

Your letter to the Vestry of Christ Church proceeds: "your offer therefore"—the invitation to the Rectorship—"than which nothing could be more liberal, confiding and kind, nor anything more truly grateful to my feelings in every point of view, I must and do, under a constraining sense of duty, gratefully and affectionately decline."

Again, you observe, in the conclusion of the letter: "Although, after what passed between you and myself in our personal interview, I felt bound to wait until I should have communicated with the Rev. Mr. Johns on the subject; my decision has been wholly uninfluenced by such communication, and based solely on considerations of official duty."

The decision, set forth in this communication of yours to the Vestry of Christ Church, and on the precise grounds here recited, you made known to me orally at the interview held at your house in Courtland Street, referred to in my letter of October 15th, when you informed me that you declined, and I informed you that I should accept the invitation to Christ Church, Baltimore. How then can you say, after such a clear showing of your decisions in the premises—which, you tell the Vestry, were wholly "uninfluenced by" your communications with me, at the said interview, but were "based solely on considerations of official duty," all of which were operative prior to our meeting, and are by you expressly acknowledged as having procured your decision—how can you say that "that invitation" (the call to Christ Church) "was then still under my consideration?" Your letter to the Vestry shows that your mind was made up on the matter in advance of seeing me, and so you stated to me at the very commencement of our interview. It is true, that you did not notify the Vestry of your decision until after you saw me, but the evidence that it was, "after mature and anxious deliberation," formed before you saw me, is set forth by your own words as quoted. Thus it is manifest that your assertions in your favour of October 24th, 1851, relating to this matter, are at variance with your letter to the Vestry of Christ Church, of July 27th, 1842.

But you observe: "The Rectorship of Christ Church with all its rights, duties, &c., may be presumed to have been then as much at my disposal as at your." Here allow me to remind you, that "then," which was the 26th of July, 1842, the Rectorship of Christ Church was in the hands of the Rev. John Johns, D.D., whose term of service did not expire until the first of the ensuing October.

But you now remind me that at "that time" I "was not a clergyman of this Diocese." I greatly regret that you overlooked this fact at the "interview" held between us, at your own request, and at your own house. Surely, Rt. Rev. Sir, it was a singular procedure, thus to hold a conference with a Presbyter of another Bishop, and to admonish him, face to face, on the subject of his official conduct, and to charge him with contemplating irregularities in lecture-room services. I ought to have requested you, if I were guilty of violation of order, to have made your communication to the Rt. Rev. C. P. McIlvaine, D.D., my Diocesan.

But further, Rt. Rev. Sir, if there had been the alleged irregularities in the lecture-room services of Christ Church, Baltimore, (with which, as I was not at that time a clergyman of this Diocese, of course I had nothing to do, and now am only a witness to the fact that you made such remarks,) why did you not correct the evil in the practice and person of my predecessor, the Rev. John Johns, D.D., now Assistant Bishop in a neighbouring Diocese? For months after month, the irregularities complained of to me, had been before you, perpetrated by one of your own Presbyters; and yet, so far as I know and believe, you never so much as even whispered to him an "affectionate request," to say nothing of an "official admonition" on the subject; but, on the contrary, you were, I believe, one of his presentors at his consecration to the Episcopate, and did him the kindness to preach the sermon on that occasion. I am sorry the tone of the expressions in this part of your last letter, brought these things again to my recollection.

In reply to my declaration in the letter of October 15th—"that no matter how carefully we have endeavoured (referring to the minority in this Diocese) to avoid it, our mode of serving our Heavenly Master, and advancing the spiritual welfare of our Church, subjected us to unprecedented Episcopal interference, admonitions, and judicial proceedings, most annoying to us, and vexatious to our congregations"—you observe: "It might have been difficult to instance a case in which any clergyman in this Diocese had been interfered with in the performance of his ministerial duties, by the Bishop or other authority of the Diocese."

In answer to this declaration, allow me respectfully to present to you the following from a multitude of similar cases:

1. The well-known "case" of the Rev. Joseph Trappnell, Jr., late Rector of St. Andrew's Church, Baltimore, who was presented and tried for defending the point, that the administration of the Holy Communion was no part of the duty to be performed by the Bishop at an Episcopal visitation. I know there were sundry questions and specifications raised in this trial, but the main matter originated in a clear case, in which the Presbyter felt himself interfered with in the discharge of his ministerial duties, and, by informing you that the Lord's Supper was to be administered on the very Sunday before the one appointed for your visitation, indicated his earnest desire that it should not be so soon repeated, and also his wish to avoid the painful issue to which you forced him. That no authority then existed in the laws of this Church, for the right which you then upheld and pressed, is now demonstrated by the addition, made at the General Convention of 1850, to the Canon relating to Episcopal visitations, granting authority to Bishops to administer the Lord's Supper at a visitation; consequently your claim, then urged, even to the trial of your Presbyter, was without law.

Case 2nd. Your threat of presentment of the Rev. John P. Robbins, of Snowhill, Eastern Shore of Maryland, to the Standing Committee, made in your letter to him, dated Baltimore, July, (the figures are illegible) 1847, on the ground that he had violated the 36th Canon of the general Convention, which Mr. Robbins most emphatically denied.

I have before me the written statements of this case, given by the aggrieved Presbyter, from which I make the following narrative:—

"The Rev. Mr. Kennard, a clergyman of the Methodist Protestant Episcopal Church, came to Mr. Robbins' house as agent of the Maryland State Bible Society," "and asked him (Mr. R.) if he would aid him in the circulation of the Word of God without note or comment: to which Mr. Robbins replied, he would." The agent then asked Mr. Robbins if he would present the Bible cause to his people: Mr. Robbins assented, and on the next "preaching day, after the regular morning service, Mr. Robbins addressed his congregation on the value of the Word of God and the importance of their having it, especially in their hearts, and also having copies of the Scriptures in their houses. After he had concluded, the Rev. Mr. Kennard arose and stated the object of his agency, and then the services were concluded with prayer."

From this statement, it is evident Mr. Robbins was the officiating clergyman, and did nothing more than allow an agent of the Bible Society to give notice that he was in the vicinity, and what was his object in being there. Mr. Robbins bitterly complained of the act of his Bishop in prejudging this case, and vouching for the truth of a mere rumour, instead of writing to him for the facts, and giving him an opportunity of a hearing, before you formed your opinion and let him know (I quote your own words) that "in strict discharge of your office, you should be compelled at once to lay the case before the Standing Committee of Diocese, in order to the public correction of a public violation of the order of the Church." You then proceed to inform Mr. Robbins, whose guilt you assume without a hearing, that if he will "be cautious not again to disturb the order of the Church, you will hold yourself at

liberty to take no notice of what has passed, and proceed no further in the matter."

"But," you observe, "unless so enabled to stay proceedings, it will be my painful duty to put the matter in the hands of the Standing Committee, and the new trouble and disgrace of another Ecclesiastical trial [mark how frequent such things were] will be brought upon the church." Strange to say, after having thus shaken the rod of discipline in the face of your unheard Presbyter, you express the hope that he may be able to explain his conduct to your satisfaction. Surely Rt. Rev. Sir, you here have a case which shows that the language of my last letter to you came far short of the reality. What Presbyter of this church, worthy of his name and office (and my Rev. brother Mr. Robbins is eminently so) could bear to be so treated? Could he afterwards think of his Bishop with those emotions of respect and affection, which we most earnestly desire ever to cherish towards our Ecclesiastical superior?

Case 3. In May, 1844, you sent a circular of questions to the clergy, wardens, and vestries of the Diocese, which so materially interfered with your clergy that eleven of them addressed to you a respectful remonstrance, dated June 1, 1844, expressive of their deep regret at the reception of such a communication, the tendency of which they held to be to engross and consolidate the rights of the clergy and laity in the hand of the Bishop, and thus endangered, by undue extension, the lawful and salutary power of the episcopate.

Case 4. At your last visitation of Christ Church, Baltimore, on March 7th, 1847, more than four years and a half ago, when, after the entire services of the occasion were over, and you had retired to the vestry room, in company with myself and others, you called me to task for not pausing in the "evening prayer, and affording you an opportunity of reading the declaration of absolution," stating that I had forgotten that such was your custom. To this I replied that I had not forgotten what was known to be your custom, but that I felt bound to obey the rubric, and so read the declaration myself; that if, before I had entered the desk, you had expressed a desire to read the evening prayer, nothing would have given me more pleasure, than to have had you officiate in the desk as well as in the chancel, but that, on principle, I could not sanction the custom to which you referred. You immediately proceeded to declare, that you had a right to it and to the whole service also; to which I respectfully stated my inability to accede, pleading conscience under the rubric; whilst you, in the most earnest manner, plead conscience also as urging you to insist on your claim.

A similar occurrence took place subsequently, at your visitation of All Saints parish, Frederick Town, where you urged the same claim, and when the Rector, the Rev. W. N. Pendleton, for precisely such reasons as determined me, was constrained to differ with you, you deemed it your duty to remain in the vestry room until evening prayer was read, and not until then did you take your seat in the chancel. With these facts fresh in your memory, I leave it to yourself, Rt. Rev. Sir, to judge of our amazement when we read, on page 136 of the Journal of the last General Convention, in a resolution offered by Bishop Meade, moved by Bishop McIlvaine, and seconded by Bishop Potter, that the "Bishop of the Diocese of Maryland has declared that the only claim he asserts is the right of administering the holy communion in each parish at his regular visitations," &c.

If you meant, when you made that declaration before the House of Bishops, that you did not intend hereafter to assert the claim which you so vehemently insisted upon at your visitations of Christ Church, Baltimore; and All Saints parish, Frederick Town, from my heart I rejoice. But if you intended to deny that you had ever raised that claim, I am silent.

Shall I proceed, in answer to the invitation made in your last letter, but for which you should never have heard from me again on these melancholy topics, or have I said enough to satisfy you that no exaggeration characterized my declarations to you, in the communication of October 15th.

You demanded instances, and I have been compelled most reluctantly to give them.

There is but one point more, which I feel constrained to notice. In your letter of October 9th, you observe, referring to your former communication, that you had "no resource but to lay our correspondence before the Standing Committee of the Diocese, in order that that body may determine whether or not your communication of the 4th was such a Godly admonition and 'judgment' as, at my ordination to the Priesthood of this Church, I solemnly declared my obligation reverently to obey, and with a glad mind and will to follow and submit to." I am at no loss, from your action in the premises, to infer what is your opinion in the case. Suffer me here to quote the words of the late venerable William White, D.D., first Bishop of Pennsylvania, who being dead yet speaketh. I refer to his commentaries on the questions and answers in the offices for the ordination of Deacons and Priests, "recommended to the patronage of all the clergy and members generally of the Church" by Bishops Griswold, Bowen, Brownell, H. U. Onderdonk, Meade, Stone, B. T. Onderdonk, and Ives. (See edit., New York, 1833, page 44.) The author observes: "When the passage speaks of Godly admonitions, it must have respect to some standard by which they should be directed. The standard must be, the various established institutions of the Church, and not the private opinion of the Bishop. It is well known, that the Church, from which this is descended, like the State to which it is allied, is under a government of law and not of will; and we cannot suppose that ours, professing to follow it in the leading features of its system, should have designed to reject this, so congenial to the still more moderate degree of authority, which it will be possible, in present circumstances, to exert. If it should be asked, Who shall be the arbiter on any question which may be raised, as to the fitness of the interposition of the Bishop? The answer is, the question being understood of admonition, out of the line of strict Ecclesiastical proceeding, which ought of course to be governed by a determinate standard, that each party must judge for himself, as he shall answer for this and for every other part of his conduct to Almighty God."

The Bishop puts the very case which has arisen: You, Right Rev. Sir, addressed to me an official admonition, which, for the reasons stated, I could not obey, but in reference to which I felt bound to do what Bishop White supposes in such case may be done—judged for myself, as I shall answer to Almighty God. If a Deacon could do so, much more a Presbyter—Bishop White supposes the case of a Deacon. I must be allowed then, under the sanction of such high authority, backed by so many Bishops, to rebel with honest feeling the institution of having violated any ordination vows. It is moreover, very remarkable, that in your last letter to me, you should seem to think you had gone too far in this matter, and may have indulged language too strong; for you say, alluding to alleged instances of clergy of this Church, officiating, as was done by myself in the instance out of which this correspondence has grown: "The question is one of limit to an admitted liberty. Very honest and allowable differences of opinion may exist, as to the fixture of that limit." Why, here, Right Rev. Sir, you yield all I have been contending for: you say that there is an "admitted liberty," and that the point at issue is one about which we may honestly differ. How, then, in such a case, could you think of subjecting your Presbyter to what you call "the trouble and disgrace of a public trial?" Why this prolix correspondence? Why wish to limit the liberty of your clergy to preach the gospel? There are fifty thousand souls in this city, who seldom, if ever hear the glad tidings of salvation. It is a subject of intense anxiety here, and elsewhere, as I learn from the pages of our Church papers in New York and Liverpool, England, how we shall succeed in carrying the means of grace to the thousands and tens of thousands now flooding our cities and country. O! Right Rev. Sir, this is not a day to shorten the trumpet of the gospel! I wish we had preachers and increased facilities within