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CHURCH CONVOCATION (NOVA SCOTIA).

COURSE OF EXTRACTS OF CORRESPONDENCE
between the Secretary of State for the Colonies
and the Lieutenant-Governor of *Nova Scotia*, on
the Subject of the Establishment of a Church
Convocation in the Diocese of *Nova Scotia*.

(*Mr. John Ball.*)

Ordered, by the House of Commons, to be Printed,
11 August 1855.

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CHURCH CONVOCATION (NOVA SCOTIA).

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 30 July 1855;—for,

“COPIES OF EXTRACTS of CORRESPONDENCE between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Lieutenant-Governor of *Nova Scotia*, on the Subject of the ESTABLISHMENT of a CHURCH CONVOCATION in the Diocese of *Nova Scotia*.”

Colonial Office, }
10 August 1855. }

JOHN BALL.

COPIES OF EXTRACTS of CORRESPONDENCE between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Lieutenant-Governor of *Nova Scotia*, on the Subject of the ESTABLISHMENT of a CHURCH CONVOCATION in the Diocese of *Nova Scotia*.

— No. 1. —

(No. 6.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Honourable Lord *John Russell* to
Lieutenant-Governor Sir *J. G. Le Marchant*.

No. 1.
Right Hon. Lord
John Russell to
Lieut.-Governor
Sir J. G. Le Mar-
chant.
27 April 1855.

Sir,

Downing-street, 27 April 1855.

I TRANSMIT, for your information, the copy of a letter from the rector and churchwardens of St. George's parish, Nova Scotia, enclosing certain resolutions, passed at a public meeting, on the subject of the establishment of a Church Convention in that diocese.

12 April.

You will acquaint the rector and churchwardens that I have received their communication, but that it should, in accordance with the established regulation, be transmitted through you, in order that Her Majesty's Government may have the benefit of any report or observations which the importance of the subject may require.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Russell*.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Encl 1, in No. 1.

Vestry Room, St. George's Parish, Halifax, Nova Scotia,
12 April 1855.

To the Right Honourable Lord *John Russell*.

WE, the Rector and Churchwardens of Saint George's Parish, in this city, having been delegated by a meeting of the parishioners, held on Easter Monday last, to transmit to your Lordship certain resolutions passed at that meeting in reference to the proposed Church Convention to be established in this diocese; we have now the honour to enclose for your Lordship's information the accompanying resolutions.

We feel it our solemn and conscientious duty, in conjunction with the parishioners whom we represent, respectfully to protest against the formation of any Church Synod in this diocese at present, and to beg that the Act proposed in the Imperial Parliament may not pass, as it is not required, and would only tend to produce novelties and discord among us.

The Church of England in these colonies has perfect freedom of action, and sufficient laws to govern and enforce all her proceedings; we therefore wish for no changes in her constitution or ritual; nor do we desire our Bishop to be invested with any authority beyond the legitimate prerogatives of his office.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO

Whilst we should be willing to adopt the constitution of the Episcopal Church in America, we are opposed to the introduction of any changes into the diocese at present, until we are first made fully acquainted with the principles of the proposed new constitution.

We are also of opinion that many other parishes in the diocese coincide with us on these points, and would rather that things should remain as they are at present in the diocese; and if any legislative interference be required, we would rather that it should be instituted here in our Colonial Parliament, upon the joint representation of the Church.

We therefore hope that your Lordship will defer the consideration of the Colonial Church Bill now before Parliament, and allow the enclosed resolutions from the second parish in importance in the diocese to have some weight.

We have, &c.

(signed) *Robert Fitzgerald Uniacke, A. M.,*
Rector of St. George's.

(signed) *John T. Walford,* }
J. W. Merket, } Churchwardens.

Encl. 2, in No. 1.

Enclosure 2, in No. 1.

Parish of Saint George's, Halifax, Nova Scotia,
9 April 1855.

EXTRACT from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Church Wardens, Vestry and Parishioners,
held this day at the Parish School House.

ON motion of J. W. Merket, Esq., seconded by F. W. Morris, Esq., the following Resolutions were submitted:

Whereas, at the parish meeting, held in St. George's parish, in the City of Halifax, on the 18th September 1854, it was unanimously resolved,

"That this meeting is of opinion that the establishment of periodical Church assemblies in this diocese, at the present time, is both inexpedient and unadvisable."

"That the Bill passed last year by the House of Lords, referred to in the recent circular of his Lordship the Bishop to the clergy, and by which Bill he states the assembly is to be governed, is inadequate to a full and free synodical action, and would not sufficiently enlarge the privileges of churchmen, inasmuch as by the provisions of that Bill no voice is allowed to clergy or laity in the future nomination or appointment of their bishop, and, further, that no regulations for the management of Church affairs are valid without the consent of the Bishop; that while we respect the office of a Bishop, we do not approve of a Bishop possessing the power to nullify the deliberate action of so large and influential a body as the clergy and laity." And at which meeting Napean Clark and Thos. B. Aiken, Esquires, were appointed delegates to represent the congregation of St. George's, with instructions to oppose the formation of a Church Synod.

And whereas our said delegates have this day reported their proceedings to this meeting,

Resolved, "That this meeting approve of the course pursued by the said delegates, in voting against the establishment of a Diocesan Synod or Convention in Nova Scotia."

Resolved, "That in consequence of it being the intention of the Bishop to construct the Synod, in conformity with the terms of a certain Act, introduced into the House of Lords in 1853, which places an unconditional veto in the Diocesan on all the proceedings of colonial synods, it is the opinion of this meeting that such a constitution would not be acceptable to the laity, because a direct unqualified veto in the Bishop, in his capacity of a separate branch of the synod, would in a great measure deprive the clergy and laity of that independent position which would render it worth the while of laymen to take an interest in Church legislation; that such a constitution would give to the opinion of one person a greater weight than the collective opinions of the whole body of the clergy and laity of the diocese, and they are confirmed in this opinion by the working of the system in the American diocese of Vermont, where the convention is in fact reduced to a cipher, as is shown by the words of Bishop Hopkins, of that diocese, in his pamphlet lately published, who says, "If the proposition under debate be so obnoxious to the Bishop's judgment that he cannot accede to it, he says so, and there is no vote taken at all."

That this meeting is strengthened in their opinion by the fact, that out of above 32 dioceses in the United States of America, but one has adopted the veto; all the other bishops having relinquished any claim to such an authority in the various conventions, though in some of the dioceses where the Bishop disagrees to the measure passed by the Convention, the question is sent back for further discussion, when two-thirds of both clergy and laity must affirm it before it can pass in opposition to the opinion of the Bishop.

That by placing an unqualified veto on the Bishop, he becomes clothed with a power beyond that of the Sovereign under the British constitution, who, though a separate branch of the Legislature, yet exercises no direct veto in opposition to the other two branches. In the case of the Sovereign, there is a council selected from the other two branches, who advise the Crown, so that no important measure is introduced by Govern-
ment

ment into the Legislature which they are of opinion cannot be carried. The Crown, in its legislative as well as its administrative capacity, is compelled to change its policy; but in the case of a bishop with a right of veto, sitting in a synod of clergy and laity, his position is very different; he sits and debates in the same chamber, and by expressing an absolute and irresponsible opinion, he must necessarily influence the independent action of the clergy and laity, and thus (as in Vernon) nothing is put to vote in the Convention which does not comport with the views entertained by the diocesan; the Bishop thereby possessing the power which is not recognised in any free constitution in Europe or America.

Resolved,—That this parish remains unaltered in its opinion, expressed in its resolutions of September 1854, and respectfully protest against the formation of such a convention, as calculated to disturb the present harmony and unity of this diocese, and to lead to the introduction of novelties and changes destructive of the peace of the Church.

Resolved,—That this meeting desire to express their respect for their Bishop, and regret that they are compelled to differ with him in opinion on this important subject.

Resolved,—That the foregoing Resolutions be forwarded by the rector and churchwardens, accompanied by suitable remonstrances to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Colonial Secretary, and that they be also published.

Passed unanimously.

(A true Copy.)

(signed) *John C. Cragen,*
Vestry Clerk.

— No. 2. —

(No. 61.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Lieutenant-Governor Sir *J. G. Le Marchant* to the Right Honourable Lord *John Russell*.

Halifax, N. S., 24 May 1855.

(Received 4 June 1855.)

My Lord,

A DESPATCH, No. 6, dated 27th April last, which I had the honour of receiving on the 8th of May, enclosed to me the copy of a letter from the rector and churchwardens of St. George's parish, Halifax, Nova Scotia, together with certain resolutions, passed at a public meeting, on the subject of the establishment of a Church Convocation in that diocese.

The letter of the rector and churchwardens, therein referred to, I conceived it my duty to forward to the Archdeacon of this diocese, in the absence of the Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia, with a request that he would be so good as to afford me the benefit of any report or observations which the importance of the subject, in his opinion, may require, for your Lordship's information.

I now have the honour to transmit to your Lordship the enclosed report of the Archdeacon, by which your Lordship will perceive, that the Bishop of Nova Scotia has lately received a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he congratulates his Lordship on the success which has attended his first movements, and expresses a hope that he may also succeed in the establishment of such meetings.

I have, &c.

(signed) *J. Gaspard Le Marchant.*

Enclosure in No. 2.

Encl. in No. 2.

Sir,

Halifax, 23 May 1855.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your letter of the 10th instant, enclosing copies of certain documents from the rector and churchwardens of St. George's Parish, Halifax, requesting me to report, for his Excellency's information, upon the circumstances of the case.

On the 4th August 1854, the bishop of the diocese addressed a circular to the clergy, appointing 11th October 1854 as the day of his visitation at Halifax. In his circular he also stated, in reference to the Colonial Church Bill then before the British Parliament, that he had at length determined to summon a meeting of clergy and lay delegates, to be held the day following the visitation day, "in order that the members of the Church may decide for themselves whether they will hold periodical Church assemblies or not."

Consequently a large meeting was held at Halifax, consisting of clergy and lay representatives of the Church. After much deliberation it was decided by a large majority in favour of holding such meetings, viz.:

For the Meetings, 37 Clergymen and 28 Lay Delegates.

Against them - 9 ditto - - 10 ditto.

Such are the circumstances of the case.

No. 2.
Lieut.-Governor
Sir J. G. Le Mar-
chant to the Right
Hon. Lord John
Russell.
24 May 1855.

12 April 1855.
9 April 1855.

23 May 1855.

4 CORRESPONDENCE:—CHURCH CONVOCATION, NOVA SCOTIA.

The Bishop has lately had a letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which he congratulates his Lordship on the success which has attended his first movements, and expresses a hope that he may also succeed in the final establishment of such meetings.

Captain Walker,
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Robert Willis*, Archdeacon.

— No. 3. —

No. 3.
Right Hon. Lord
John Russell to
Lieut.-Governor
Sir J. G. Le Marchant.

11 June 1855.

(No. 9.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from the Right Honourable Lord *John Russell* to
Lieutenant-Governor *Sir J. G. Le Marchant*.

Sir,

Downing-street, 11 June 1855.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, No. 61, of the 24th of May, enclosing a letter from the Archdeacon on the subject of the establishment of a Church Convocation in the diocese of Nova Scotia.

I have, &c.
(signed) *J. Russell*.
