

## THE SYNOD OF HURON AND MR. WRIGHT.

[To the Editor of the Church Guardian.]

DEAR SIR,—Your contributor "Outis" has criticised the "Canon on Discipline," recently passed by the Diocesan Synod of Huron, as recorded in the CHURCH GUARDIAN of October 18th. Permit me to continue from the point where he leaves off. Quoting from your report, we find that a certain clergyman, the Rev. J. T. Wright, "persistently obstructed" the passage of the Canon in question. "Persistent obstruction" sounds bad, but perhaps Mr. Wright considered that he was only offering necessary, if firm, opposition to clauses oppressive and liable to be gravely misunderstood. He seems to have stood alone—the Athanasius of the Synod. So much the more need for persistency in his opposition. Substitute the words "firm opposition" for "persistent obstruction," and let the Huron clergy be glad that one man was found honest enough to say what he thought, and thoughtful enough to do his persistent best against a Canon which will place every Huron parson, hand and foot, mind and body, at the mercy of Bishops present and Bishops to come.

Look at the clause which Mr. Wright persistently obstructed, you members of the Synod, clerical and lay, now that you are returned from the excitement of debate, and the pleasure of passing Canons, to the quiet retreat and sounder judgment of rectory and home, to ask yourselves whether it might not have been better if Mr. Wright had been Messrs. Wright & Co., an extensive firm carrying on extensive business of firm opposition to this Clause III of your Canon on Discipline?

"Outis" has discussed the clause itself. Let us pass on to the way in which it seems to have been carried at the Synod:

"Mr. Wright drew attention to the fact that there was not a quorum of the laity present."

Now we are quite aware that a hard and fast line is not always drawn, nor can be, on these occasions, when, from various reasons, an exact quorum is not obtainable; but there is business and business, a time for relaxing a rule and a time for strictly enforcing it. Such a time and such business as this of the Huron Synod would seem to have demanded the careful judgment and vote of every member, and not merely of the legally-required quorum of voters necessary by Synodical law for the passing of any motion. The persistent obstructor was, therefore, right in judgment as in name, when he caused the house to be counted at such a grave crisis. But what was the result of the count?

"On a count being made, the laity was found to lack 30 of the required number 58."

Most excellently worded, Mr. Reporter! A neat way of expressing the fact that rather more than half the requisite number of laymen were absent! Considerably more than half of the whole number of the Synod! What shall we say of such parliamentary practice as this, amongst the Reverend Patres Conscripti of the Diocese of Huron? As for the lay fathers they are to be congratulated on having it in their power to boast that only a small proportion of them assisted at the process of buckling on this new clerical harness, wherein kicking-strap and blinker, curb and bit, are fashioned so carefully, that no clerical wearer can henceforth kick or bite, or indeed see or think, save at the discretion of his driver.

But the Bishop rises superior to all such petty details—

"His Lordship regretted this extremely."

"This"! What? That the Synod had been acting illegally and was on the high road to illegality continued? No, an it please you, but that Mr. Wright had drawn attention to the fact—

"He heartily sympathized with those who had spent their time and money in coming to the meeting and had it wasted this way."

Quite so, my lord! In future let the Special Committee which has to draw up another delib-er-able Canon of Discipline just spare the Synod all such useless expenditure by meeting your Lordship and a few well-selected friends and judicious voters, and passing laws and canons for the Diocese without troubling quorums or Synods or Laity, or an observant public inside or outside the Diocese of Huron.

"His Lordship hoped that the reverend gentleman would make it the subject of earnest prayer and endeavor in future to avoid interrupting or delaying the business of the Synod."

And what shall Mr. Wright do now? Go home and pray that he may sit foolishly silent whilst his common sense and desire for the good of his Diocese prompt him to oppose a measure contrary to both? or that he may no longer be oppressed with the gift of elementary arithmetical knowledge, but henceforth believe 28 to mean 30 more? or that he may be delivered from all Synods—at any rate in the Diocese of Huron? or that the Bishop thereof may learn to exercise his presidential functions without resorting to language which, had it been used by the Moderator of a dissenting assembly instead of a Bishop of the Catholic Church, would probably have been thought by the Right Reverend Prelate himself to savour largely of absurdity and cant?

After this pious finish to the discussion, and while poor Mr. Wright went to his prayers, the rest of the Synod seem to have dispersed quorum hunting. As to his Lordship, he doubtless retired to his study, and carefully investigated Clause III to see whether it might not be brought to bear, forthwith, upon the persistent obstructor of Clerical Discipline Acts. At 7.30 p. m., the hunt seems to have been so far successful that twenty trump laymen were brought in from 5 o'clock teas, or such other dissipations as may have tempted them away from the synodical benches. Still there was no quorum.

"His Lordship . . . was sorry to say that they still lacked ten laymen to make up the proper number. He would be very sorry to say anything offensive to the most fastidious person, but he deeply regretted that any one wearing the livery of the servants of Christ had been the means of putting the Synod to this great inconvenience."

Without laying claim to be "the most fastidious person" alluded to, we confess to a feeling of offence at the term employed by the Bishop of Huron to designate clergymen in general, and the Rev. Mr. Wright in particular. As livery is a badge of servitude, and the priest of God's Church is minister to, and therefore servant of, God's people, the term may be literally correct; but, used as his Lordship used it, in wrath and anger against a particular clergyman, it has an offensive sound, and suggests that he who wears this livery—by which his Lordship surely meant the sacerdotal vestments—must likewise be the humble and submissive servant of the Synod and its Bishop; and that the sin of putting the Synod to the "great inconvenience" of acting honestly according to its Constitution was a special sin, because the liveried offender was so liveried. In other words, that it would not have been so bad if Mr. Wright had been a layman. The lay brethren must have felt grateful to his Lordship as he drew this distinction between the "servants of Christ" and their own unliveried selves.

We know nothing of Mr. Wright. We accept the Report in the CHURCH GUARDIAN as accurate and complete, for want of any other. We write simply in the interests of the Church generally, which cannot benefit by such undignified and unjust behaviour as stands recorded in the Report we have criticised, any more than any diocese can benefit by such a Canon on Discipline as the Diocese of Huron has inflicted on its clergy. And if we have seemed to jest, there is a deep sorrow underlying our jesting—a sorrow which can be best expressed in a word of advice, which we venture to offer to the Bishop and Synod in question, viz, that next time they meet, it be with strictly closed doors, for the Church's sake, and for their own.

I am, dear sir, yours truly,

OUTIS SECUNDUS.

(Continued from page 2.)

some sense, of a Missionary character. The tide of influence that goes forth from the great centres of Christendom must be helping or retarding the progress of Christianity in the world. How many a missionary is hindered in his work by the character and conduct of his fellow countrymen. The heathen draw natural and inevitable inferences from the character of those nominal Christians who come among them. It is necessary therefore to the success of Missionary effort that we should seek to purify the centres of Christianity, and elevate

the masses. The great influence of women ought to be employed for this in the most effective manner possible. The refined and cultivated must condescend, and help upwards their sisters of a lower class. He could not add to what the Bishop-Coadjutor had said as to organized women's work. In this age of utility, surely it is an acknowledged fact that the sick should be nursed, that the young should be taught, by those duly qualified and trained. This cannot be attained without organization and rules, more strict or less strict according to circumstances. By proper organization all women may find an opening for whatever work for Christ they are capable of doing well, in accordance with their own natural aptitudes and inclinations. In the United States there was at first a strong prejudice against sisterhoods, but after experience of their working, the decision of the Church was unanimously in their favour. He would deprecate the idea that he considered the mothers as occupying a lower sphere of usefulness in the Church. None were so deserving of honour as devout and faithful mothers. None could so effectually mould the character of the Church's children. Look at the mother of Samuel, of Timothy, of St. Augustine. Every Christian mother might co-operate with missionary effort by encouraging the children's missionary boxes, teaching their little ones to tithe their pence, and to make free-will offerings of the fruits of their self-denial. To help would be multiplied in thousands of families all over the land. He gave his experience as a boy in Halifax, when he was a Methodist, and collected from everybody on the principle that everybody ought to be a Methodist. Now we of the English Church have the right to make this claim on her behalf.

The Rev. T. Neales said he had the honour to represent a Parish as to which his Lordship, in long past years, used to shrug his shoulders when its name came up, and say, "Ah! Woodstock again!" Perhaps he does so now. He would speak a little about his own Parish. There was a tradition there of a time when a concert was held in the church for some church purpose, and a platform for the singers and performers on bass viols and other instruments was erected over the top of the Communion Table. When he himself entered on his work he might probably have been called a ritualist, his ritualism consisting in the change of vestments demanded by his preaching in the black gown. In Japan, after the exclusion or destruction of the Christians, when the door had been shut inexorably against Christian missions, the Japanese, to shew their hatred of the Gospel, appointed a day on which annually to trample on the Cross, the symbol of Christ's religion. He believed that almost as bitter a prejudice had once existed against the Cross in Woodstock; but thank God it had almost entirely passed away. He spoke of the increase of Church members in his Parish. He told also of that bitter and terrible night, nearly a year ago, when, before six o'clock in the morning, the raging fire had swept clean away the old church in which they had worshipped so many years, the new church, on which a large amount of money, time and labour had been expended, and their Sunday School house, as well as his own home. Now they had regained nearly all that they had lost, and he desired to express his thanks for much brotherly sympathy and help, especially from the Rector of Trinity Church, who had himself passed through a similar trial. He spoke of the necessity of helping home and foreign missions in order to strengthen our own parishes. At our ordination we were pledged to seek the dispersed sheep of Christ's flock, and warned of the judgment which would follow our neglect. To be evangelical we must be also evangelistic, for we must not narrow the meaning of broad words like this. If we would defend ourselves we must be aggressive. He spoke of the wonderful liberality of the large Parish of All Saints, Clifton, England, where, out of an offertory of \$30,000 a year, there were 27,000 small coins. From this one Parish comes a third part of all that is given to the S. P. G. in the whole Diocese of Gloucester and Bristol. He spoke also of the liberality of the late Rev. Father Lowder's Parish to the cause of missions. He taught his people to give with prayer.