

is involved, is to be courageous, and attempt to perform our duty—(cheers)—and then I am confident that the Church of England will show to the world that it has powers of renovation which have not been suspected by some. For my own part I hold it banished, not merely because it is the sanctuary of divine truth, but because I verily believe it is our best security for that civil and religious liberty of which we hear so much, and which we are told are opposed to its institution. (Loud cheers.)

The resolution was carried unanimously. Other resolutions having been proposed and seconded by the High Sheriff, Sir C. Yong and the Rev. C. D. Guide, Mr. WALTONS who was very warmly received, said the movement they made was for the benefit of the poor, and not of the clergy—in order that the poor population of the country might receive all that could be given them, and that which they were entitled to receive—namely, the best offices of the Christian religion as administered in this land.—

My right hon. friend Mr. Disraeli has told you in his most interesting speech of the remark made by our late venerable and most amiable Primate, that the population of this country had outgrown the Church. My right hon. friends dissented from that opinion, and so do I. In my opinion a better way of putting the case would be to say that the population of the country has unfortunately been to some extent neglected, partly owing to its enormous increase, which has stopped the means of meeting those practical wants and necessities of the community, which wants and necessities it is the object of this meeting to endeavour to supply. Now there is one part of the subject which has not been thoroughly adverted to by previous speakers, and, inasmuch as it involves a general application—an application equally applicable to this district as it is to the kingdom—I would wish most earnestly to press it upon you. You all know that in this country we have decennial censuses. The tale that is told in these censuses is perhaps the most startling that ever was told to a religious community. If you go back to the year 1801, the year in which these censuses were commenced, you will find that the population of England and Wales was 10,000,000. If you take the census published last year, but not published with the full comments that are to be made on it, you will find that the population of England and Wales has increased to 20,000,000 and upwards. Now, what inference do I draw from that fact? The inference I draw from it is that, since it took 18 centuries to bring the population up to 10,000,000, the means of meeting the spiritual wants of the people were spread over so vast a time that they were comparatively great; but since the population has within the last 60 years doubled the amount which the previous 18 centuries had brought it up to, the means of meeting the spiritual wants of that population must be multiplied 100 times in order to make it adequate to the wants. Within each two of the decennial periods your population increases 12, 14, and 16 per cent; but have you means of providing for the spiritual wants of the people in proportion to their increase? For your defences by land and sea—for the administration of law and justice, and the regulation of your police—for the maintenance of your position as a nation—for all these things more or less secure provision has been made in proportion to the increased necessities; but have you provided for the spiritual necessities of the population in proportion to the per-centage of its increase? I may venture to press this point still further. Within the last ten years for which a census has been taken your population has increased by nearly 2,600,000. I need not tell you that these figures show an increase of 1,260,000 for five

years, of between 200,000 and 300,000 per annum, and of between 600 and 600 every day in the week. Let me ask you, does not the enumeration of these particulars—does not the fact that every day the population of the country increases by between 600 and 600—lead you to this inevitable consequence, that since one church and one clergyman are not sufficient for more than 1,600, or 2,000 of our people, we ought to be exerting ourselves for the national church by providing one additional clergyman and one additional church every four or five days in the year?

The question was as to the way in which a necessity so clearly proved could best be met. There were three ways. By the principle of demand and supply, by a state provision given for the purpose, or by the voluntary principle. Take the first:—

We all of us know what the laws of economic science lay down, and how they are applied in this country in those matters which will always concern the natural wants of man, and his artificial as well as his natural wants. We know that in all the natural wants of man, and even in regard to his luxuries, supply will follow demand. But when dealing with the intellectual part of man, with his well-being, with the knowledge which he ought to possess, and with the responsibilities which devolve upon him—when dealing with these higher parts of his nature we find that he may remain ignorant instead of demanding knowledge, that he may prefer to be vicious instead of becoming virtuous. And that instead of wishing to be subjected to the obligations of religion, he may desire to remain free from what he considers to be shackles. Therefore it is that the law of demand and supply which rules in temporal matters never can be applied to spiritual matters such as we are met here to consider, but will fail to accomplish that which we want to effect. I shall now take the other case—that of a state provision. I do not say that the State might not now advance money to meet the wants of the people, whether those wants are of an educational character or otherwise; but I see great danger in applying to the state in such a case, because by such an application you run the risk of forfeiting what my right hon. friend so well described as one of the characteristics of this country—that self-reliance which goes far to make her what she is. More than that, I think my right hon. friend Mr. Disraeli, who has twice superintended the financial affairs of this country, and who has twice had to manage and lead the House of Commons, would tell you that, from the great difference of opinion existing on these subjects, there would be so great an opposition to any application for a state provision that such an application would not be likely to prove successful. Then comes the voluntary system, with regard to which I think there exists a great confusion in the minds of some persons, owing to their not seeing the difference between a voluntary for which a return is made and such an offering made under other circumstances. As I understand it the principle of the association is one which you ought to encourage. It is that of local exertions to help the grants from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

And now a word on the Ecclesiastical Commission:—My Lord Bishop, you are a member of that Commission. For twenty five years it has been at work. Let me point out what it has done, and how it may be applicable to the great objects which you have in view. When it was stated the Episcopal incomes of her Bishops were of enormous amounts—some very high and some very low—there were sinecure rectories, and non-residential Canons were things common. Plurality of benefices was also common, and the property of the church was almost ruined by the detestable system

of renewal fines. Remember, you now have an equalisation of the Episcopal emoluments. There are no sinecure rectories, no non-residential Canons. There has been a reform in those matters to which I have adverted, and the property of the church has been improved. This year the commission has an income of £100,000, but if you apply that sum at once, you kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. While if you capitalise it to meet private exertions, you double the property of the church, stimulate the exertions of private individuals, and 100 years hence there will still be funds by which the growing wants of the community may be provided for with the aid of small benefactions and contributions. I believe that is the obvious course for the members of the Church of England to pursue.

He argued this question on the assumption that there ought to be a national church, nationally endowed, in this country:—

I do not think that those who dissent from the church—I mean the religious dissenters—are the persons who will be most disposed to quarrel with her existence as a national church. This I do know—that you can never meet the spiritual wants of a people without a church possessing what I think are the characteristic elements of the Church of England, and which I hope will always be characteristic of that church. I think that to supply those wants a church must be national and fixed, tolerant and charitable, catholic and comprehensive.

Mr. Disraeli had adverted to five great points, of which only one would require legislative sanction and parliamentary provision:—

I can only say that if legislative sanction and parliamentary provision be required for that one, you are indeed most fortunate here in this county of Buckingham in having for your diocesan one of the most distinguished prelates in knowledge, eloquence, and learning that ever had a seat in the House of Lords; and you have in the other House of Parliament one whom I may speak with pride and pleasure as my friend. You have in the House of Commons Mr. Disraeli, one of the most brilliant, if not the most brilliant, geniuses that ever possessed. I can only say with regard to the last point to which he adverted, that if a parliamentary sanction shall be required to give effect to the object shadowed out by you my lord, and others at this great meeting, I shall be found side by side with my right hon. friend. I have fought some battles in his support, and I hope and believe that there may be other battles yet to be fought. If so, I know of none in which I would rather stand at his side and under his shield, or in which I would fight with greater confidence and stronger hopes of success, than one for the maintenance and extension of the influence of your parochial system, without which this country would come to nothing, and which, when extended as it may be, and as I hope to God it will be, so as to meet the wants of the whole community, will show to the poor of our country that every class of the population which exists on the face of this happy island will always find that there are in every parish in the kingdom means of attending and receiving the benefits of public worship and the advantages of a settled religious instructor, ever ready to give pastoral aid and pastoral instruction to those who need them. I hope, in short, that in this land we shall have offered to all, as all are entitled to it, the greatest blessing which God can confer on man—the blessing of the administration of the service of the Established Church. (Cheers.)

Mr. HUBBARD, M.P., also addressed the meeting. The hon. gentleman said he approved the objects of the association, and should reserve any allusion to the doubts to which the right rev. chairman had referred for another opportunity.