

[EXTRACT.]

Lambeth, July 4, 1852.

With respect to the matter of greater doubt and difficulty, the inconvenience is apparent of the uncertain jurisdiction of the bishops, and the consequent imperfection of discipline in your remote provinces.

Whenever the subject of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the colonies has been mooted here, the absence of any specific scheme or proposal on the part of the colonial bishops, has been urged as a reason for postponing the consideration; and it certainly would not be competent for the authorities here to propose such enactments as might remedy the evils under which you labour, without a suggestion from you of the means of their removal.

The subject would then be considered by the Colonial Secretary and the ecclesiastical officers of the Crown; and such legislation might follow as would place you in a better condition for the right administration of church discipline.

(Signed) J. B. CAUSTAR.

The meeting was attended by thirty-five clergymen, assembled from all parts of the island, some having travelled a hundred and fifty miles to be present. The Bishop, having opened the meeting with prayer, addressed the clergy, thanking them for their ready attendance in answer to his request, while he acknowledged the intentions of several who would have been present to-day had not duty prevented them; noticing the reasons that had hitherto prevented his calling the clergy together—that the principal reason was now removed by the receipt of the Primate's reply to the communication of the Australasian Bishops, so long waited for—that the clergy were now met to consider that reply, and to act upon it; but still, not synodically.

What ever might be said as to the legality of Diocesan Synods (and upon this point high authorities in ecclesiastical law widely differed,) it was safer for the clergy here not to assume this legality in their own case, but simply to act as a meeting of clergymen summoned to consult with one another and with their Bishop. His lordship, after an interesting sketch of the history of Diocesan Synods, and the fact of the recent Synod of Exeter—calling especial notice to the gravity and unanimity of its proceedings—passed to the more particular subject of the day's meeting. The clergy were assembled to consider two things—first, the anomalous position of the Church here; and, secondly, the remedy for it. The anomaly was this: that our Church in Tasmania had been declared by high legal authorities to be not established in the sense in which the Church in England was established, and yet that it had not the power possessed by other non-established bodies, of assembling for the management of its own affairs; in other words, that the Sovereign had parted with portion of her prerogative which gave us protection, while that portion which placed upon us restrictions were still retained. It would be for the clergy to consider whether they desired this anomaly to be removed. If so, the only remedy appeared to be, to petition the Sovereign. There might be delay in this course, but slow steps were generally sure ones. His lordship further stated his opinion, that whatever was done, should be done not with a view to this diocese only, but to the province of Australasia. It was not improbable that the meetings, which it might be presumed would now be called in each diocese, after the example set by the Metropolitan, would be followed by a general meeting at Sydney, in order to give a combined force to the representations that might go forth from the several dioceses. But, whether this were so or not, the clergy of each diocese should remember that they had brethren around them whose cause was their own. The Bishop concluded his remarks, which were listened to throughout with the greatest attention and interest, by the expression of his earnest hope that the clergy present would speak their minds freely and fully, in a spirit of mutual confidence and brotherly love, on an occasion to which they might hereafter look back as the beginning of great things for the Church.

The following resolutions were agreed to by the unanimous voice of the assembly:—

That it is the opinion of the bishop and clergy of the diocese of Tasmania that a constitution, so framed as adequately to represent both the clergy and laity of the church, and giving them power to assemble for the administration of its affairs, is calculated to promote the church's well-being, and that its establishment in the several Australasian dioceses, upon a system of general uniformity, is therefore highly to be desired.

That accordingly a petition be presented to her Majesty the Queen, praying that she will be pleased to sanction such imperial legislation as may be necessary to remove any restriction that may at present hinder the establishment of such a constitution in the Australian dioceses.

THE MAURITIUS AND ITS GOVERNMENT UNDER PROTESTANT ENGLAND.

Mauritius has been a British possession since 1810. By the census of 1st August, 1846, the population was reckoned at 161,930 souls:—

Table with 2 columns: Category and Population. Categories include General population, Ex-appeantices and families, Indians, Crews of vessels, and Total.

The island does not belong to any diocese under the British Crown.

No English bishop ever visited Mauritius until 1852, June, 1850, when the Bishop of Colombo came here by permission from the Secretary to the Colonies. Consequently, not one of the Protestant churches had up to that year been consecrated, nor had a confirmation even taken place on the island.

Setting aside the natives of India, the majority of the inhabitants are Roman Catholics. The majority, to the number of 1,100 to 2,000 at least, are members of the Churches of England or Scotland, and Dissenters, Independents, and Wesleyans, with a few Unitarians.

The Roman Catholic clergy claim all the population (not being Protestants or Indians) as belonging to their Church, and have succeeded in gaining over, as far as external forms are concerned, large portions of the labouring classes. In addition to a bishop, there is a considerable body of Roman Catholic clergy. Of these, five are (or were lately) in Port Louis, the capital; and the others distributed over the island. Until 1818, the Roman Catholic bishop was one of those termed "bishops in partibus," taking their titles from some insignificant foreign town under the Pope's dominion. But in the year just mentioned, the Secretary to the Colonies (Earl Grey) sent out an order to the Governor of Mauritius, that the Roman Catholic bishop was in future to be designated as the "Right Reverend Bishop Collier," and to be addressed "My Lord," and "Your Lordship," as our bishops are. By the Pope, Dr. Collier has been styled "Bishop of Mauritius," and so (or of Port Louis) he now designates himself. In the parochial church, or cathedral at Port Louis, nearly 2,000 baptisms are said to take place annually, and 3,000 persons are put down as members of the Church in that district alone; but dependence must not be put on this number, as so large a proportion of them attend no church at all. Moreover, it is well known, that at the time of their emancipation, and even up to a later period, the mass of the ex-appeantices were of no church, and had no religion among them. Besides the parochial church at Port Louis, there are similar parish churches, of equally old standing, in the districts of Pamplémousses, Flacq, and Moka; and in 1849 two other handsome churches, capable of containing from 350 to 500 persons, were consecrated in the districts of Rivière du Rempart and Grand Port; in that of Plains Wilhems one is now being built; and Bishop Collier is making great exertions to have one erected in each of the other districts of Savanne and Black River. In addition to all these, there is a considerable number of chapels, chiefly erected by contributions from the ex-appeantices, and persons of that class.

While the Roman Catholics thus flourish, if we turn to the Protestants, we shall find that they are quite thrown into the shade. The episcopal churches on the island are but three; viz. one at Port Louis;—it is properly a Government church, (it was originally a powder magazine,) opened in 1815, all the expenses connected with it being paid out of the Colonial Treasury, except in those changes when the congregation volunteer improvements at their own cost, but even then the Governor's permission is required before they can be undertaken;—one at Plains Wilhems, opened in 1817; one at Moka, opened in 1848.

The Episcopal clergymen are five in number, viz.:

- The Rev. Alexander Denny, Senior Civil Chaplain, Langrishe Banks, Second ditto. J. S. Perling, Chaplain to the Forces. J. Mark De Joux, Superintendent of Government Schools. Gideon De Joux, Professor of Mathematics in the Royal College.

In 1849 and 1850, Mr. Gideon De Joux performed divine service in French every Sunday afternoon in the church at Port Louis, for the benefit of such Protestant French and Creole families as were not sufficiently conversant with the English language. For this duty he receives £50 per annum, raised by subscription among the English congregation; but this service, like so many arrangements, was in its turn given up, as the reverend gentlemen was required for duty elsewhere.

The Chaplain to the Forces preaches to the troops at Port Louis on the first three Sundays of each month, on the fourth Sunday at Mahbourg (Grand Port district), and on the fifth Sunday (or four times a-year) at Flacq.

At the first station he officiates early in the morning, in the Government church, and in the two last in a barrack-room. Here it is worthy of remark, that while the Roman Catholics possess a handsome new church at Mahbourg, there is none for Protestants, though of 300 to 350 soldiers, besides their wives and families, and those of regimental and stationary officers there, two-thirds may be (and have been) Protestants! Mr. Perling's other duties are, to visit the garrison prisons and military hospitals every Sunday (or when further required), and to minister to the inmates of each.

Before proceeding further, it may be as well to state what were the minor changes from the above, resulting from the Bishop of Colombo's visit. They are:—

1st.—The Reverend the Chaplain to the Forces performs divine service on each Sunday, at the residence of the Director of the Botanical Gardens, to the Protestants of Pamplémousses and Rivière du Rempart districts.

2dly.—The Rev. Gideon De Joux officiates in a temporary chapel at Belle Ile, in the Black River district, to a congregation composed chiefly of ex-appeantices and other labourers.

In addition to three Episcopalian churches, there are four Dissenting chapels in Mauritius, viz.:- One at Port Louis (well attended), the Rev. Jean Le Brun officiating minister. One at the Salines, where a Swiss missionary, the Rev. Mons. Favey, officiates. The Rev. Jean Le Brun, junr., has a considerable congregation, chiefly of Madagascar people, at Elizabeth chapel, in Moka district. Besides these, in Plains Wilhems, Mr. Cheron has divine service every Sunday, in a building erected by him, which serves as chapel and school-room.

Strange to say, considering the number and respectability of the Scotch merchants, there is as yet no Presbyterian church in Mauritius. It is, however, necessary to state, that not only has a minister of that persuasion lately been sent out, but that a site for a church has been chosen in Port Louis. Meanwhile, the service is performed in the Court-house, and by the exertions of one or two active well-wishers, the sum of £400 has been collected towards the expenses of building the church.

The last point which remains to be noticed, is the amount of the incomes of the clergy of the English church, and of Presbyterian and Roman Catholic denominations.

The salary of the senior Civil Chaplain is £600 per annum; that of the second Civil Chaplain £400 per annum, with £50 additional for keeping a horse.

The Chaplain to the Forces receives government pay as such, besides colonial allowances for the relative rank of Major, or £20 per annum.

\* Thus they were Dr. Slater, P. P. Collier, J. S. Perling, J. Mark De Joux, and Dr. Alexander Denny.

The Messrs. De Joux receive incomes in their respective situations as holding government appointments, but as they cannot be required to officiate as clergymen, they are entitled to remuneration as such whenever they do clerical duty; but the senior of the two reverend gentlemen has been always very liberal in that respect.

A sum of £250 per annum has for some time been provided by government for a clergyman of the Presbyterian persuasion, but, for the reason already given, it has only been so employed very lately, and a considerable addition to his income would be required in an island so expensive as Mauritius. Accordingly, we believe that the government allowance has been increased, on condition that the congregation contributes a certain further sum, so as to ensure to the minister £400 a-year.

The original salary of the Roman Catholic bishops in Mauritius was £1,000 per annum; but on the departure of the first holder, this sum was reduced to £720, the difference being paid to Dr. Slater as a pension. We have reason, however, to believe, that within the last few months the bishop's income has been raised to the higher rate, under the plea of "travelling expenses." He has also a free house\* and a large allowance from the parish of Port Louis for his table expenses. In fact, it is exceedingly doubtful whether any one but the bishop himself is aware of the real emoluments he possesses.

It is impossible to forget the enthusiasm and delight with which the arrival of a Protestant bishop on the island was welcomed among us, or the gratifying appearance which the church in Port Louis presented when filled by a larger congregation than has ever been seen before or since within its walls. But a short and casual visit like that of the bishop of Colombo, is not one likely to be followed by durable benefits. A resident chief is required, able, zealous, and well informed. He must be tolerant, and, above all, overflowing with christian charity, for he will find much to try him, many prejudices to contend against, and ignorance to combat. He must be prepared to find a steady and energetic opponent in the Roman Catholic bishop. Dr. Collier is most zealous for the advancement of his church. To his zeal in its cause he owes his present elevation. He is an Englishman, and was educated at Douay. He is now, and for a long time has been, most anxious to establish a Roman Catholic College at Port Louis, to be entirely under his own control, and in opposition to "The Royal College," which is liberally supported by government, and open to the young of all persuasions. He came home with the writer a short time ago, with this object in view, and in the hope that he might be supported by Earl Grey in this arrangement. He has again returned to Mauritius, taking with him one of the late converts from the English church, whom he intends to place at the head of the new seminary which he is about to establish. In this we cannot help thinking that he has well felt the pulse of the Roman Catholics in Mauritius, and that it will prove a good stroke of policy, while he thus gets over the difficulty of introducing another foreign priest,—a measure opposed by the government of the island. The bishop, and several clergymen whom he took out with him, landed in Port Louis with no little pomp and state on the 6th January last.

\* 6, Carlton-gardens, June 11, 1852.

"My dear Mr. Greswell,—I am obliged to you for having drawn my attention to two statements which have been recently put into circulation on the authority of a highly-respectable baronet—statements which, had they been left to depend on their intrinsic credibility alone, would have gained but little notice.

The first of these statements is this:—

"That Mr. Gladstone's views on the relations of the Church to the State have, since 1847, undergone a change little anticipated by his then supporters, many of his best friends regretfully admit."

The second is:—

"That the abandonment of the Church's connexion with the State is necessarily involved in the legitimate development of the principles he now advocates."

I likewise thank you for not having called upon me to notice one or more unworthy insinuations current on the same authority, and contained in a document of a somewhat later date.

With regard to the two propositions above cited, and to your questions upon them, I have to observe:—

"That no attempt is made to sustain them by any reference to what I have spoken, written or done;—

"That not one of these 'best friends' is known to me, or to any friend whom I have been able to consult;—

"That the principles of which I am now the advocate are the very same that I avowed, and for the avowal of which I was not sparingly assailed, in 1847;—

"That I am aware of no incompatibility between the principles of full religious freedom and the maintenance of the National Church in connexion with the State, to both of which I am now, as ever, cordially attached;—

"That in regard to the latter of these objects, if the change in my convictions which is imputed to me had occurred, I should not have left it to the author of this circular to announce it to the world; and

"That whether the question be or be not an open one for others, it can, in my judgment, be no open question for one who aspires to the representation of the University of Oxford.

In short, I disown and repudiate both these allegations emphatically, and in all their parts.

I remain, my dear Mr. Greswell, most sincerely yours.

W. E. GLADSTONE.

Rev. R. Greswell."

Imperial Parliament.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THURSDAY, June 10.

THE SLAVE TRADE.

The business of the evening was confined to a debate arising out of the presentation of petitions from the West Indian planters by Lord Brougham, the Bishop of Oxford, the Earl of Harrowby, and the Earl of Portarlington. The Earl of Harrowby presented a memorial signed by the Bishop of Jamaica and several clergymen, and containing a dissenting opinion on the subject of the slave trade, and the desirability of the abolition of the trade in the year 1816.

Earl GREY started up, and combated these assertions, which he must deny whenever they should be made; the distress existed before the legislation of 1816, which latter had also mitigated the slave trade:—

"There was this striking fact in the papers on their lordships' table, that taking the five years before the admission of foreign sugar into the markets of this country, and taking the five years since, there was a marked diminution in the amount of the slave trade; and there was still this more remarkable fact, that at this moment the planters of Cuba were so satisfied by what they saw going on that free labour was cheaper than slave labour, that they were taking measures to introduce no fewer than 80,000 industrious Chinese free labourers."

The Bishop of Oxford had supported the legislation of 1816, so long as he looked upon the question from a politic economical view; but seeing no reason to doubt that its effect had been to give a great stimulus to the Brazilian slave trade, he left it his duty to raise it out of the mere science of economists into a far higher atmosphere—the atmosphere of the highest national and moral considerations; and to show that however right it might have been on economic principles to introduce slave-grown sugar into this country, upon moral principles it was wrong:—

"The noble earl had endeavoured to draw from certain returns the inference that the effect of the act of 1816 had not been to increase the slave trade; but he (the Bishop of Oxford) begged their lordships to consider these facts, first, that it must have had the effect, and had been known to have had the effect of promoting the production of sugar in the Brazils; next, that every hog-head of sugar so produced must have been produced by slave labour; third, that the slaves who had furnished that labour must have been slaves not bred in the country, but imported from Africa; for, whatever conclusions might be drawn by ingenious deductions from returns, a man must be able to show, either that the sugar was produced without hands, or that the hands that produced it were free, or that they had been bred in Brazil, before any ingenious deductions could ever tend to support the conclusions of the noble earl. The noble earl had referred to the present desire of the Cuban planters for free labour, and had attributed it strangely enough to the act of 1816; when the plain and palpable reason, which could be seen by every eye as distinctly as the sun at noonday, was, that it was because of the unexampled success which had attended the brave and unwearied exertions of our cruisers on the coast of Africa, which had made it so difficult and expensive to import slaves; and because an apprehension was growing up that when this country took a great cause like that in hand it was impossible to frustrate our efforts; it was for these reasons, and these reasons alone, that the planters had found that their labour must be supplied otherwise than it had hitherto been."

Lord HARROWBY hoped Government would be able to discover some means of mitigating the distress, and

Lord DERBY reassured that the legislation of 1816, and observed that everybody else thought so but Lord Grey:—

"He still believed that the only effectual remedy would be that of stopping the progress of the reduction of differential duties now going on. But at the same time he confessed he entertained great doubt whether the public mind of the country was prepared to sacrifice the economic interests involved in that proposition."

The Earl of HARROWBY expressed his doubts whether public opinion would allow the exclusion of all foreign produce, such a total exclusion being a sufficient remedy, as he thought.

Earl GREY said that the views he had expressed were not his alone. Lord Derby well knew that they were those of the ablest officers under the Crown in the West Indies.

The Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND corrected the noble earl at least in one particular—he had just received despatches from the Commander-in-Chief on the station, reporting the ruined condition of the Islands as having been occasioned by the legislation of 1816.

The Bishop of OXFORD reminded the house that the general impression which prevailed among capitalists was, that it was impossible for free labour to compete with slave labour, had, moreover, led to large investments of money in Cuba and Brazil, so that every possible improvement in the machinery and manufacture was there introduced, while in our colonies they were utterly unable to obtain capital for a similar purpose. The consequence was, a greatly increased production by slaves in Cuba and Brazil.

Lord STANLEY of Alderley said that the increased production of beet-root sugar ought to be taken into account. The conversation then dropped.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, June 10.

Mr. KILGIB complained of the conduct of the Government in issuing a proclamation against the habits of Roman Catholic Ecclesiastics. He wished to know whether the proclamation was to be published in the Dublin Gazette? and whether the Irish Attorney-General was to prosecute Roman Catholic ecclesiastics who wore the robes of their order, and which they had done without dispute since 1829.

Mr. Secretary WALTON said it was not at present their intention to publish the proclamation in the Dublin Gazette, but a private intimation had been given to the Roman Catholics in Ireland on the subject. Recently a procession had taken place in honour of the Virgin Mary, in which priests appeared in their sacerdotal robes much to