

sion, unwilling to make unnecessary demands on that time which so many can ill spare, and believing that God prefers mercy to sacrifice, are influenced by the consideration that the ordinary course of business will be interrupted on that day, and the great body of the people thrown idle; but to prevent misapprehension, they think it necessary to protest that, while owning the duty of subjection to civil rulers in all their lawful commands, we do not recognise their authority to decide as to a question of religious duty, or to enjoin the performance of a piece of divine worship, under pain not only of their displeasure, but of God's, or to fix the time when and prescribe the manner how, it ought to be performed. It might be becoming for a Government to request the prayers of all Christian churches within its pale on so awful a crisis; but it is as incongruous for civil functionaries to command them, on the pain of Divine displeasure, to offer up prayers, as it would be for ecclesiastical functionaries to prescribe to them, under the same high penalty, the course they ought to follow to put down the mutiny. There is the greater necessity of making such a protest, as after a phraseology less offensive to those who conscientiously deny the right of the civil power to interfere in matters properly religious had been adopted, there is in the present proclamation a recurrence to the use of terms which had been so strongly and generally reprobated, and a re-assertion of an authority which no principled Dissenter can ever acknowledge."

#### EXETER HALL SERVICES PROHIBITED.

[Our readers are aware that some time ago special services were conducted in this Hall on behalf of the working classes, bishops and other distinguished persons in the Establishment officiating, and great crowds attending. It appears, however, that the Rector of the Parish has interfered to prevent the resumption of these meetings. In addition to the legal order he has issued, he has also addressed a letter to the Bishop of London in explanation and vindication of his conduct.]

The occasional services at Exeter Hall were to have been resumed on Sunday, 8th November, but on Friday a notice was issued by Mr. Wilbraham Taylor, the secretary to the committee for the promotion of these services, signed by the Earl of Shaftesbury, stating that a peremptory order had been issued by the Rev. E. G. Edouart, the rector of the parish, prohibiting their resumption; and that, in consequence, the service announced to take place would not be held. The committee further intimated that they would not allow the matter to rest, but would take immediate steps to have it decided by a competent legal tribunal. The notice of postponement having only transpired on Saturday morning, a large number of the public were not aware of the fact, and consequently, from half-past five to seven P. M. on Sunday, there was a continuous stream to Exeter Hall. A large bill on the front gates, dated November 6, announced that in consequence of a notice of prohibition received on the previous day from the Incumbent of the parish, the services would be suspended until the legal question was settled. The notice was signed by Lord Shaftesbury as Chairman of the Special Service Committee. Each successive throng that came up, read the bill in blank astonishment, and moved away. "We did not," says the *Record*, "observe that any of the disappointed multitude turned towards the parish church, St. Michael's, in the adjoining street. The congregation there consisted of about 250 persons, of whom 27, two of them children, occupied the 'free seats,' and may therefore be classed as 'working classes,' of whom perhaps 2,000 or 3,000 had been shut out of the Hall. We are informed that the attendance at Mr. Edouart's church was never better than during the services at Exeter Hall last summer."—*Christian Times*.

#### THE BISHOP OF NORWICH AND THE DISSENTERS.

Dr. Pelham, the newly appointed Bishop of Norwich, has issued the following circular, which is said to have given great offence to many High Church clergy of his diocese: "The Bishop of Norwich requests the attendance of the clergy and Nonconformist ministers, together with the churchwardens and other lay officers of the churches and chapels of the city, at the Palace, on Thursday, 17th September, at four o'clock, to consider how far it may be feasible or expedient to hold a special service in all the places of worship in the city, as an opportunity for united prayer and humiliation before God in connection with the present disastrous events in India."—*English Paper*.—[Very few of the clergy attended, and the catholic proposal of the worthy Prelate had to be abandoned.]