

priest himself. With all respect to others, he would not desire to have in the Church of England such agents as some of the local preachers of the Methodists or the Friars of the Catholic Church. It might be said that by rejecting this report many good men would be thrown out from the opportunity of labouring in the church. He would not shut them out; but he would make such cases exceptional. Bishops could act and did act in such cases. In respect to lay agency, he thought that previously serving with some minister in duties like those intended to be assigned to the deacons, might be made a condition of admission to the deacon's orders.

Rev. Mr. BLEASEWELL spoke in favour of the system. Much had been said about maintaining the church in all its integrity. We talk of our bishops, our priests, and our deacons; but this order of deacons does not exist now in the original signification of the term. The proposed scheme would supply the link that is missing, and why should gentlemen look with such horror upon it. They should strive resolutely to supply the need which is felt. He had seen something of lay agency. He knew one lay agent whose conduct was any thing but in accordance with ecclesiastical order. He thought there ought to be some restraint upon such men, and that they should not be allowed to act as they pleased. Deacons could also be had for much less than priests, and he had known men who would be glad to labour for the church as deacons, if the diaconate were a permanent order. He would conjure his friends who had opposed the scheme, to lay aside some of those preconceived notions they have had on the subject. Those ideas were not adapted to the progressive character of the age. The scheme was one which had much to recommend it, and should be well considered. He knew that the bishops felt some hesitation in adopting the proposition; but if it went from the Lower House there was no doubt their lordships would in some measure act upon it. The church was losing ground, and always would lose ground until the system was adopted.

Rev. Mr. WOOLKYCHE said the report was to provide for a permanent diaconate, an order which the Church of England did not recognise. It was all very well for gentlemen to endeavour to separate the report from the canon; but he desired to warn his brethren that if they adopted the report they at the same time adopted the canon which was annexed to it. He also wished to state that it appeared to him to be a most mischievous report. He was not much acquainted with Upper Canada, but he was acquainted with Lower Canada, and he found that there was one subject which was always coming up, and that was the want of men for the ministry. But if we had means we could have men. If the report was adopted, we would be provided with a class of men which the laity of the Church of England had never asked for. The laity are opposed to the ministrations of any ill-educated men. A man might be a very good man, but still not be a man they would like to have minister to them week after week. What might work well enough in England, in the crowded districts, would not answer here. He hoped the meeting would unanimously reject the report.

Rev. Mr. SLACK had listened with a great deal of satisfaction to all that had been said on the subject; but he rose for the purpose of making an amendment to the Rev. Mr. Palmer's amendment, which he thought would have the effect of making the report consistent with itself, and do away with the objectionable parts. He moved, seconded by the V. M. ARCHDEACON BROUGH, that the report on the diaconate be

referred back to the committee, with a view to its revision and amendment.

Rev. Mr. DEWAR suggested that it be referred to a new committee.

Rev. Mr. SLACK consented to "a committee" being inserted instead of "the committee."

A lay delegate thought that it would be useless to refer it to a committee unless they pointed out what amendments they wished to have made.

A clerical delegate suggested that it might be advisable to take the sense of the House, in order to ascertain if they would sanction the principle.

Mr. SPRAGGE thought that the system would be the means of creating a number of poor curates, like those who had to live on £40 a year. We wanted men who were competent to answer such propositions as might be made to them by those who differed from them in opinion. He thought that what the Provost of Trinity College had said deserved the strictest attention. The laity felt they were honoured by having a clergyman under their roof; but if this new system were adopted, they would feel inclined to look down upon their ministers.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON advocated the referring back of this matter to the committee, as it was a matter of great importance. He hoped the resolution proposed by Mr. Slack would be carried, as something should be done in the matter. If any thing can be done which would have the effect of introducing greater efficiency among the laity, it would be satisfactory to all the dioceses. He believed the laity did not desire to have laymen reading the prayers and then preaching sermons. But they wished to have the clergy assisted in every way in which they could be helped, and to have them, as the Provost of Trinity College had said, brought nearer and dearer to the hearts of their people. (Applause.)

The Rev. Mr. KENNEDY said that he differed in toto from those speakers who admitted that the extension of the diaconate might be required in cities and towns, but that for country missions it would be far better to employ scripture readers. Those gentlemen could have no knowledge of missionary work in the rural districts. He therefore felt called upon to state briefly his views with regard to this question. He had expressed them years ago, and his experience convinced him that if the step proposed by the committee had been taken then, the church in this country would be in a very different position to what it is. He was formerly a catechist, or lay reader. In towns there ought to be no difficulty in obtaining lay assistance; persons can be found who gladly undertake the duties of district visitors, and Sunday school teachers, and a clergyman can readily be found to go and baptize a dying child; but not so in the country. For thirteen years he had the sole charge of a very extensive country mission. During the whole of that period he had only been able to give regular Sunday services at three stations. He had, however, thirteen stations which he attended periodically on week days, and had, at 2 p.m., generally good congregations, and the people assured him that if a clergyman could be sent to them on Sunday, they would all gladly attend his ministrations, but they felt bound to take their children where there was public worship on a Sunday. At two or three of these stations, he recommended persons whose position and education well fitted them to carry out his views, to assemble the members of the church on the Sunday at their houses, that service and a sermon, which he would furnish them with, should be read by them, and the children taught their catechism. In two places the attempt was made, but was

given up, as the parties stated that their neighbours would not attend, whenever they had an opportunity of attending *preaching* by some one styled a Rev. at the nearest school house. Moreover, he could name flourishing villages where gentlemen of education and high social position had, Sunday after Sunday, read the church service, and a printed sermon in churches previous to the appointment of a clergyman, and what was the result? that the few families who attended were all of the higher and better educated classes, the humbler classes preferred going to some place of worship presided over by one claiming to be an ordained minister. This proved that the proposition to substitute lay agents or scripture readers for ordained deacons, whose orders would be quite as readily acknowledged as those of dissenting ministers, was a fallacy. Some of the previous speakers expressed themselves as though it would be impossible to find such men as the committee recommended for the diaconate, out of the lower and more ignorant classes of the members of our church; but this was an error. He had met with men in several places, possessed of a good English education, and who could soon have prepared themselves to pass such an examination as the report contemplates, who would, from love to the church, if duly authorised, in many instances at their own cost, and in others, for such remuneration as would suffice to pay their expenses, had held services at one or two stations on Sundays, visited the sick, baptized infants, and performed their work under the guidance of the priest, who had obtained the bishop's license for them to act as his assistants or curates. If they were deacons, they might occasionally minister in the principal churches, whilst the priest visited the out-stations, and administered the Holy Communion. He considered that the church was incurring a fearful responsibility in allowing so many thousands of souls to perish, or to stray from her communion, because she insisted that her dignity required that the message of salvation should only be delivered by men who had received a collegiate or classical education. If a sufficient number of these men were to be found, and could be supported, he would then say there was no need for this extension of the diaconate. He, for one, denied that the report contemplated the lowering of the standard of education required before a man be admitted to the office of priest. In his opinion, it would be unfair to those who had gone to the expense and labour of acquiring that superior education, only to be obtained by passing through a collegiate course, if the deacons proposed by the report to be ordained, were to be allowed the same privileges and the same hopes held out to them of promotion. There was no reason to fear that with present prospects there would be many candidates offering themselves. The remuneration, if any, would be comparatively trifling. They would be subjected to an examination, and only ordained by the bishop when he was satisfied as to their fitness for the work. He hoped the Synod would urge this question at once on the consideration of the House of Bishops, as, in his opinion, without some such action, the church, instead of opening new missions, will, as clergymen grow old and feebler, lose thousands who had attended their ministrations.

Rev. Dr. SMOOR agreed with Rev. Mr. Kennedy that this was a country question. They must either give up their people to the hands of other denominations for want of some increased agency, and they were losing their people because they were too proud to recognise a lower standard of education for assistants. It was a common saying that they attended only to the gentry and neglected the lower classes, and that in great