

the Bishop of London, that a great debt of gratitude is due to the gentleman whose name appears last on the petition—Mr. Henry Hoare. No man could have devoted his time, his money, and his great abilities more assiduously and more self-denyingly to any cause than Mr. Hoare has done for the purpose of aiding the Church of England—first, in bringing the clergy to understand and consult one another, and then in bringing the laity to assist them by mutual counsel, advice, and co-operation. I am sure every one of my right Rev. brethren will acknowledge that we owe an unspeakable large debt of gratitude to Mr. Hoare for the course which he has for so many years pursued.

THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER—Concurring in all that has been said with respect to the obligations we are under to Mr. Hoare, there is one point in his character to which I would call special attention—and that is, the extremely judicious manner in which he has carried on his movements. He had to enter upon a new course, which in many quarters was not very popular; and so far as my own observation has gone I must say that he has exhibited a degree of forbearance and patience beyond all praise, and has succeeded in subduing opposition, and to a great extent in conciliating those who, in the first instance, entered into a consideration of his views with feelings of dislike and distrust.

THE ARCHBISHOP—I believe the exertions of Mr. Hoare were first begun in my diocese, in which he resides; and I should be wrong if I allowed the opportunity to pass without stating my high estimation of the earnestness with which he has devoted himself to the object which he has undertaken. His disinterested and unremitting efforts for the benefit of the Church cannot be too highly prized.

THE BISHOP OF SALISBURY—Mr. Hoare has visited my diocese once or twice, and has created amongst both the clergy and the laity a most affectionate feeling towards him for the honest sincerity with which he has propounded his opinions; and his thorough good humour has rendered him one of the most popular men in my diocese.

The resolution was then agreed to, and the following right Rev. prelates were named as the representatives of the Upper House:—The Bishops of London, St. David's, Exeter, Oxford, Llandaff, and Salisbury.

THE BISHOP OF OXFORD then moved—

"That his Grace the President of this Convocation be prayed to communicate to his Grace the President of the Convocation of the Northern Province the earnest desire of the Convocation of this province to act with the Convocation of the Northern Province, on terms of the most Catholic equality and freedom of deliberation and action, as to matters of common concern to both provinces.

"That his Grace be further prayed to inquire whether any practical steps for securing such harmonious and, if possible, concurrent deliberation and action can be suggested by the President of the Convocation of the Northern Province; and further, that, having reference to the action taken in this Convocation as to the 29th Canon, his Grace be requested to convey to the President of the Northern Province the earnest desire of this Convocation to be able to consider the formal opinion of the Northern Province as to the particular allegation of the canon agreed to as desirable by this Convocation, and generally as to the best mode of proceeding with regard to the said canon, before the Convocation proceed to seek for the necessary powers to enable it to put in use any canon on the subject of the same canon."

I consider it most essential that there should be unity of action between the two provinces, and

especially with regard to the canon which was agreed to during our last sitting; for a mistaken idea has gone abroad, that we have absolutely concluded the matter without giving the Northern Province an opportunity of expressing their views on the subject. It was the desire of the Convocation of this province to bring forward the matter in such a shape as to enable the two Convocations to enter into a common agreement with respect to the canon. If the resolution meets the concurrence of your lordships, we can send it down to the Lower House, and evince our united desire for concurrent action with our brethren in the Northern Province. The time has passed when the Northern Province could be expected simply to record the decisions of the province of Canterbury. The great increase of that province in population, wealth, and intelligence, and in the number of its sees, all point to the same conclusion, that there must be free and equal deliberation to enable us to come to an harmonious conclusion on those important matters which come under our consideration.

THE BISHOP OF CHERESTER—I beg to second the motion.

The motion was agreed to, and it was also resolved that it be communicated to the members of the Lower House, with the view of obtaining their concurrence.

THE ADDRESS OF CONDOLENCE.

The Prolocutor and his Assessors attended, and expressed the concurrence of the Lower House in the address of condolence to her Majesty which had been sent down from the Upper House.

THE CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON presented a petition from certain members of the Church of England resident in Capetown and its vicinity, stating that they had read with much interest the report of the debates in their lordships' house relating to a declaration of principles proposed to be sanctioned by the Upper House, and recommended for the adoption of members of the Church of England and Ireland in South Africa; that they should be unwilling to see such a declaration adopted, and praying their lordships to withhold their recommendation. They contended that no such declaration would have legal force in the colony, seeing that no penalty would attach or prosecution lie on its infraction, and that therefore it would be without that validity which belonged to declarations or oaths imposed by legislative enactments; that it would be an infringement of the legislature for any merely voluntary body to assume the imposition of oaths or declarations professing to bind its members, and that no legally constituted Church of England Synod existed in that colony. That, while admitting the full right of any of their fellow-subjects to deem themselves members of a Church in union and communion with the Church of England; they repudiated for themselves that title, as a matter involving the very essence of Church-membership, and they complained that the very name of "members of the Church of South Africa in union and communion with the Church of England and Ireland" would be at variance with the name they now had, of members of the Church of England, from which they had no desire to separate themselves. After quoting the opinion of Lord Westbury (then Sir R. Bethell) in the debate in the House of Commons on the Colonial Church Bill, as expressing their views, they stated that the letters patent reconstructing and subdividing the diocese of Capetown did not create a Bishop over a church in union or communion with the Church of England and Ireland. Were they to style themselves other than they now did, it would tend to draw the church in the colony from under the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, which

they would greatly deplore. The effect of such a declaration would rather tend to exclude many attached members from the Synod of the church than to throw open its gates. They looked upon any declaration of church-membership as unnecessary; but if their lordships thought differently, the declaration, in their opinion, should simply be a declaration of membership with the Church of England alone. The title of the church ought to be one in all lands, and if they adopted a different style and title it would tend to sever the unity at present existing between different parts of the national church and cut themselves off from the church (in the name at least) in other portions of her Majesty's colonial possessions.

LAY AGENCY.

THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN—I have to present a petition of very considerable importance, signed by ten Prebendaries, eleven Rural Deans, and a great number of the clergy of my diocese. The petitioners say that "They are of opinion that it would greatly tend, under the Divine blessing, to enlarge the sphere of usefulness of the church of this land, if the clergy might be assisted by an authorised body of lay teachers holding some subordinate office, as that of Sub-Dean or Elder, yet not subject to those restrictions in respect to their other employments as to those civil disabilities by which the clergy themselves are restrained, and whose obligations to devote themselves to such subordinate ministry should not be perpetual. Believing that such an institution, already in full operation in several colonial dioceses, would be of the highest value towards meeting the religious wants of the overgrowing masses of our population at home without infringing the existing laws, and would be hailed by many good men as supplying them with a sphere of usefulness within the church which they earnestly desire to find, your petitioners humbly pray your honourable house to take into your most serious consideration that part of the report of the Lower House on Home Missions which relates to this subject." I am unable to move that the prayer of the petitioners be complied with, on account of an error into which the petitioners have fallen. There is, I believe, no report of that committee before the house. A report was agreed to by the Lower House in the year 1859, and laid on the table, and the chairman of that committee, who now presides over the deliberations of the Lower House, gave notice of his intention to move that the report be adopted and formed into a representation. But the session came to an end, and no further steps were taken. I think, however, that the object of the petitioners may be carried out if we adopt the following resolution:—

"That a committee be appointed to consider the expediency of authorising, by licence of the Bishop or otherwise, lay teachers to assist incumbents of parishes in house-to-house visitation, in catechising, and in performing such religious services as may be assigned to them by competent ecclesiastical authority. And further, should such a measure be deemed expedient, to consider what should be the qualifications and duties of such lay teachers, and under what regulations and restrictions they should be placed."

I am quite aware that in proposing such resolutions I am venturing on a subject which is beset by many difficulties. But is one which is increasingly occupying the minds of the most thoughtful men in the land, and relates to a question of progress which in the opinions of many of the clergy may be raised in the history of Convocation. It was necessary when Convocation first began to resume its duties—at any rate when it proceeded to deliberate and express its opinion on matters relating to the Church—