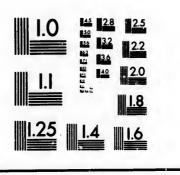
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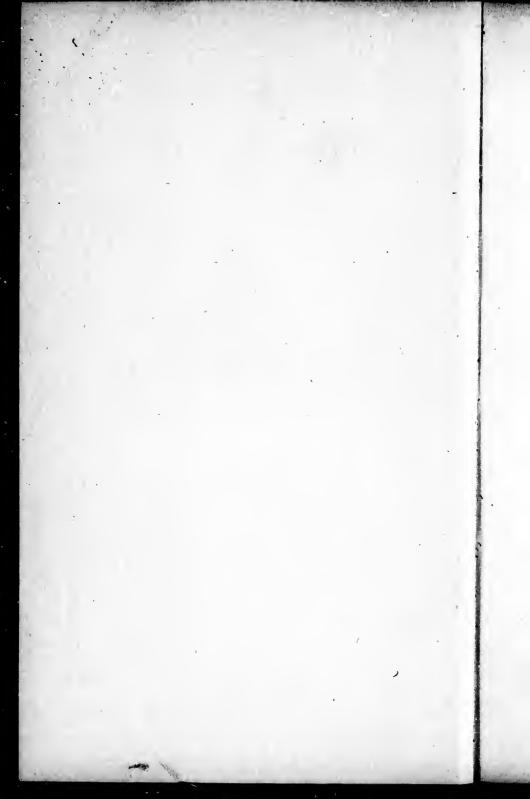
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Grobellew

SPEECH

OF

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL

SIR HOWARD DOUGLAS,

BART., G.C.B.,

(MEMBER FOR LIVERPOOL),

ON

SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTION

IN THE

COLONIES,

IN THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

APRIL 24, 1843.

EXTRACTED FROM

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.



SPEECH.

Sir H. Douglas said, that he should not permit himself to be led into any discussion on colonial affairs by what had fallen from the hon. Member for Coventry; but this he must say in passing, in reply to the desire expressed by the hon. Member to get rid of the colonies altogether, that the total value of British goods and manufactures taken from this country by the colonies in 1841 was upwards of 15,000,000l. sterling -a proof of the vast value of our colonies in this respect, which no one in or out of that House ought to underrate at any time, but more particularly in the present state of distress, in this country, arising from deficient consumption of British productions. As the subject of the ecclesiastical establishment for the colonies was now before the committee, he wished also to call the attention of her Majesty's Government to the very powerful appeal recently

made on behalf of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, showing more especially the necessity of increased means for the extension of religious and moral instruction, but the inability of the society to provide for these high objects, or even to keep faith with their missionaries already engaged in this high and holy calling. As the passage to which he adverted was short, he would read it:—

"The tide of Emigration (it said) continues to flow to British America and Australia; tens of thousands of poor lahourers are to be found in the forests of Canada without churches, or clergymen, or schools; while the Australian settlements, originally designed for a small number of convicts, have grown up rapidly into populous colonies, nearly destitute of the means of religious and moral improvement. In the East Indies great Britain has established her dominion over a hundred millions of Hindoos or Mahomedans. The West Indian colonies are making great efforts for the education of their colonred population; while on the western coast of Africa, and at the Cape of Good Hope, are settlements which promise to open a way into the immense region inhabited by the Negro and the Caffre. At the present time, moreover, the peace recently concluded with China, affords the opportunity of not merely extending the commercial intercourse of the English nation, but also of planting a branch of Christ's Church, in that large and densely-peopled empire."

The noble Lord, the Secretary of State

for the Colonies, had stated, correctly he feared, the gradual withdrawing, and, in 1833, the cessation, of the parliamentary grant to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to which he had already adverted. He most earnestly entreated her Majesty's Government to consider the inadequacy of the funds of that Society, to provide spiritual aid and religious instruction to settlers now in the colonies, in connection with the Church of England; far less to provide for these most essential objects, relatively with any more extensive system of colonization; and he would particularly advert to the impracticability, for want of funds, to carry into effect a measure of the very highest importance, long urgently required, approved, recommended, and designed—he meant, the founding a bishopric in the province of New Brunswick. The noble Lord, the Member for London, when Secretary of State for the Colonies, announced his intention, on the 31st of December, 1840, to advise her Majesty to found a bishopric in that province; and the grounds upon which that noble Lord formed that intention, and which he so well expressed, were,-

"That the constitution of the Church of England has no authority within it, excepting that of a Bishop, competent to ordination, to enforce rules of discipline, or even to connect thoroughly into one body the various ministers of local districts,

[&]quot;That the Roman Catholic Church is full.

organised in this respect, and so is the Church of Scotland; and it does not seem appropriate that members of the Church of Eugland, in considerable numbers, should either be under the superintendence of a Bishop residing at a great distance, or be left entirely to voluntary contribution in this essential matter.

"For these reasons, his Lordship proposed to advise the Queen to erect a bishopric in New Brunswick, and stated his opinion that the Imperial Parliament should make provision for this foundation to the extent of 600l. per annum, which charge should appear in the estimates."

The noble Lord's expectation was, he believed, that means would be contributed towards this endowment in New Brunswick, either by voluntary subscription or from local funds. Scon after, he returned from the Ionian Islands, he was requested to become a member of the New Brunswick Bishopric Society, for the purpose of seeking contributions, in furtherance of this great object. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, notwithstanding their diminished means, by the withdrawing of the parliamentary grant, and the numerous claims made upon those diminished means, had appropriated, out of their small and lessening capital, the sum of 20,000l., 3 per cent. Cons., in trust. for this endowment; but, notwithstanding the most zealous and urgent endeavours of the New Brunswick Committee, a sum not exceeding about 2,300l. had been promised by subscription. But he regretted

to say, that nearly the whole of that sum was subscribed with a condition attached, that he thought most objectionable, and subject to which it ought not, he thought, to be accepted. That condition did not indeed interfere with the authority by which the Bishop of New Brunswick may be appointed, so far as to dictate who the person ought to be; but it does stipulate who that person is not to be, by an exclusive condition, of which he should say no more, at present, than to remark, that such conditions, or expectations, as these are not unfrequently attempted, when provision for such high and holy offices are to be made by voluntary contribution; and there are no funds, whatever, at the disposal of the Crown, in the Province of New Brunswick, applicable to this, or any other purpose. He earnestly hoped, and fervently prayed, her Majesty's Government to take into their consideration this very important and most interesting measure, with a view to advise her Majesty, at their pleasure and convenience, to carry it into No one can read the sad history of the times, relating to the first troubles in British North America-no one can peruse Hutchison's History of Massachussets Bay, and the biographies of other men that figured, on both sides, in those daysno person can have communicated, largely, as he had done, with the old loyalists, who bled and suffered in that struggle, without being struck with one great and signal

error which was committed in those and earlier days, and which possibly had a more fatal effect than even the errors which were committed in legislation and taxation, -that great error consisted in not having properly provided for, supported, and upheld by endowment, the National Church of England, in those colonial possessions which became the resort of sects and sets of persons, who first overthrew the Monarchy here, and then overturned it there. He did trust in God that we were not to repeat that sad error for so sordid and trifling a consideration, as that which now prevents the long contemplated, and most desirable measure, of founding a bishopric in the province of New Brunswick, from being carried into immediate effect.

