferred on him—as he believed by the constitution of the Church of England.

The Archdeacon referred the question of the validity of his claim to his legal adviser, who was present, and who stated, that according to the decisions which had been made in certain cases in the Ecclesiastical Courts, the vote of Mr. Skinner could not be received. The Archdeacon thereupon rejected the claim advanced by that gentleman.

Mr. Skinner then delivered to the Archdeacon a formal claim in writing, accompanied by an appeal to Convocation. We subjoin a copy of this document:—

Whereas an opinion has been expressed and acted upon by a high authority in the Church of England,

that (by 27th Elizabeth, c. 28) every priest or stipendiary, receiving an annual stipend, being no perpetuity, of £8 or above, and hired to serve in any place, was represented by Convocation under its civil aspect; and still more, ought to be entitled to vote if it be looked upon as a spiritual assembly; I, James Skinner, clerk, M.A., duly licensed and appointed to be senior resident curate of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, in the district of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, in the archdeaconry of Middlesex, and diocese of London, do hereby claim to vote at the election of proctors for the said diocese, held this 29th day of July, before the Venerable John Sinclair, Archdeacon of Middlesex, at St. Paul's, Covent-garden. And whereas the said Venerable John Sinclair, Archdeacon of Middlesex, has been pleased to reject the said claim, and has refused to accept my vote, I do hereby appeal to Convocation that the said claim may be fairly and fully tried.

I place this appeal in the hands of the Venerable John Sinclair, Archdeacon of Middlesex, the 29th day of July, 1852.

J. SKINNER, M.A.,

Senior Curate of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, in the diocese of London.

The Church advised, in an article upon the subject of the proceedings now taking place for the election of proctors for the new Convocation, “that in all cases where it is possible, stipendiary curates should assert their claim to vote.” Our contemporary appears to see that in one case this advice has not been heeded. The case in question is of course a very strong one, for St. Barnabas is a church with a large staff of clergy and a considerable congregation, attached to the district of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, and as such wholly represented (according to the definition of the Archdeacon of Middlesex) by the one vote of the perpetual curate of St. Paul's. Surely it cannot be contended that, out of a number of priests who have the cure of a parish or district, none is qualified—within the Church's meaning and the rule of common sense—to vote in these elections, except that one who happened to be the incumbent. It is clear that one priest may have the same intelligence and education, the same sense of his priestly obligations—as he undoubtedly bears the same priestly commission as another—though the one may be only a licensed curate, and the other an incumbent; and it not infrequently happens that the former has of the two the larger share of energy and practical experience. Again, then, we recommend all licensed curates, being priests within the terms of the statute of 27 Eliz., c. 28, to claim their electoral franchise, and thus to pave the way for maintaining their right to sit and vote in the synodical assemblies of the Church, which are undoubtedly among the events “looming in the future.”

In reference to this point we observe that, in considering the report of the South Australian Church Society, a clause was agreed to by the Bishop and his coadjutors to the following effect:—“The synod of clergy consists of every duly licensed officiating minister, presbyter is alone having the right of voting.” The point appears to have been discussed by the conference, and decided as a question of Church usage.

The rectors, vicars, incumbents, and licensed curates of livings within the diocese of Exeter, were cited to attend in the Consistorial Court on Friday, between the hours of one and two o'clock, for the purpose of electing two proctors to appear for the clergy of the diocese in the Lower House of Convocation, to meet in St. Paul's Cathedral the day after the assembling of Parliament for the dispatch of business.

Soon after one o'clock the Worshipful and Rev. Chancellor Martin, Chancellor of the diocese, took the chair, and Mr. R. Barnes, the Deputy-Registrar of the Court, read the formal documents on which the proceedings were grounded. The form of the Bishop of Exeter's mandates to the Archdeacon was to require them to summon the clergy within their archdeaconries to the place of meeting to-day, “to agree to elect, ordain, transmit, and upon their expenses to provide two efficient proctors” to represent them in the Lower House of Convocation. In interpreting the meaning of the general words “the clergy” some of the deans rural, cited all licensed curates, as well as rectors, vicars, and perpetual curates. Upon this a question arose whether licensed curates, being cited, possessed the power of voting.

The Chancellor decided that, having regard to ancient authorities, the clergy meant those who were permanently located in charge of souls in the diocese, such as rectors, vicars, and perpetual curates, and that licensed curates could not vote.

Prebendary Lacey hoped the meeting would not conclude without taking steps to change into an important reality that which was previously an unfulfilled ceremony. He wished to know whether it was competent for any one to propose a petition to be presented to Convocation through their proctors on the subject.

The Chancellor ruled that they must proceed first to the business of electing proctors.

The Rev. C. E. Wakley nominated the Rev. James Duke Coleridge, D.C.L., vicar of Thorverton, as one of the proctors, observing that he knew his abilities and capacity, having returned him many times before, that he had served them fully for many years, and had always attended the Convocation in London.

The Rev. C. B. Bartholomew (Incumbent of St. Davids, Exeter) seconded the nomination, which was received with general cries of—“Hear!”

The Rev. J. R. Hogg (Brixham) having first obtained permission, put this question to Dr. Coleridge—whether, if returned, he was prepared to use every effort that the rights of Convocation and synodical action might be restored?

Dr. Coleridge said undoubtedly he was prepared to do so. Ever since the year 1826 he had never failed to attend every time Convocation had met, and he had never failed to use his utmost endeavours to attain that object, even so far as to be the seconder of an amendment which went up to the Throne, praying the Queen to grant her royal license for Convocation. (Hear, hear.) That was the system and line of conduct he had pursued, and if God gave him power he would continue to pursue it so long as he had life.

Prebendary Lacey said it was desirable the second proctor should be an incumbent in the adjoining county

of Cornwall, and he begged to nominate the Rev. Edward H. Brown, Vicar of Kenwyn, Cornwall, as Dr. Coleridge's colleague.

The Rev. A. Watson (St. Mary's Church), said in seconding that nomination, he did so upon the understanding that Mr. Brown, equally with Dr. Coleridge, would use his best exertions and endeavour to restore synodical action to the Church.

The Chancellor observed that the second nomination seemed as equally unanimous as the first.

Dr. Coleridge said, there was now far stronger hope than ever that Convocation would be allowed to resume its real rights and powers. But the Church had many secret and many avowed opponents. There was too much lukewarmness, too much hollow-heartedness, and he would venture to say, too much hollow-heartedness, within her walls. Enthusiasm had too much power, and died too much the Church doing its own work as it ought. These causes united deterred him from entertaining very sanguine hopes that they would soon hear the word of command given to strike off the chains which now fettered the Church, and to leave her to exercise that power which he it remembered had never been suspended by any earthly king without the reservation on her part to claim its exercise when its interests demanded it. He appealed to the Archdeacon of Barnstaple, and he was sure he would support his statement (Archdeacon Bartholomew made a gesture of assent), as to the peaceful and gentle spirit which had prevailed in the Lower House of Convocation. While the feeling was strong and increasing that Convocation ought to be allowed to act, there had never been a sentiment uttered calculated to create distrust or excite suspicion of alarm in the mind of the most timid Churchman. When Convocation met, as at present constituted, the first act should be—self-reformation. The Lower House of Convocation should have the free unimpeded right of electing its own proctor, and not have a designated and prescribed dignity sent to head Convocation. Then came the disproportion of numbers; ninety-nine cathedral and forty-four parochial clergy constituted the Lower House. There was but one opinion on that point. There was not a dignitary in this or any cathedral throughout the kingdom who would not say, “rather let those numbers be reversed.” These points require great consideration, and in order to consider them, they (the members of Convocation) must assemble, and when they were assembled, let both houses go up to the foot of the Throne, and humbly, most temperately, but at the same time not a whit less firmly or less unmistakably, supplicate her Majesty to grant her royal license that Convocation might proceed to business; God grant that in her wisdom, and in her justice, the Queen should grant that prayer. What, if she should be advised to refuse? What then was to be done? He would read the answer of Archbishop Wake:—

“I make no doubt but that it is duty, as well as wisdom, of a Christian king to consult of all these matters (which concern the state of the Church) with those who have the government of it committed to them by God; and neither obstinately to refuse the clergy liberty to assemble when they think it would be for the service of the Church and the benefit of religion to come together—not yet unreasonably require their attendance when there is nothing at all, or nothing of any consequence to be done by them. Should it so fall out that the Prince should neglect his duty in this particular, in that case I conceive it would be the duty of those who are the fathers and governors of it to apply to him for his permission to come together—to remonstrate with humility, but yet with Christian freedom too—to consider the necessities of the Church, the evils that are to be remedied, and the reasons they have to hope that, by their assembling, they may provide some remedy for them, and to press him in the name of God, and in pursuance of that trust which the public has reposed in him, to give a favourable answer to their requests. Should we be denied all liberty of these assemblies, though the governors and fathers of the Church should with all their care and interest endeavour to obtain it, should the Prince so far abuse his prerogative as to turn it not only to the detriment, but to the ruin of all true religion and morality among us, and thereby make it absolutely necessary for something extraordinary to be done to preserve both; in such a case of extremity, the Bishops and pastors of the Church must resolve to hazard all in the discharge of their duty; they must meet, consult, and resolve on such measures as, by God's assistance, they think these unhappy circumstances to require, and be content to suffer any loss, or to run any danger for their so doing.”

They must meet, if not to legislate, to deliberate, and when he thought of the vast weighty matters which must come before Convocation so assembled, when he looked round and saw who and what manner of men were present, he might well shrink from undertaking the office they had that day imposed upon him. But it was their pleasure, and he accepted it, and he pledged himself to attend every time Convocation assembled, so long as God gave him strength to do so; and when increasing years brought increasing infirmity, and he was unable to attend, he would not wait for the natural death of Convocation, but he would resign at once the office into their hands to elect an able and a better man to discharge the duties which he prayed God might be more onerous, and the office, of course, would then be far more honourable.

The Chancellor said—Is it, then, the choice of the clergy, having voice in this election, that the Rev. James Duke Coleridge, Dr. of Civil Law, and Vicar of Thorverton, and the Rev. Edward Harold Brown, Vicar of Kenwyn, Cornwall, be duly elected proctors to represent the clergy of this diocese in the Lower House of Convocation? (General murmurs of assent.) I consider the election unanimous, and pronounce them duly elected.

The return was then handed round for signatures. The Rev. Mr. Hill asked if he, as a licensed curate, could sign the return.

The Chancellor thought the question ought by no means to be left in an uncertainty, because they knew the licensed curates were a very different body now from what they were years ago. There being no special custom in the diocese to the contrary, he was bound to decide that licensed curates had no voice in this election. It would be better, as this was not a

contested election, that no such signatures should appear, which might be made a precedent, and lead to inconvenience.

The Rev. Mr. Hill wished to know if he was to understand the Chancellor had authority to prevent his putting his signature.

The Chancellor said, as presiding there, he was bound to conduct the proceedings to the best of his judgment, and, therefore, he had that authority. There was little doubt of the question being settled at once, as every one must feel its importance.

The Rev. A. Watson repeated the question, if it were competent for any one now to propose a petition. The Chancellor had no precedent for making that point the scene of a discussion of a wider nature than that for which they were assembled, and therefore, he could not admit any other subject.

The proceedings which had been conducted in a most amicable spirit here terminated.

On the same day the clergy of the archdeaconry of Sarum assembled at the Salisbury Cathedral, for the election of proctors. After a show of hands a poll was ordered by the Archdeacon, and the following gentlemen were declared duly elected:—The Rev. G. P. Loweth, M.A., Rector of Orcheston St. George, the Rev. Henry Caswell, M.A., Vicar of Figheldean.

On the same day the benefited clergy of the archdeaconry of Durham met in the parish church of St. Mary-le-Bow, in the City of Durham, for the election of proctors to attend the forthcoming Convocation of the Province of York. After the morning prayer the Venerable the Archdeacon of Durham proceeded to the business of the day by stating briefly the objects of the meeting, and the necessity that exists for the revival of the powers of Convocation, in order to meet the circumstances of the Church. The writ having been read, the Archdeacon invited any of the clergy to nominate candidates for the office of proctor. The Rev. J. A. Park, Rector of Elwick Hall, in a brief speech, proposed the Rev. T. L. Strong, Rector of Lodgefield, to be one of the proctors, and the Rev. T. H. Dyke, Rector of Longnewton, seconded the nomination. The Rev. H. Wardwell, Rector of Winton proposed the Rev. J. D. Eade, Vicar of Aycliffe, to be the other proctor, and the Rev. R. Webster, Vicar of Kelloe, seconded the nomination. The Archdeacon then put the names of the candidates to a show of hands for or against each, when both were unanimously accepted. The Rev. G. Skipsy then proposed for adoption a memorial addressed to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty would be graciously pleased to take steps for the revival of Convocation, and resting to the Church that independent action so essential to her wellbeing and success. The memorial was adopted with only one or two dissentients, and upon a resolution being moved to the effect that the Archdeacon should sign the memorial, as chairman, and on behalf of the meeting, it was unanimously agreed to. The Archdeacon then declared the business of the Synod concluded, and dismissed the clergy who afterwards partook of his hospitality at a luncheon provided in the hall of the University. The following clergy were present: Archdeacon Thorp, Rev. J. D. Eade, Hon., and Rev. J. Grey, Rev. T. L. Strong, Rev. T. H. Dyke, Rev. J. A. Park, Rev. H. Peters, Rev. G. Skipsy, Rev. J. Brown, Rev. J. H. Browne, Rev. J. Archer, Rev. G. Degard, Rev. J. Collins, Rev. H. G. Liddle, Rev. R. Webster, Rev. J. Raine, Rev. H. B. Carr, Rev. C. Carr, Rev. Cath. Carr, Rev. J. D. Shafto, Rev. T. Chevallier, Rev. J. L. Law, Rev. C. Duberley, Rev. W. Brown, Rev. F. B. Thomps. n. Rev. H. Barret, Rev. H. Wardwell, &c.—*Durham Advertiser.*

On the same day the benefited clergy of the archdeaconry of Stafford, having been summoned by advertisement to attend and elect two proctors, who in their turn are, in conjunction with two proctors from each of the other archdeaconries, to elect two proctors to represent the diocese of Lichfield in Convocation, assembled in some number in the chancel of St. Mary's parish church, at Stafford, after morning service.

In the absence of Archdeacon Hodson, the Rev. W. E. Caldwell the Rector of Stafford, took the chair. There were also present the Hon. and Rev. Hervey C. Bagot, the Revs G. Buckridge, Lewis Bagot, C. H. Atkins, J. Finch Smith, C. W. Stocker, Jer. Barnes, C. S. Roys, Benj. Webb, E. Harland, H. J. Pye, J. Dakeyne, W. W. King, Benj. Pideck, W. Highton, A. Scaton, Jos. Salt, G. Mather, C. E. Broadbent, W. Hutchinson, W. Webb, J. H. Theodosius, W. Hides, J. M. Lowe, C. B. Jackson, F. J. Blackburne, G. Fraser, H. T. Brandon, P. Maitland, S. Plant and R. B. Baker.

Mr. Salt, the banker of Stafford, Mr. J. H. Smith, of the Oxford Circuit, and other laymen were present in the chancel aisle. The letter mandatory having been read.

The Rev. Dr. Stocker, Rector of Draycote-le-Moors proposed the Rev. Edward John Justinian Edwards the incumbent of Trettonham, who was seconded by the Hon. & Rev. Hervey Bagot, the Rector of Blythfield.

The Rev. C. H. Atkins, Rector of Marscyne Midway, proposed the Rev. George Murray, the Rector of Handsworth who was seconded by the Rev. George Buckridge, Master of St. John's Hospital Lichfield.

The Rev. J. Osmond Dakeyne, Rector of Wolverhampton, who said he rose for the purpose of putting a third clergyman in nomination, observed that though the clergy of this archdeaconry had done nothing in the election of their proctors since 1819, at which time they were only one hundred and fifty at the most in number, yet he was disappointed that now that they numbered (as he believed) two hundred and fifty-four, only about thirty should have assembled that day. And he must solemnly protest against this meeting being turned into a mere farce, as would be the case if the clergy only assembled to elect two persons, whose names were cut and dried beforehand, as the preliminary election of proctors was, in his opinion, even more important than the proceedings of Convocation in London. He had intended to have nominated the Rev. W. Broadbent, but being perfectly satisfied with the two proctors proposed, and having had this opportunity of speaking, he should not do so.

The Rev. J. Finch Smith, Rector of Aldridge, inquired why all the priests in the archdeaconry were not summoned.