

The Rev. Ernest Hawkins, B. D., returned thanks. He had been twenty years a Fellow of the Society, and was now about to break off that connexion. He had been happy in the period of his Fellowship, and was now happy in the period of his separation. (Cheers.)

The Rev. Mr. Sewell said grace, and the company dispersed.

Imperial Parliament.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

WEDNESDAY, June 23.

COLONIAL CHURCH BILL.

We now give the debate on Mr. Gladstone's resolution mentioned in our last week's postscript. On the motion of the right honourable gentleman the house went into committee on Colonial Ecclesiastical Laws, and he was about to explain the immediate object of his resolution, when—

"SIR J. PAKINGTON, interrupting him, asked how the subject came on as an order of the day instead of a motion?"

"MR. GLADSTONE replied, it was by a point of form, and in consequence of a previous order of the house."

"THE CHAIRMAN observed, that on reference to the book it appeared by the minutes of proceedings that the committee was fixed for this day."

"MR. GLADSTONE said he believed the course he had pursued was strictly regular. The object he had was to be enabled now to do that which he could have done had the bill been read a second time, when he could have moved a committee *pro forma*, in order to introduce certain amendments so that the measure could be considered in its best form. The change of intention on the part of the Government towards the bill had altered his position, but, considering the pressure on the Government, he had not pressed the second reading at the time. Meantime, he was glad to find the subject had attracted considerable notice, and that it had become of the greatest interest to the colonies, and he hoped there would be an unanimous feeling on the part of the house that the bill should go forth to them in the best possible form. It had been admitted, without a dissentient voice, that it had become necessary to have some legislation to devise a mode of management for ecclesiastical matters in the colonies, and that principle was asserted most distinctly and positively by the Secretary for the Colonies, who had pointed out very fairly the reasons why this had become necessary. There were two modes of obtaining this object. They might, by positive Parliamentary enactment, originate a working system of ecclesiastical machinery in the colonies, and, by ecclesiastical courts, synods, or conventions, give them the power to pass regulations for the government of the Church, or they might remove the doubts and the disabilities which at present had the effects of restriction, and which placed matters in such a maze of confusion as to render it impossible for the parties to move in any practical direction, and to leave them to make provisions as circumstances seemed to require. The latter was the course he proposed to pursue, and he was perfectly convinced it was that which the house would early in the ensuing session adopt. On a former occasion the Secretary for the Colonies had used words which, whether they were his own or those of the Primate of the Church, had a very ominous sound. They were, in effect, that it would not be difficult to frame a measure on the basis of the Church Discipline Act, passed ten or twelve years ago, which would answer all the proposed objects."

"SIR J. PAKINGTON—They were not my words."

"MR. GLADSTONE—They were of great importance, whether they were the words of the Secretary for the Colonies or of the Primate, and he adverted to them because he wished to protest at the earliest moment against any such measure. No British House of Commons would ever agree to such a piece of interference with the domestic regulation of the colonies, and, though it might lie within the range of the speculative omnipotence of Parliament, it was a thing which would never come to pass. The sense of the house had been distinctly expressed in favour of passing a permissive bill, and the elaborate statement of the Secretary for the Colonies had been so much calculated to raise misapprehension on the subject that it was necessary he should briefly advert to it. He had urged two main objections to the bill—first, that we had no adequate information from the colonies, and could not distinctly tell what their wishes might be on the subject, and he had especially and specifically referred to a letter from the Metropolitan of Australia, the Bishop of Sydney, to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he appears to contemplate a series of conferences with the laity, &c., on which to found suggestions for the management of the Colonial Church. He had heard the honourable gentleman urge that objection with surprise, because he had told the right honourable gentleman he (Mr. Gladstone) was already in possession of the wishes of the Bishop of Sydney from private sources, and that they had been published to the world at the conference held by the Bishop in 1850, in the minutes of which the Bishop and clergy of the colony distinctly expressed a desire that Parliament would enable them to set about the management of their own concerns. He asked the Secretary for the Colonies to lay on the table the Bishop's letter, and, with the kind concurrence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the right hon. gentleman had acceded to his request. He must confess he found with some surprise there was a passage in the letter which the right hon. gentleman had not quoted—(hear, hear, from Sir J. Pakington,) which was entirely of a contrary effect to the passage quoted by him if the latter was taken alone, though the right hon. gentleman might not have perceived the contrariety. The Secretary for the Colonies had made three other objections to the bill, which he said was so worded that it was difficult to affirm what was its effect—that it would place the Church of England in a state of dominance that would break the Church of England in the colonies into a number of small separate churches, and that it destroyed the supremacy of the Crown. Now, he greatly regretted the exaggerated tone of the observation of the right hon. gentleman—a tone so exaggerated that every member in the house would have been entitled to say to the right hon. gentleman—'If this enactment be so preposterous, and have all the mischievous effects you say, how is it possible Government could have ever consented to the second reading?' As to the state of dominance in which the bill would place the Church, the hon. baronet (Sir R. Inglis) rose half an hour after the hon. member spoke, and, with much greater reason, objected to the bill, because it would reduce the Church of England to the legal level of dissenting denominations. The right hon. gentleman, indeed, contradicted

himself in the very objection, because, after complaining of the first clause for placing the Church in a state of dominance, when he came to the fourth clause, which provided the regulations made by the Colonial Church should have no other power or effect than the regulations made by other religious bodies, he declared the effect of it was to neutralise the first and to reduce it to a cypher. The right hon. gentleman said the bill would break up the Church into several separate churches, because it had a tendency to place in the hands of the Bishops, clergy, and laity of the Colonial Church, subject to Parliamentary restriction, the management of their affairs; and he proved the separation would take place by quoting the statements of the Colonial Bishop, clergy, and laity, and by showing they all agreed in the maintenance of their connection with the Church of England; therefore the effect of giving them power over their own affairs, and to carry out their own wishes, would be to destroy the connection which they desired to maintain. If apprehensive of danger, then he said let them insert the restrictions; if not apprehensive of danger, let them leave the bill with as few restrictions as they pleased. He wished the house to understand the principle on which he proceeded, because he proposed to leave the provisions of the bill as they stood originally, with the exception of those which related to missions in foreign lands—that was, he proposed to leave the doctrine of supremacy to be inserted as it stood in the Thirty-nine Articles. He took that course because they were not now providing a legislative system for the Church in the colonies, or saying whether the oath of supremacy should be taken in the colonies or not, but were inserting in the bill a series of disabling proceedings. Now, the principle he laid down with respect to disabling provisions was, as he thought, elementary. It was this, that they ought not to disable the Colonial Church from doing anything except that which would be mischievous or hurtful for them to do. How could he show a case of necessity for taking the oath of supremacy? The taking of the oath of supremacy might be a very proper measure. It was so as far as England was concerned, where it had been a great public and national question ever since the Reformation; nay, more, which had been at that time and in the reign of Elizabeth the hinge on which the differences between reformed and unreformed Churches had turned. It governed the tenour of our law, and, as our Church was established, the doctrine applied itself to all that took place in the Church; but the taking of the oath of supremacy in the colonies was an entirely different question. Did he say they should have no oath of supremacy? Certainly not. But he said the house should leave them to consider whether they would assert the doctrine of supremacy as it was asserted in the Thirty-nine Articles, or assert it in the shape of an oath. That was the principle on which he wished to proceed in all colonial matters, civil or ecclesiastical. It was this principle—that everything which could not be distinctly shown to be a question of imperial interest should be left to be managed by the colonists themselves. It was true that those who condescended to drag party feeling, and especially religious party cries, into any question, could always execute these objects with great facility; but the question was, whether they could show a case of imperial necessity to compel persons, after they had, with all the solemnity with which they asserted their belief in the Christian faith, declared the doctrine of supremacy, to take an oath to the same effect. There was another point to which the attention of the house should be called, though it had not been noticed by the Secretary of State. The question had been raised whether the regulation of these bodies, which might be constituted as synods or conventions, should be subject to the veto of the Crown. That was a question which the house ought to have clearly and fairly before it, when they came to determine the exact nature of the enactment of the bill. He had not inserted such a provision, because he thought it would probably be held by the colonists to be attended with a great deal of practical inconvenience, and likewise it might cause dissatisfaction, particularly in Canada, where the principle of religious equality was strongly enforced, as it would seem to establish such a footing of favour between the Church in the colonies and the Church at home as would constitute a ground of discontent. He had stated his opinion, and thought the bill better without this provision, because it would clearly call into existence functions of the Crown which did not exist at present. On the other hand, he fully admitted that such a provision, if it should be thought fit to introduce it, was perfectly consistent with the principle of the bill, and it would be, no doubt, patiently submitted to by the members of the Church in the colonies. The chief relation between the Crown and the Church in the colonies was the relation of patronage, and principally that patronage exercised through the medium of the Secretary of State in reference to Bishops. He proposed to preserve to the Crown that real power, and that the bill should not be held to put an end to any such relation, unless with the consent of the Crown. The main reason for which he had been anxious to have an opportunity of correcting the reprint of the bill was this;—There was nothing to be altered which, in his view, touched the principle of the bill; but he admitted that both the right honourable gentleman the Secretary of State and the learned gentleman the member for Aylesbury (Mr. Bethell), who approached this subject in a spirit of great fairness and candour, had alleged that the bill would place positive legislative power in the hands of the Church in the colonies. Now that was a question turning entirely upon the force and effect of certain words. His (Mr. Gladstone's) object would be to preclude any such effect, and for that reason he had altered the form of the first clause of the bill, which contained the substance and principle of the whole measure, and, instead of saying that it should be lawful for the Bishop, with the clergy and laity, to make such and such regulations, he proposed to enact that no statute, law, usage, or other authority of the United Kingdom should be construed to extend, or should extend, to prevent any such Bishop of any diocese in the colonies from doing the same things which were contemplated by the former clause of the bill. His object was simply that this should be a relieving and a permissive bill, and he therefore very willingly agreed to the alteration to which he had alluded. Though it seemed to him but a trivial change, yet there were others who thought that legislative power was conveyed to the Church by the former words, and who looked upon this as a very important change in the phraseology. Another change suggested was one making a distinct reservation as to the powers of the colonial legislature. He did not think himself that such a reservation was absolutely necessary, but, at the same time, it might obviate and prevent doubts as to the object of the bill if the powers of the colonial legislature were reserved in express terms. He proposed, therefore, to end the clause with a proviso subjecting the regulations and canons of the synods to the authority of the local legislature, and to such provisions as they might think proper to enact, with one excep-

tion. He did not think it necessary to mention any other of the changes which he proposed to make. The right honourable gentleman and others took exception to the use of the phrase, 'declared members of the Church of England.' That objection, in his mind, was a more reasonable one from any gentleman than from the head of the Colonial Department, because, while to us in England it was a phrase of strange sound, in many of the colonies it had an established, fixed, and legal meaning; and moreover, it was the only word which had such a meaning. In Van Diemen's Land and other places, where it was the practice in taking the census of the colonies to note down the religious persuasion of the inhabitants, the phrase afforded the best legal and practical mode of showing to whom the bill was intended to be applicable. With respect to other colonies, of course, the words have no practical effect; and, therefore, instead of saying 'declared members of the Church of England,' he would insert the words, 'being declared or bona fide members of the Church of England.' That was a phrase adopted in some acts of Parliament in the United Kingdom, and perhaps, it was the best phrase. He had nothing else to state, except that by a clerical error New Zealand having been omitted from the schedule, he proposed to insert New Zealand in this bill, and to make provision for minor dependencies in the colonies in the schedule. He wished to place this bill in precisely the same position as the former bill at present stood in—that it should be reprinted, laid upon the table of the house, and sent to the colonies in a correct, instead of an incorrect form. Although he regretted that there could not be legislation on the subject in the present Parliament, yet it was best to proceed cautiously in this matter. Jealousy and scruple on such a subject were not, on the whole, unwise; and when the house came to consider the subject in the next Parliament, they would approach it with a fuller acquaintance with the facts, and a fuller knowledge of the wishes of the colonies than if at the present moment they had proceeded to pass this measure into law. He begged to move the following resolution:—

"That the chairman be directed to move the house, that leave be given to bring in a bill to relieve Bishops, clergy, and laity, in the colonies, in communion with the Church of England, in respect to legal doubts or disabilities affecting the management of their Church affairs."

"SIR J. PAKINGTON.—In the speech which it was my duty to make to the house some weeks ago I then stated with the greatest sincerity (and I now beg to repeat the statement) that I did not entertain a moment's doubt that the right hon. gentleman the member for the University of Oxford in bringing forward this bill had been actuated by the purest and the most conscientious motives. I do not know anything in my public life which has given me more pain than to feel that, when driven by the responsible condition in which I stood to comment upon a measure introduced by the right hon. gentleman, and to comment upon language used by him, I had given the right hon. gentleman personal offence. I thought I had exhausted courtesy in my communications with the right hon. gentleman, and was so far from wishing to evince towards him other than the utmost good feeling, that when I believed myself bound to make a public exposure of the bill in this house, having previously had three private communications with the right hon. gentleman, I wrote to him in the kindest terms on the very day when I was to address the house on the subject, expressing my great regret at being compelled to speak against the bill, but adding that I did so without any unkind or personal feeling. The right hon. gentleman has alluded to-day to those who would speak and condescend to bring to their aid party cries, and religious party cries, in order to obtain an object. Now, I should wish to know from the right hon. gentleman whether that expression was intended to apply to me?"

"MR. GLADSTONE.—The right hon. gentleman has not correctly quoted the expressions I used. I spoke simply of the fact of the introduction of party cries into the debate. I said nothing about the perverse or insincere introduction of those cries; I spoke of their unnecessary and gratuitous introduction."

"SIR J. PAKINGTON.—The words of the right hon. gentleman were, 'speaking, and condescending to bring religious party cries into the debate only to obtain an object.'"

"MR. GLADSTONE.—No, not 'to obtain an object.'"

"SIR J. PAKINGTON.—The answer of the right hon. gentleman to my question has been very indistinct, but this I do say, that if the right hon. gentleman intended to apply those terms to me, there is no describing the indignation with which I utterly repudiate them. (Cheers.) I will now pass to the remarks of the right hon. gentleman, and I must say that I think the general course pursued by him has been one of considerable inconvenience, involving also a considerable deviation from Parliamentary practice. We have heard of protracted debates, but so protracted a debate as this Parliament has never known. The right hon. gentleman moved the second reading of the bill in the month of April. He did so at a time when I remonstrated against his proceeding, on the ground that it was impossible for me then to address the house on the subject, and inasmuch as, from the extreme importance of this bill, it was absolutely necessary as a matter of duty, and not of inclination, that I should reply to the speech of the right hon. gentleman. But the right hon. gentleman was deaf to that appeal."

"MR. GLADSTONE.—You were then going to support the bill on its second reading."

"SIR J. PAKINGTON.—The right hon. gentleman is utterly mistaken in supposing that I ever supported the bill. So strong, indeed, was my feeling on the subject, that while I knew perfectly well the good intentions of the right hon. gentleman in introducing the measure, and agreeing to a certain extent with its principle—though I was at first willing to allow the second reading to pass, it would have been with the most distinct understanding that I could, as a minister of the crown, allow the bill to go no further; and it was not till after anxious consultations with the most eminent legal authorities that I was brought to the conclusion (in which I did not stand alone) that, notwithstanding the extent to which I did and still do concur in the principle of the bill, it was inconsistent with my duty to consent even to the second reading. In spite of my remonstrances on the occasion to which I am referring, the right hon. gentleman persisted in making his speech, which was entirely unreplicated by any minister of the crown; and when I was at last in a position to make a reply, the right hon. gentleman came down to the house and said, 'No! we won't have a debate now; we will put it off for a fortnight.' [Mr. Gladstone—I beg to deny that distinctly.] At all events, the right hon. gentleman wrote to me a letter on the morning of the day on which I made the speech, and told me that, as I was going to object to the bill, he should postpone the debate for another fortnight."

DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

The Queen's Speech.

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"I am induced, by considerations of public policy, to release you at an earlier period than usual from your Legislative duties."

"The zeal and diligence, however, with which you have applied yourselves to your Parliamentary labours, have enabled me, in this comparatively short session, to give my assent to many measures of high importance, and, I trust, of great and permanent advantage."

"I receive from all foreign powers assurances that they are animated by the most friendly dispositions towards this country, and I entertain a confident hope that the amicable relations happily subsisting between the principal European States may be so firmly established, under Divine Providence, as to secure to the world a long continuance of the blessings of peace."

"To this great end my attention will be unremittingly directed."

"I rejoice that the final settlement of the affairs of Holstein and Schleswig, by the general concurrence of the powers chiefly interested, has removed one cause of recent difference, and of anxiety."

"The amicable termination of the discussions which have taken place between the Sublime Porte and the Pacha of Egypt afford a guarantee for the tranquility of the East, and an encouragement to the extension of commercial enterprise."

"The refusal on the part of the King of Ava of redress justly demanded for insults and injuries offered to my subjects at Rangoon, has necessarily led to an interruption of friendly relations with that Sovereign."

"The promptitude and vigour with which the Governor-General of India has taken the measures thus rendered unavoidable, have merited my entire approbation; and I am confident that you will participate in the satisfaction with which I have observed the conduct of the naval and military forces—European and Indian—by whose valour and discipline the important captures of Rangoon and Martaban have been accomplished, and in the hope that I entertain that these signal successes in so many cases may lead to an early and an honourable peace."

"Treaties have been concluded by my naval Commanders with the King of Dahomey and all the African Chiefs, whose rule extends along the Bight of Benin, for the total abolition of the slave trade, which is at present wholly suppressed upon that coast."

"I have had great satisfaction in giving my assent to the measure which you have wisely adopted for the organisation of the militia—a constitutional force which, being limited to purposes of internal defence, can afford no just ground of jealousy to neighbouring powers, but which, in the event of unforeseen disturbance of my foreign relations, would at all times contribute essentially to the protection and security of my dominions."

"GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—"

"I thank you for the liberal provisions which you have made for the exigencies of the public service."

"The expenditure which you have authorised shall be applied with a due regard to economy and efficiency."

"The recent discoveries of extensive gold-fields have produced in the Australian Colonies a temporary disturbance of society requiring prompt attention. I have taken such steps as appeared to me most urgently necessary for the mitigation of this serious evil. I shall continue anxiously to watch the important results which must follow from these discoveries."

"I have willingly concurred with you in an Act which, by rendering available to the service of those Colonies the portion arising within them of the hereditary revenue placed at the disposal of Parliament on my accession to the throne, may enable them to meet their necessarily increased expenditure."

"MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

"I have gladly assented to the important Bills which you have passed for effecting reforms long and anxiously desired in the proceedings of the Superior Courts of Law and Equity, and, generally for improving the administration of justice."

"Every measure which simplifies the forms and diminishes the delay and expense of legal proceedings, without introducing uncertainty of decision, impairing the authority of the Courts, or lowering the high standard of the Judicial Bench, is a valuable boon conferred upon the community at large."

"I hope that the measures which you have adopted for promoting extramural interment of the dead and for improving the supply of water, may be found effectual for the remedy of evils the existence of which has long been a reproach to this great metropolis, and may conduce to the health and comfort of its inhabitants."

"The extension of popular rights and legislative powers to my subjects resident in the colonies is always to me an object of deep interest, and I trust that the representative institutions which, in concert with you, I have sanctioned for New Zealand, may promote the welfare and contentment of the population of that distant but most interesting Colony, and confirm their loyalty and attachment to my crown."

"It is my intention, without delay, to dissolve this present Parliament, and it is my earnest prayer that, in the exercise of the high functions which, according to our free Constitution, will devolve upon the several constituencies, they may be directed by an all-wise Providence to the selection of Representatives whose wisdom and patri-