

Of the Meeting, viz., the Rev. C. Bancroft, M. A., and G. Pyke, Esq. At first it was proposed to give directions to this Committee to frame a Bill, which might be presented to the Legislature for their approval. But this being afterwards thought premature on our part, as it was necessary, in order to be effectual, that any legislation for this purpose should be general, and not the act of any single Diocese; the Committee were directed to deliberate carefully upon the matter; and as soon as they were prepared with a Report, recommending any definite course of action, I was to call the members of the general meeting together again to consider it. Early in February, I left Montreal on a Confirmation tour; and soon after, we heard that Mr. Gladstone had introduced a Bill into the House of Commons in England, on this very subject; we were anxious to learn the contents of this Bill, as it would materially assist the Committee in their work. It was debated in Parliament, and withdrawn. Another Bill was afterwards introduced by the same member, and ordered to be printed on the 25th of June; soon after which Parliament was dissolved. I was again absent on a Confirmation tour during the greater portion of June, July, and some of August; and the attention of all of us was also deeply occupied by the effects of two desolating fires that occurred in this city in the course of last summer, destroying £500,000 worth of property, and rendering upwards of 10,000 of the inhabitants houseless. Towards the latter end of August I received from the Right Honourable Sir John Pakington, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, the following letter:—

Downing Street, 30th July, 1852.

MY LORD.—As your Lordship must naturally feel much interest in the debates of last Session in the House of Commons upon the Bill brought in by Mr. Gladstone for regulating the Church of England in the Colonies, I forward to your Lordship some copies of the speech in which I stated my objections to Mr. Gladstone's measure.

I also send to your Lordship copies of the Bill, and of the altered Bill which Mr. Gladstone subsequently introduced, but which was not discussed in the House.

The subject will doubtless be renewed in the next Session of Parliament, and in the event of legislation upon it by Her Majesty's Government, it will afford me much assistance if your Lordship will favour me with your opinion upon the present state of the Church in your diocese, and what legislative changes you would suggest in order to place the Church in your diocese in a more efficient and satisfactory position.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient servant,
JOHN S. PAKINGTON.

The Lord Bishop of Montreal.

I stated in reply that "I had referred the above letter together with the accompanying documents, which I had the honor to receive, to a Committee which had been appointed in Jan. last, at a General Meeting of Clergy and Lay Delegates assembled in Montreal. That that Committee would make a Report to the Clergy and Laity, who would meet again in January next by adjournment; and I should lose no time in forwarding any Resolutions, which might be adopted on the subject.—But the subject was so important, and any false step would be so injurious, the members of the Colonial Church, if they could only feel assured, as we ought now to do, that the authorities at home were really anxious to assist us would I was certain deprecate any legislation until the matter was most fully weighed and digested; and for myself I should desire, if possible to have something more definite laid down in any Act passed by the imperial Legislature for our general guidance, as it would be extremely inconvenient and detrimental to the interests of the Church if, as I conceived under Mr. Gladstone's proposed Bill might be the case, each Diocese were to adopt a different system of internal discipline and rule."

Having summoned the committee appointed at a general meeting of the clergy and laity as mentioned above, the communication received by me from Sir John Pakington, with the accompanying documents, was taken into consideration at three successive meetings. Through some misconception of the Assistant Secretary of "the Church Society," he had summoned on the 3rd December all the gentlemen who had been originally on the first committee appointed by "the Church Society." And as Dr. Holmes, Col. Wilgress, John Abbott, Esq., and the Revs. E. Rogers and J. P. White were present when the committee met, it was resolved that they should act with us, to which I readily assented, as my only object was to give the matter a full and fair consideration. Meetings were subsequently held on the 7 and 13th Dec., and on the breaking up of the committee on the latter day, I addressed the following circular to all my clergy, together with a copy of Mr. Gladstone's Bill and the Report of the Committee.

MONTREAL, Dec. 31, 1852.

REV. AND DEAR SIR—I have received from Sir John Pakington a copy of a bill introduced into the House of Commons in June last, by Mr. Gladstone on the subject of the Colonial Church accompanied by a request that I would favour him with my opinion upon the present state of the Church in this Diocese, &c. I have thought it best to bring the subject under the consideration of the Committee which was appointed in January last by the Clergy and Laity, assembled in Diocesan Synod.

I have now to request that you will attend an adjourned meeting of that Diocesan Synod, to be held in National School Room, on Wednesday, 19th January next at twelve o'clock; and that you will communicate with the lay delegates from your mission and obtain if possible, their attendance also on that occasion, in order to receive the report of the Committee, of which I

now send you a copy, together with one of Mr. Gladstone's proposed bills; that we may be prepared to agree to some statement which may be forwarded to Sir John Pakington, in reply to his enquiry.

I remain, Rev. and Dear Sir,
Yours faithfully,
F. MONTREAL.

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Regular practice every Wednesday, at Eight P.M.—
Terms of admission, Performing Members 20s. per annum.
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WEEKLY CALENDAR.

Date.	1st Lesson.	2d Lesson.
Feb. 13, 1 SUN. IN LENT.	Gen. 19a	Mark 13.
" 14, Ember Day. Fast.	Num. 13	2 Cor. 9.
" 15,	" 16	Mark 14.
" 16, Ash Wednes. f	" 17	2 Cor. 10.
" 17,	" 20	Mark 15.
" 18, Ember Day. Fast.	" 21	2 Cor. 11.
" 19, Ember Day. Fast.	" 22	Mark 16.
" 20, 2 SUN. IN LENT.	" 23	2 Cor. 12.
	" 24	Luke 16.
	" 25	2 Cor. 13.
	" 26	Luke 1c.
	" 27	Gal. 1.
	" 28	Luke 2.
	" 29	Gal. 2.
	" 30	Luke 3.
	" 31	Luke 3.
	" 34	Gal. 3.

a To verse 30. b To verse 39.
c From verse 39.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The communications of "H. C. C." and "A Graduate" are unavoidably postponed till our next.

We do not consider that a newspaper is the proper place to discuss the queries transmitted to us by W. Sanders. They had better be submitted to the Rural Dean of the District, the Rev. B. Cronyn M.A., London.

The letter from the Rev. W. S. Darling, did not come to hand till we were on the eve of going to press, consequently cannot appear this week.

Canadian Churchman.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1853.

"LITURGICAL REFORM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND."

ARTICLE III, IN THE "NORTH BRITISH REVIEW," AUGUST, 1852.

Although the subject of Convocation does not come professedly within the compass of the above article, yet the Reviewer with such comfortable *sung froid* assumes as unquestionable, so many false premises on that important matter, that we should not be justified in passing them by, especially as they are the principal bulwarks behind which, notwithstanding their miserable unsoundness, the opponents of the revival of Convocation generally entrench themselves.

The Reviewer thus observes, "but if even charges had been desired by the Church at large, the machinery for accomplishing them was wanting. The Church of England came forth at the Reformation, like Minerva from the head of Jove, of full grown stature: no means for subsequent development were provided. The Parliament became the Legislature of the Church, and that legislature has ever shown itself to be most averse to entertaining any project for the modification of the Church." Again, referring to this same subject he says—"It is not probable that English Statesmen will ever consent to the creation of a synod whose authority should rival and, when firmly established, overrule that of Parliament. It is certain that in no case will they allow any ecclesiastical body to modify, by its own right the doctrines professed by the established Church. On the other hand, the dislike of applying to parliament for doctrinal reform, and the unwillingness of Parliament to entertain any such proposals, grows stronger every day. The Church is thus left to itself to take its chance of standing or falling in the form in which it was originally constructed at the Reformation." These extracts are amply sufficient to show the animus of this writers statements and feelings on the subject of Convocation; and to evidence how completely the "wish is father to the thought;" for that like most separatists, he fears, perhaps unconsciously, the renewed energy which, with the blessing of Almighty God, Convocation would be likely to infuse into the Church. But statements such as those we have quoted, especially when taken from publications making the professions of the N. British always produce in our minds painful feelings, because they are such palpable fallacies, that we can scarcely

suppose, but that a scholar must know them to be so, and yet in such case to make them, is surely inconsistent alike with the honour of a gentleman and the faith of a Christian. Let us examine them a little in detail.

I. First our Reviewer suffers no opportunity to escape of impressing his readers with the idea that the Church of England, like the Kirk of Scotland and the reformed Communities of the Continent, was a new creation which started into being at the time of the Reformation at the will of the British nation. Thus in the passages just quoted he tells us that "the Church of England came forth at the Reformation, like Minerva from the head of Jove, of full grown stature:" again he speaks of "the form in which it was originally constructed at the Reformation." Now the Irish bog trotter who has heard such statements, less classically propounded perhaps, from the lips of his priest, little better informed in such matters than himself, may be excused for believing them; but, from the pen of a North British Reviewer, they are absolutely worse than unpardonable. In what was the Church of England "originally constructed" at the Reformation? How was the creation of Henry VIII, the "love" we imagine in our Reviewer's mind, when he made this most inapt comparison. Was it in her Episcopate and Priesthood with its *succession unbroken* for nearly twice one thousand years? Was it in her ancient Liturgy, which this very writer describes as the precious tradition of the religious feeling and most exalted aspirations of many centuries of Christianity." Was it in that "much of the ancient Catholicism" which he himself states that (ultra) — Protestants "were startled to discover, had been retained in the Church of England? Or, will our Presbyterian friend say that the Church of England was "born" at the Reformation, because she then threw off the Romish novelties of papal supremacy, the idolatry of the blessed Virgin and the Saints, the coarse heresy of a natural corporeal presence in the holy Eucharist, &c. &c. Surely not, for then these heresies must have been as *old as Christianity in England*, a falsity which he will have to wish to uphold. Or, was it her connection with the State which made the Church a new creation in the reign of Henry the eighth? Why that connection had already existed in all its vigour for seven or eight hundred years!

But in truth to multiply arguments is useless! A more shamelessly dishonest statement was never uttered, than this,—that the Church of England was a new erection at the Reformation;—and the only possible apology for the North British reviewer is that he has heard the falsehood so often asserted, that he repeats the convenient slander without considering its oft refuted untruth. He is however most peculiarly unfortunate in his classic allusions, inasmuch as the very reformation of the Church, so far from coming complete or "full grown" from either the "head" or hands of Henry the eighth or any other "Jove," occupied a period of about thirty years, exclusive of those slighter alterations which took place some of them near a century later! Rather a longer parturition than that of Minerva! But the real reason why dissenters whether Romish or Protestant, so pertinaciously, and not very reputedly, adhere to statements, for which a well instructed "fourth form boy" might put them to the blush, is doubtless a fear of the influence of the Anglican Church should Her Apostolic, descent and Scriptural purity be acknowledged; and a trembling, almost undefined, sense of sin in having left her fold, should she indeed prove to be the only true branch of Christ's Holy Apostolic and Catholic Church in England. In a word, we include this part of the argument in the words of Palmer, and say, "I positively deny that the Church of England was founded by act of Parliament, and require the act to be produced which pretended to found it."

But further, the Reviewer says speaking of the time of the Reformation, "The parliament became the legislature of the Church." Here again is either disgraceful ignorance, or, still worse, wilful perversion. Surely a writer in the North British Review does not need to be informed, that Parliament had for ages been the secular legislature of the Church; just the same in principle that it was in the reigns of Henry the eighth and his children, and remained in some degree down to the recent repeal of the Test and Corporation Act, when, as its members ceased to be necessarily members of the Church it, of course, became unfit any longer to perform the functions of a Church legislature. But then this parliamentary legislation, it is to be strictly remembered, was, in all doctrinal and spiritual matters, ever carried on in connection with the more than coordinate equality of Convocation, which was the equally legal voice of the Bishops and Clergy. In proof that Parliamentary legislation

in Church matters, was no novelty, introduced at the Reformation, it may suffice to remind our readers of the facts, that in the reign of Richard the second, the clergy took the utmost pains to obtain a parliamentary act for the suppression of heresy, and that in the reign of Henry the eighth the Benefit of clergy was abridged by law. Indeed, as Palmer well observes, "it is certain that in all ages, from the time of Constantine, the greater part of the universal Church has been supported, and its regulations enforced, by the additional authority of Christian princes," and we may add by their governments, whether councils or parliaments. So much for the insinuation that parliament first "became" the legislature of the British Churches, at the time of the Reformation. To the Royal supremacy we shall have occasion to refer in a subsequent portion of this notice.

Most strange are the contradictions into which, even clever men fall when, giving themselves up to party zeal, they become too eager to make out a case! Thus the quotation we have given above, opens with the assertion that, in the Anglican Church, "the machinery for accomplishing" even desirable changes, "was wanting;" and yet in the next line he brings it as an accusation against the Church that "the Parliament became her legislature!" O! most logical reviewer! But our reviewer is not alone in his wisdom. The blind nonsense that has been written and spoken respecting Parliamentary interference in the affairs of the Church, even, while as yet in all Church legislation, Convocation was a co-ordinate council, as though such state enactments were subversive of the true Catholicity of the Anglican Church, has long as appeared to us most extraordinary; and as affording singular evidence of the fact, that it is much more easy to find fluent talkers and writers, and even learned men, than it is to meet with those who are wise,—capable of clear thinking, and sound reasoning. We know of no ecclesiastical legislation which appears to have come so near primitive practice and Catholic principle as that of England previous to the commencement of the last century. We name that period, because in 1707 the Act of Union with Scotland being completed, Presbyterians were then admitted into the British Legislature; when, also, it of course became to a considerable extent unfit to exercise its functions as a portion of the legislature of the Anglican Catholic Church. Before that Union took place, however, the members of the English Parliament being necessarily communicants of the Church, were most properly and correctly, considered as the representatives of the laity of the English Church; hence, as the Church of Christ is composed not only of the clergy but of the whole baptised faithful clergy and laity, it was right, it was the *only* right, that the laity should have an assenting voice in all her proceedings.

We say an "assenting voice," because as God has appointed His ambassadors,—Priests and Bishops, not only as the sacramental priests but also as the authorized guides and pastors of His people, and has promised to them His especial presence and grace in the fulfilment of their office, it is evident that from them must come the *initiative* in all matters, both of doctrine and discipline. But they having propounded what, in their holy wisdom, they believe to be the truth and righteousness of Christ, it remains for the faithful at large to receive or reject it. Thus does Palmer speak on this matter, "The position which I am about to maintain is, that the whole Catholic Church of Christ, consisting of pastors and people, and every portion of it, are divinely authorized to judge in questions of religious controversy." Again, speaking of the judgments of councils, he thus repeats the same principle, "the Church ultimately judges whether the judgment is in itself correct; and if the whole Church, in fact approves and acts on it, it becomes the judgment of the universal Church."

What is true of the whole is, of course, true of a part, circumstances being the same,—hence we see that so long as the Parliament of England was composed of churchmen, its sanction was necessary on every scriptural and Catholic principle, before the acts of Convocation could become binding on the consciences of English Christians. How disgraceful to their authors then, become the silly speeches we so often hear, respecting the Church of England being a "Parliament Church," &c. &c.; and certainly the North British Review has lowered its own character by giving its sanction to such slanders.

It is worthy of note that the Synod or Convocation of the Church in the United States, is based on exactly the same principles as that obtained in England, when its Church was happily governed by Convocation and Parliament conjointly. Only in the United States, the system is very far less satisfactorily carried out. There the secular influence is, in itself, very far greater, and is of course unsubjected to any royal supremacy.