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C O N V O C A T I O N

HELD AT

Bishop's Court,

THURSDAY, JUNE 4TH, 1857,

BY THE

BISHOP OF SODOR AND MANN.

DOUGLAS :

M. P. BACKWELL, PRINTER, ATHOLL STREET.

C H A R G E .

MY REVEREND BRETHREN,

BEFORE I attempt to engage your attention in reference to those subjects which I alluded to in my last Charge as deserving of serious consideration, I must revert to our proceedings last year in Convocation.

You then decided unanimously, after a full and free discussion of the question, that Synodal action in this diocese was desirable; without one dissentient voice, you agreed upon what the constitution of our Synod should be; you settled sundry details respecting the time and place of its meetings, and how they should be commenced. In your decisions I concurred heartily, and in your prescribed order for the meetings of your synod, I felt that you had done all you could to secure in its deliberations a spirit of humility, charity, and brotherly love. I pray God that by such means the fruits of wisdom may be made manifest among us for years to come,—of that “wisdom from above” which is promised to all who ask for it “in faith, nothing wavering,” which shall manifest to us how we ought to speak and walk towards them that

are without, "redeeming the time"—which shall constrain us to renounce "Envy and strife," producing, as they always do, "Confusion and every evil work," and keep us "first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy," remembering that "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

It is needful that I should inform you of one of the first-fruits of our synodal meetings, bearing, as it does, upon the passage in my last charge respecting my intention of establishing, in connection with the Wilson memorial Chapel or Cathedral, a Theological College, or School of Pastoral Theology and Practice, wherein young men, after completing their ordinary course of education, might be trained in the special duties of the ministry for service in the Manx Church. I reminded you that this intention was the result of my desire to walk, as far as practicable, in the footsteps of Bishop Wilson. Although this decision was announced to you before the appointment in Convocation of the Diocesan Synod, I felt myself in duty bound to court the opinion of the members of the synod in a matter to which I attached so much importance in reference to the future interests of our Church; and in accordance with an undertaking to report to you the result of all our deliberations, but without publishing the opinions or votes of individual members of the Synod, I shall now only place on record the reason why my declared intention has been abandoned. The entry in our Journal of a meeting held on the 29th of September, 1856, is as follows, "The members of the Synod having severally expressed their opinion that it is inexpedient to attempt the establishment of such an institution, the Bishop expressed his readiness, though with reluctance, not to issue the commission referred to in his Charge." Although the members of the Sy-

nod have severally pledged themselves not to publish the details of discussions on questions submitted to them for decision, I may be permitted, under the special circumstances of this conclusion, to observe, that in manifesting my readiness to yield to the judgment of the most experienced of the Clergy of this diocese, though reluctant to abandon a project which still seems to me to be both practicable and full of promise for the future welfare of the diocese, I have given you proof of the sincerity of my declaration when I took upon myself the official responsibility of your ruler, that I desired to exercise my ministry among you in suggesting and assisting, rather than in authoritatively directing you. My heart's desire truly was, and is, to "strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die,"—"to build the old waste places,"—to raise up the foundations of many generations,"—to be called with you "the repairers of the breach" which the want of watchfulness in a past generation has suffered in our Zion,—to be with you "the restorer of paths to dwell in," such as those in which Churchmen walked together, when under Evangelical guidance, truly so designated, "they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

To revert again to our proceedings in Convocation last year. You then confirmed unanimously the minute which was read to you of the proceedings of a provisional meeting held September 17th, 1855. Thus you recorded your judgment that beneficial results might be expected from a general visitation of every parish in the diocese, "if conducted by the Bishop accompanied by the Archdeacon, at their joint convenience; articles of enquiry, to be agreed upon by the Bishop and Archdeacon, having been previously issued to the Clergy by the Registrar." This has been done, and it now remains for us to make some practical use of the information that has been collected.

If, my Reverend Brethren, I sought to please men, and to justify myself in settling down for the sake of an insecure peace among "them that are at ease in Zion," I would not again advert to unpopular subjects which I have alluded to in my previous Charges; and it is now only with the hope and prayer that we may be stirred up to a higher sense of our responsibilities and our duties in the spiritual offices to which we are severally called, that I must again advert to the most painful result of the visitation, viz., the confirmation of all that I have hitherto stated respecting the spiritual and ecclesiastical, the intellectual and moral condition of this diocese. The Church has indeed lost her hold on the affections of the people; and her ministry, to all appearance, is powerless in "banishing and driving away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's word," and in repressing offences which are alike opposed to the will of God, and to the decent order of the "one Catholic and Apostolic Church" of Christ.

Is such a statement calculated to offend any one among us, rather than to humble all of us in our corporate capacity?—Even if this were sure to be the case, nevertheless I dare not keep silence, and refrain from the discharge of a positive duty, the neglect of which would place my own soul in peril. No unprejudiced reader of Scripture can peruse the charges of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, in their office of Bishop, without coming to the conclusion not only of what are to be regarded as signs of perilous times to the Church, but what is the duty, under certain circumstances, of those who are commissioned in Christ's stead "to set in order the things that are wanting" for the maintenance of sound doctrine and apostolic traditions, and to correct abuses of the law of liberty which may, from time to time, arise from without or from within. It would be well for us and for the church, if we more frequently

contemplated the nature and extent of our ordination vows, with special reference to God's unchangeable will, rather than to the fluctuating opinions of the world. Respect among men is sure to be given to ministrations which are zealously carried on in a spirit of faithful subordination to the plain and positive injunctions of recognized authority; and God's blessing on the labours of His ministers, in such a course, is sure. My office is thus defined in our Consecration Service—"to maintain and set forward, as much as lies in me, quietness, love, and peace, among all men;" but "such as be unquiet, disobedient, and criminous" I am to "correct and punish, according to such authority as I have by God's word, and as has been committed to me by the Ordinance of this Realm."

With a view only of promoting "quietness, love, and peace among all men," I have adverted, on former occasions, to the prevalence of schism in this Island, as manifested in those who separate themselves from the communion of the church. I am aware that my spirit in making these remarks has been misrepresented, and my heart's desire to promote unity opposed by a display of ignorance which is pitiable, and wholly unworthy of notice, except we take it as an illustration of the lamentable fact that Dissenters, as at present influenced, only abstain from open and active warfare with us so long as we are culpably timid and inactive in our own ministry. Revived energy on the part of Churchmen invariably rouses Nonconformist leaders to vigorous opposition; and in this respect, their unhal- lowed acrimony may be taken as a measure of our own fidelity; while, on the other hand, their acquiescence in our mode of proceeding may be taken as a proof that we regard not, as we ought to do, our ordination vows.

I would have any one of you, my Reverend Brethren, who laments over the continued desertion of his

flock, strive to trace it to his own shortcomings in the path of duty, rather than attempt to account for it in any other way. We cannot be together too much humbled in our ministry, if only we are thereby impelled to imitate in all things the example of our Divine Master and Pattern,—if in His name we speak with authority the whole truth in love, with gracious words—if, with Him, we pray to the Father for unity, humbly beseeching Him, that all “who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life,”—if, doing the work of evangelists, we give full proof of our apostolic ministry in all things which appertain to our spiritual callings, being ourselves ensamples to the flock.

I have said on a former occasion, “It is a mistake to suppose that Dissenters of any class will be brought back again into the bosom of the Church by the compromise of essential principles.” I have also observed before, that it is unjust to Dissenters to impute *to them alone*, the divisions and offences which prevail, contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, and to the traditions which we have been taught. Convictions such as these, strengthened by experience and observation, compel me to be just to Nonconformists, whilst I strive to be honest with the members of our own communion, and, lamentable as is the fact, that the Church has, for the time, lost her influence over the still professing admirers of the apostolic Wilson; yet I cannot, from any desire for popularity among Churchmen, forbear to express my own honouring regard for the zeal and self-sacrifice which is manifest around us among those who discard our discipline, and conform no longer to the order of our Church. When first I was an anxious enquirer into the Ecclesiastical condition of this diocese, I found it recorded, in the reports prepared by Mr. Horace Mann after the last census, that the Church

provided "sittings" for "17,210," whilst dissenters had provided sittings for 33,985.* In the expectation that these returns were excessive, I have caused enquiry to be made respecting the number of Nonconformist places of worship in each parish, and, according to your own returns, I find that they number ninety-one, whilst our own Churches, Chapels, and licensed school-rooms amount only to thirty-one. And when I look at the apparent concern for the external preservation of buildings devoted to God's service, together with the wisdom manifested in their size, and in their locality, by dissenters, I cannot but mourn over the comparative want of foresight and discretion which has permitted many of our Churches to continue in a dilapidated condition, whilst their size, their locality, and their comfortless arrangements betoken a want of that zeal which the Scriptures allude to as characteristic of our Redeemer's regard for the externals of devotion. When also in my journeyings through the diocese, I have witnessed the number and respectability of the congregations assembling for, and separating after, their religious services in these meeting-houses,—when I contemplate the sacrifices they must voluntarily make for the maintenance of their services, and for the provision of their teachers, without seemingly grudging us the undisturbed possession of comparative wealth,—when, I say, I witness these proofs of religious feeling, I cannot but the more regret that it takes both an unscriptural character and an unauthorized direction, and I pray for guidance in attempts to direct it, as opportunity may be granted, in a manner which shall betoken more enlightened acquaintance with the Scriptures, and a spirit of greater sobriety. Such however, as it is, under the circumstances which have produced it, I cannot uncharitably condemn it.

* The total population of the Island is only 52,116, while by this return, seat-room appears to be provided for 51,195

But I must again direct your attention to some observations which I ventured to make to you two years ago—"Every thoughtful observer of the times must see that there is, throughout the world, a progressive spirit of religious excitement." In our own Church there is a yearning for such satisfaction as cannot be felt under the influence of teaching, which in matter and style is unedifying, and of services which have lost their animating power through ignorance of their Scriptural and highly spiritual character. I have said "If we do not encourage, rather than repress, this craving for something real in faith and service,—if we do not, on the one hand, guard the precious treasure of the faith which is committed to us, from all who would alloy it with unscriptural traditions; and if we do not, on the other hand, so occupy the gift till the Master of it comes again, that he may receive His own with usury, and find us prepared to prove our faithfulness in saving souls alive,—God will correct us, and first, by the very hands of those, who, otherwise, would be forward to maintain and defend us. In times, such as ours, of religious excitement, there will be, no doubt, as there ever has been, a tendency to run into extremes, and to be uncharitable. Be it so, our course is clear."

Yes, my Reverend Brethren, and whilst it is clear that Holy Scripture prescribes to us but one path to walk in as "stewards of the mysteries of God," "Who hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation,"—while in such a ministry it behoves us "to utter by the tongue words easy to be understood," and, in case of peril, to blow the trumpet of alarm with sounds of no uncertain character—surely experience teaches us that as it is inexpedient to withhold any truths because they may offend ignorant prejudice, so is it fruitless to abandon the external symbols of distinctive worship to avoid slanderous reproach. Where, let me ask you, are the proofs of success in misdirected efforts to promote

unity by the exhibition of a Jesuitical spirit in the developement of those doctrinal statements which our Book of Common Prayer sets forth? Where are the symptoms of a desire for unity engendered by efforts to assimilate our places of divine worship to meeting-houses, where preaching is unduly magnified as if it were the one only sacramental means of grace? What profit has accrued from the banishment from many of our oldest Churches of their ancient fountains, and using them as troughs to feed swine, or ornaments in flower-gardens, or allowing them to remain as useless lumber in our grave-yards? What profit is manifest from the regulation of the times and seasons of our worship to suit the convenience of others who have appointed the ancient hours of Church Services for their own religious meetings? What symptoms of concord are growing out of the abstinence from teaching that Catechism which our Reformers have handed down to us as the standard of our instruction? What feeling, even of personal regard, has been won by clergy of the Established Church, who, in their own persons, or through their families, have given their sanction in times recent to dissenting meetings? Where, in a word, is the encouragement given to us by dissenters, for a continued systematic abandonment of all distinctive principles of teaching, or of service, under the name of compromise for the sake of peace? Is it not a fact that they have now, for all practical purposes, assumed towards us a dictatorial tone, which, with the authority of numbers to enforce their directions, prescribes to us what we are to teach, and what to do, in order to win from them some occasional attendance on our ministry, not as a duty, but merely as an act of personal courtesy?

Is it not to this notorious fact, my Reverend Brethren, and to the seeming hopelessness of attempting any other course than that which you have hitherto pursued, that I must ascribe the direction of your zeal

towards the evangelization of any other people in any other quarter of the world, rather than those of your ancient diocese, and of your native Isle? In my last charge, I alluded to the efforts which are made in this diocese to collect money for religious societies elsewhere, as compared with similar efforts to render the established institutions of this Island as efficient as they ought to be. In this, I only echoed the sentiments expressed by Bishop Bowstead in 1839; and that such remarks might be justified by the evidence of facts, I then undertook to furnish you, at our present Convocation, with some statistical information respecting what is being done in this Diocese for religious societies elsewhere,—hoping thereby to satisfy you that there is need of a caution, lest, in our zeal for distant objects of commiseration, we overlook the fact that infidelity, in some shape or other, is creeping in among our own population. The following table, filled up from your own returns, shews the total sum collected for Religious Societies, during the past year, to be £980 17s 10d. which is distributed as follows,*— Thus we see that for our home Missionary Society only £206 7 11½ is collected, to which, if we add

* Diocesan Society.....	£206	7	11½
Church Missionary Society	249	9	2¼
S. P. G.	82	6	1½
Bible Society	118	15	4½
Curates' Aid Society	1	0	0
Pastoral Aid	121	6	6
Colonial Church and School	29	8	11
Jews Society	65	2	1½
National Society	20	16	1¼
Irish Church Missions	9	0	2
Douglas Scripture Readers'	75	5	4½

Total £980 17 10

*These amounts appear in every case to fall below the sums stated in the printed reports, but I was desirous that the returns should be made by yourselves, and the relative proportion of the sums collected remains about the same.

the £75 5 4½ for the Scripture Readers in Douglas, out of £980 17 10, only £281 13 4 remains at our disposal for Missionary purposes at home.

But, my Reverend Brethren, while I am speaking to you on the subject of associations for religious purposes, I must animadvert (and it is with painful reluctance that I do so) upon certain proceedings of a section of our Church members who notoriously hold exceedingly contracted views of evangelical doctrine, and who desire to curtail the liberty of Churchmen between narrower limits than those which were wisely agreed upon at the Reformation.

Till lately, I was in hopes that we might escape the contagion of sectarian strife which elsewhere has manifested itself by feverish excitement, and been productive of party divisions and fierce contests. It was essential to our strength and influence in so small a community, that we should act together, as clergy, with one mind and one heart. I was resolved to make any sacrifice of inclination that my conscience would permit me to make, to secure this result with reference to societies for religious objects; and I at once, and without hesitation, accepted office when called thereto, in every association established in the diocese before my episcopate, save one. This one, I could not conscientiously countenance, because, in its fundamental rule of action it struck at the liberty of every parochial clergyman who sought its aid, and improperly interfered with his freedom to consult his own Bishop in the selection of his own assistant curate.*

**Extract from Report of the Pastoral Aid Society in 1853, under the head of "Questions on a case for aid."*

"Your special attention is requested to the VIIIth Regulation, (p.viii.) by which you will see that no Grant is valid unless the person supported by the Society has been duly nominated to and approved by the Committee; which approval must be obtained BEFORE ANY NOMINATION IS MADE TO THE BISHOP BY THE INCUMBENT, OR ANY ENGAGEMENT IS CONCLUDED WITH THE NOMINEE, con-

But, since we met last year, my hope has been destroyed; and, after much anxious deliberation, I feel it to be incumbent upon me both to speak and act in such a manner, as at once to place on record evidence of the fact that an unseemly course of opposition to authority, without any local provocation, has been entered on, against which I feel it to be my duty to protest, having no legal power to protect the Diocese from the consequences which I apprehend as the result of such a course.

I allude, first, to the perseverance which has been manifested in advocating the claims of a recently-formed association, under the title of "Colonial Church and School Society."

It is well known that a branch of this Society was attempted to be formed in this Diocese against the wishes of my predecessor. My wishes and feelings upon this subject have been equally well known. I have no desire to provoke controversy respecting the operations of this Society. Its declared object is unquestionably good. But it is impossible to disconnect the language of its officers and supporters from the spirit of its operations; and, when I read in the public report of its proceedings in this Diocese, that it is specially recommended as "the strictly Protestant and Evangelical Society," for planting Churches and Schools in our Colonies, what can I conceive to be the conclusions which are intended to be pressed indirectly upon the public mind, but that the "Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," making our Colonial Empire, as it does, the first object of its missionary work,—though presided over and really governed by the whole bench of English and Colonial Bishops, with many Laymen distinguished for their zeal in works of love—is to be regarded as unworthy of its charter, untrue to its title,

cerning whom the fullest information is requested to be furnished, for the guidance of the Clerical members of the Sub-Committee, to whom this subject is referred.

not protestant in its principles, and propagating "some other Gospel" than that which the Evangelists have bequeathed to us in Holy Writ?

But pertinacity under such circumstances, and the use of such terms in recommending this particular Society to the inhabitants of this Island, is a trifling offence against the order and decency of our Church discipline, compared with the next act of manifest disregard for the spirit, if not the letter, of Ordination vows. Still is there a traceable consistency in the proceedings of that section of churchmen elsewhere, to whom I have alluded, in their seeming disposition to narrow the limits of liberty in matters of faith and practice to suit their own contracted views of Evangelical truth. Another Incorporated Society is assailed in a manner similar to that which the Propagation Society has experienced, and this, apparently, because in strict conformity with its charter, it promotes "the Education of the poor in the principles of the Established Church."

In compliance with the request of our Metropolitan, the Archbishop of York, I have lately called your attention to the claims of the National Society, and invited you to make collections in your churches and chapels in its behalf, on the ground of its having provided the means of instruction to upwards of a million of our poorer brethren. It is not for me to call in question the motives or reasons which have induced Her Majesty's responsible advisers to recommend the withdrawal of those Royal Letters, on which this, with two other Incorporated Societies, greatly depended for its continued ability to do good. My simple suggestion to you is met immediately by a reply to the effect that a large body of Clergy and Laity in England had joined in a protest against the substitution of Episcopal for Royal Letters.

My attention is thus unavoidably directed to a document which, otherwise, I might not have noticed as of any importance to the Church of this Isle. It is en-

titled "A Declaration respecting the issue of Episcopal, in lieu of Queen's Letters." The reason for its issue is given in a letter signed, "Wilbraham Taylor, in behalf of Lord Shaftesbury," and stating that, in consequence of a circular issued by the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury, inviting the Clergy of that province to make collections for the National Society, this declaration had been drawn up and numerously signed. But those who know how signatures to such documents are frequently procured, will not attach much importance to a seemingly large number of names. What concerns me much, however, is, that it bears the signature of clergymen in this Island, who have thus evinced a readiness to embroil us in a controversy from which we have been hitherto happily preserved. I cannot tell how soon this step may be followed up by the introduction into this Diocese of a Society, comprising, as it does, many whom I respect and love, and with whom I desire to act, which designates itself "The Church of England Education Society," which earnestly appeals to the Protestant public to enable it to carry out the great work it has undertaken, viz:—"to provide the children of our poor with a sound Scriptural Education in the protestant principles of the Established Church." It remains to be seen how soon deputations from this Society may be invited here to disturb our peace and unity by the most reckless accusations against a society to which we owe a heavy debt of gratitude,—falsely representing it as not acting consistently with the object for which it was originally incorporated,—insinuating that it is no longer the Church of England National Society,—that it does not provide, or care to provide, for the children of the poor, a sound Scriptural Education in the protestant principles of the Established Church. I do not deem it needful now to invite your attention to the origin of this movement in opposition to the National Society, or to point out to you the probable issue of it. But this I will venture to observe, that I

know not how those clergymen who have made themselves parties to this declaration, can reconcile their open avowal of indifference, even to Episcopal suggestions, with the vows which they made at their Ordination, "that they would reverently obey their Ordinary, and other chief Ministers unto whom is committed the charge and government over them, following with a glad mind their godly admonitions : and that they would maintain, as much as lieth in them, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people."

Perceiving the disposition to introduce into this Diocese that hateful party-spirit which prevails elsewhere, and from which this Island has been so happily free,—denied legitimate control over those who invite, and those who attend here as deputations, being the advocates of notoriously antagonistic societies,—I have thought it to be prudent, if not necessary, to withdraw from my position here, in any, save the three great Incorporated Societies, which, from their formation up to a very recent period, enjoyed, and still deserve, the good opinion and confidence, the cordial approbation and sympathy of the great majority of the members of our church.

In reference to the all-important subject of Education, I must venture a few remarks with special regard to the peculiar condition, wants, and prospects of this Island. Even if our time on such an occasion as this permitted, I should not be disposed to enlarge upon questions which now for some years have engaged the attention of public men, without leading to much practical result. I think, however, we may safely assume that the agitation of these questions has elicited certain facts which are of the first importance, and may influence us in any efforts that we make towards extending the means, and improving the the systems, of popular instruction. And here I would advert, in the first place, with thankfulness, to the many manifest declarations of public feeling as to the attempts which have been made to disconnect altogether religious

from secular instruction. Giving full credit, as I am disposed to do, to those who originated, and to those who have agitated this question, for motives of pure philanthropy, and a desire thus to get rid of the seemingly insuperable objections of religious bodies to any united system of spiritual teaching, I think that it is a matter of mutual congratulation to us as churchmen that such a scheme has been all but unanimously condemned. And if anything were wanting to satisfy us as to the soundness of public opinion on this point, we have it in the shape of positive evidence furnished by one to whom the Church of England owes a debt of gratitude for unwearied services and far-sighted policy, in his office, first as Secretary, and then as Treasurer of the National Society. Archdeacon Sinclair having undertaken to act as one of a deputation from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the American Board of Missions, which, according to established usage, assembles during the general Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church at New York, has published, in the form of a letter to the President of Her Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, some remarks on the Common School system of the United States. This system has been strongly recommended to us as one that the wisdom of our American brethren has adopted, and thereby solved the great problem which hitherto has baffled the Educationalists of this country. It is now shewn that under that system in America, a large number of children of the proper age to be in school, are not sent even for secular instruction, and that of those who do attend them, 10, 20, 30, 40, and in some places even 50 per cent of the scholars do not attend a Sunday School, and consequently do not receive religious instruction at all; and this in a country where we are told on good authority that "five-sixths of the homes of the people are irreligious;" "five-sixths of the parents of America not attending any place of public worship, and being therefore of course unqualified to give

a moral bent and religious instruction to their offspring. This being so, on the testimony of authority which is said to be "of the highest respectability and of great intelligence," we need not be surprised to hear at the same time that the system of National Education which makes no provision for the religious wants of the children is found to be "radically defective,"—that it is declared to be "not only injurious to the character of the rising generation, but a benevolent fraud upon the public bounty"—that "general mutterings of dissatisfaction are heard, especially among the Christian population"—"that the foster parents of this system confess to its bearing the elements of degeneracy in its own bosom," and that the cry of America is beginning to be, "Give us Christian schools, schools which have a God, a Saviour, a Holy Spirit—a Bible, a hymn book, a catechism and prayer, a pastor and pious school-teacher—a school between the family and the church—a school which will carry forward the Education of children in the same spirit in which it was commenced by pious parents,—a school that will be a nursery to the church—a school so entirely under the control of the church, that it may carry out the spirit of its great commission in reference to its own children, "Feed my Lambs."

Thus a voice from America speaks to us in terms of warning, founded on its own experience of a system which by others is described as "a disastrous failure," and proved to be so by the attendant increase of crime.

But in the publication alluded to, we have valuable evidence, not only condemnatory of exclusively secular teaching, but also of religious education, on any but some well defined principles of dogmatic instruction. An eminent Ecclesiastic in one of the Northern States, writes,—"In this State it was once the custom to teach in the ordinary schools the Westminster Catechism to the children of Congregationalists; and the Church Catechism to those of Churchmen. The divisions of

the Congregationalists however, and the fact that many of them became Methodists and Baptists, and sectaries of other names, resulted in so wide-spread an indifference in matters of religion, as to put an end to this, so that now, the only relic of this thing of old is found in the reading of the Bible, as an exercise in *reading-out* merely, in the schools." To such an extent did this system of compromise in matters of belief lead to a practical suppression of all religious knowledge, that, after a while, it was proved by inspection of these schools, that in only one district were any children found who knew the ten Commandments—and in one school where there were no Church children, not one scholar could be found who knew the Lord's Prayer; and a very intelligent person who desired the office of teacher, could not even tell the names of the first books of the Old Testament, although he is described as "well-instructed in other matters." Such a system may well call forth, as it has done, in America, the reprobation of even journalists, by one of whom, in a paper of no mean authority, it is thus described—"Indeed the prevailing school system is daringly and criminally deficient." Yet are we told that the wisdom of our American brethren has solved the great problem which has hitherto baffled the educationalists of this country.

In the document then, to which I have alluded, we find evidence of the fact, that the system of common school education in America is attended with an increase of crime, because "it is the education of only one side of human nature, and that not the controlling side; man's moral and religious nature constituting this other and better undeveloped half." "We may further state," writes a good authority of the same interesting country, "that the neglect of moral and religious instruction is a necessary consequence of a system where there are so many persuasions participat-

ing in the instruction, all of whose varying opinions must be respected. Each party is taxed for the support of the system; and each, however small, provided it be in earnest, pleads, by the sacred rights of conscience, for liberty of opinion, for freedom from religious bias; and thus every positive element of Christianity must be sedulously excluded."

But this is not all. Estrangement from church principles and church ordinances, among those who retain a religious profession in America, is there accounted for by disregard for them, or a lack of moral courage in expressing them, on the part of those who are charged with the training of the rising generation. In support of this allegation, we have the testimony of a very remarkable document, which was published at the request of a synod of the German Reformed Church. "It is the seemingly distant and careless attitude in which the common school system stands to the church in the education of children, which is so powerful in weaning their hearts from her. It is not positive opposition, but negative indifference, which is the root of the evil. It is in this, as in other cases, distance, coldness, carelessness, more than all else, that alienates the heart from what it ought to love, and would love but for that. A child weaned in early infancy, removed from its mother, brought up among strangers, not permitted to hear her name pronounced, except with the uplifted finger of caution, and hearing that it is almost a crime to praise her virtues,—such a child can never afterwards have all, if any, of the feelings which belong to the relations of a child to its mother. It is just so when we permit our children to be trained out of the church, where her name is not heard, except in a way which implies that she needs to be watched, and that her influence is especially to be deprecated in the nurture of man's intellectual nature. Thus

“ the Church is, in fact, a man of hideous face, looking
 “ out upon children from the dark, filling their young
 “ spirits with secret dread, and causing them to go as far
 “ as possible the other way for fear of hidden evil ; and
 “ just as those superstitious fears which are awakened
 “ in the confiding heart of childhood by thoughtless
 “ parents or injudicious nurses, can be removed by
 “ neither reason nor philosophy ; so the feelings of fear
 “ and jealousy towards religion, which this false system
 “ of education inspires, will present its repulsive im-
 “ ages before the spirit, in spite of its better judgment,
 “ to the latest hour of life ! He that—or any system
 “ that—instils into the heart of a child any fear but
 “ the fear of God, or raises any doubt or dread but for
 “ that which is evil, has made wrong what he can ne-
 “ ver make right.”

Your own experience and observation, my Reverend
 Brethren, will satisfy you that there is much truth in
 the foregoing remarks ; and that they are peculiarly
 applicable to us, under existing circumstances, in this
 island. And let me observe to you that, in selecting the
 evidence to which I have called your attention, I have
 purposely avoided arguments of my own, supported by
 illustrations of facts collected nearer home. This I
 have done, in order that what I advance for your in-
 formation may not lose its effect from any suspicion
 of its origin, as coming to you under the influence of
 any of those party feelings which have so sadly dis-
 tracted our Anglican Church, and brought us into the
 peril of which the Lord warns us, under the image of
 “ a house divided against itself.”

And now, though I have already taxed your patience
 longer than I intended, I must call your attention, in
 connection with the subject of education, to our own
 local position and powers to do the work which is
 evidently and reasonably expected of us : and, assuming
 that we are mindful of our commission to feed the

lambs of our Master's flock with food convenient for them, it remains for us either to accuse ourselves of neglect in the use of means which are at our disposal ; or, if we excuse ourselves on the ground that the means are wanting, to make our case known to the Church at large, and cry for help.

The growing feeling elsewhere is that the State must undertake this work of education,—that taxation must be resorted to for the supply of the requisite funds ; and that parents must, directly, or indirectly, be compelled to have their children educated. What evidence does this diocese contribute in support of such a theory ?

It is provided by the Common law of the Island, that a school should be built and maintained in substantial repair in every parish by assessment upon the inhabitants. By the Ecclesiastical constitution of the Island, agreed upon in Convocation, and accepted by the Insular Legislature, it is provided that, “for the promotion of education and good manners, all persons shall be obliged to send their children as soon as they are capable of instruction, to the petty (*i. e.* elementary) school, unless the parent give some just cause of excuse.” Those who neglect, upon the presentation of their Minister and Churchwardens, are to be fined one shilling per quarter. The Minister and Churchwardens are to send those children free whose parents are too poor to pay for them. In respect of all other children, a scale of payment is provided by law. The parochial schoolmasters are appointed upon the recommendation of the minister and parishioners, and are to be licensed by the Bishop. It is forbidden by law that any man should exercise the profession of schoolmaster whose qualifications have not been ascertained by a competent authority, and who has not been duly licensed. “The principle of state education,” remarks Mr. Moseley, Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools in 1847,

“appears to have received a legal recognition in the Isle of Man,” and “if, with a framework of laws such as these, the education of the Island comes short of those results which are to be expected from it, the cause must arise from some administrative neglect. That it should have fallen into the hands of a body of masters of whom a large proportion are, I fear, to be considered inadequately instructed, would be inexcusable, if the salary offered to a master were such as to secure qualified candidates for any vacancy which might occur.” “Among the existing masters, there are no doubt some who are to be considered in every way qualified for the office; there are probably others, who, if a sufficient motive and due encouragement were afforded, would, in course of time, render themselves so qualified; and there are perhaps some, whom no such motive or encouragement would elevate to the standard of the responsible duties they have undertaken.” To the two first classes, the Privy Council Committee on Education have offered, and do offer, the encouragement and the aid they stand in need of, not so as to render local co-operation unnecessary, but so as to call it forth”—whilst for the latter class my predecessor procured an Act of our Tynwald Court, enabling vestries, or the cess-payers of certain quarterlands constituted into a district for the purposes of this Act, to assess themselves in order to provide retiring pensions for inefficient masters. That Act gives, moreover, powers of local assessment for providing school houses and masters’ residences, or, where it is needful, for repairing and enlarging such as already exist, and for providing school furniture and good apparatus for teaching, and for the payment of salaries; enacting that, for the future, no schoolmaster shall be held to have a vested or life-interest in the school, but be subject to suspension or dismissal for sufficient reason assigned, by a committee appointed by the Act

for the management of the school, and acting in such suspension or dismissal with the sanction and authority of the Bishop. There has been, then, in this Island, from the year 1704, up to the present time, ample power provided by the United consent of Ecclesiastical and Civil authority for Educational purposes. Moreover, in 1847, Mr. Mosely states in his report, "the children whom I examined appeared to me singularly apt, quick, and intelligent, and fond of learning, and I have reason to believe that the parents are desirous that they should be instructed; that, in short, there is a public opinion generally favourable to education, as well among the industrial classes, as among the farmers." Any person reading such statements as these, and presuming that they are true, more especially any of those who now so zealously advocate the necessity of a legal recognition of the principle of state education, would expect to find our Island population remarkable as "a wise and understanding people." Is it so? Is it not rather the reverse of this? Look to the prevalent religious sentiments and customs of a vast majority of our people,—look for the indications of enlightened civilization in their social, domestic, and personal habits,—and what do we find? It is a common observation founded on practical experience, that "extremes meet," and we find just the same results of ignorance among our own people under the operation of latitudinarian principles, as the pages of history inform us, and modern observation teaches us, to be the produce of the Romish system of training, viz., slavery to the unscriptural assertions of men, as of infallible tradition, and superstitious fanaticism, in the place of "a zeal of God" which is "according to knowledge." What can be more remarkable, when the eternal interests of the soul are concerned, than the confidence which is placed by dissenters over a large portion of this Island, in the declarations and fanatical

statements of a class of self-constituted teachers, many of whom are hardly able even to read the text of Scripture? What more fearful than the passionate excitement which, under the name of a revival, has so lately spread itself over the length and breadth of the Island—under which not a few earnest people have been deprived, for a time at least, of the exercise of reason? What is the testimony of those who most love their native Island, and yet are constrained to acknowledge its inconsistencies with a Christian profession? Do they not bemoan just such indications of ignorance on the part of their own countrymen as lead them to express themselves in the language of the prophet of old, when he declared of God's ancient people, that they were "destroyed for lack of knowledge?" Did not the evangelical Wilson allude to certain "great and crying sins, which, if not repented of and forsaken, will certainly draw down God's judgments upon this nation," such as "the sins of drunkenness, tippling, whoredom, swearing, cursing, profaning the Lord's Day,—a mere formal religion, without any visible effect upon the lives of its professors,—a spirit of disobedience to government, a disregard for the sanctity of oaths, a too general proneness to litigiousness, and too little regard to justice and honesty betwixt man and man." And have these sins been rendered less prevalent, or otherwise, under a system of teaching and of discipline the reverse of that by which Wilson sought to check them?

I cannot now enter into details respecting the course of instruction which should be systematically pursued in our elementary day schools, in order to uproot superstition, and to lay the foundation for spiritual influence, which God may graciously bless to the production of righteous fruits. But, before we part, I must say a few words to you on the subject of our Sunday school system of training,

wherein we are freed from the ordinary hindrance of a want of pecuniary means to secure the services of highly instructed teachers. Much has been done, and wisely done, by the Privy Council Committee on Education, to promote, with local co-operation, the spread of science. It is indeed a question whether too much stimulus has not been given to a species of superficial philosophy, which, in times of old, produced the same results which it now seems to be producing in America. Into these questions I will not now enter. But a special blessing seems to be bestowed upon the earnest labours of those who have devoted themselves to the work of Sunday School instruction. As a striking testimony of this, I will venture to give you two extracts only from the reports of Her Majesty's Inspectors; and these passages I have selected because I happen to know that the remarks are just. Mr. Watkins says, in 1844, of Sunday Schools, "Of the utility of these schools, even on the "lowest grounds, as a means of keeping up connexion "with the children after they have left the daily school, "there can be little doubt. And when we consider that "they are the only means of *individual* religious in- "struction to thousands of young people in our manu- "facturing districts, we shall not easily over-rate their "value. One thing must, I think, be confessed of them "by all persons who have had opportunities of judging "them fairly, that their effects are curiously disproportion- "ate to the means apparently used in them—that "they are much greater, far beyond what might be ex- "pected of them, both in amount and duration. Taking "into consideration the few hours, in some not ex- "ceeding *two of actual employment*, during which they "are at work, the absence of all excitement, the fre- "quent want of method, the simplicity of their oper- "ations, and the seemingly small amount of instruction "imparted, I feel convinced that there is a special "blessing of God on these attempts to give his ac-

“countable creatures a knowledge of “Him in whom
 “they live and move and have their being.” In the
 “best which I have visited,—best, I mean as to in-
 “fluence and permanent effects—the school hours are
 “not more than one and a quarter in the morning, and
 “three quarters of an hour in the afternoon. What the
 “amount of instruction given may be, I had no means
 “of judging, at one short visit. But that educa-
 “tion is proceeding there, the Christian up-bring-
 “ing of immortal creatures for time and for eternity,
 “is very evident. My belief is, that the success of
 “Sunday-schools may be attributed, under God’s
 “blessing, to the heartiness and simple devotion
 “to their object which the teachers, male and female,
 “bring with them to their work. It is truly with
 “them a work of faith and a labour of love. Being
 “Christians themselves, they desire above all things
 “to lead others to their Saviour Christ. Under the
 “guidance and in the continual presence of an ear-
 “nest and faithful clergyman, helping him and being
 “helped by him, a work is doing by these unpaid
 “teachers, the value of which will not be fully known
 “till the great day of account.”

Mr. Thurtell, in 1848, says “The Sunday-schools
 “in Lancashire supplied, till of late years, most of the
 “education that the poor received; and they are still
 “of great importance, and present some remarkable
 “features. The most striking peculiarity is the ad-
 “vanced age of many of the pupils. Wherever the
 “care and influence of the clergy have been fully
 “exerted to this end, the attendants on the Sunday-
 “school include not only the scholars of the day-
 “school, and children of like age, but also a far more
 “numerous body of young persons who continue to va-
 “lue this opportunity of adding to their instruction in
 “the best things, long after the ordinary age of leaving
 “school. It is quite usual for young men to remain

“ in connexion with the Sunday-school till 18 years of
 “ age, and young women till 20 at the least; some-
 “ times men over 30, and women over 40 are found in
 “ regular attendance as scholars. It seems that, among
 “ the religiously disposed, attendance on the Sunday-
 “ school is considered, and with reason doubtless, to be
 “ one of their religious privileges, one of the means of
 “ grace put within their reach. Connected with the
 “ school there are frequently lectures to the teachers,
 “ explanatory of some portion of the subjects on which
 “ they have to give instruction; and these lectures are
 “ often given so as to attract to them others, besides
 “ those that teach or learn in the Sunday-schools. The
 “ lecture of this kind which I heard given by the Vicar of
 “ Bolton-le-Moors, was a remarkably interesting and in-
 “ structive exposition of Scripture, addressed to a large
 “ general congregation. The Sunday-school in connexion
 “ with the parish-church at Bolton was the most striking
 “ of those I had an opportunity of visiting, consisting of
 “ about 1200 scholars, many of them considerably ad-
 “ vanced in life; and the Vicar expressed to me that, in
 “ his own view, the instruction to be imparted in a
 “ Sunday-school was altogether subordinated to its re-
 “ ligious and moral influence, its influence in keeping
 “ young people interested about things that concern
 “ their salvation, and in carrying on habits of religious
 “ observance.”

From these Reports we learn that it is feasible to
 keep together adults in the communion of the Church;
 and this by a voluntary church organization and sub-
 mission to discipline. If it be God's will, I may take
 an opportunity hereafter of enlarging upon this subject,
 in order to put before you in detail the system of man-
 agement under which such results have been attained.

But I have already detained you too long. Only
 bear with me a few minutes longer, that I may, in
 conclusion, humbly and earnestly beseech you to weigh

well the facts which I have felt it my duty to place before you. Count me not an enemy because, with some boldness, I have put before you the truth. Seek not to attribute the statements I have made to party spirit or to party leanings. But give me credit for one single object honestly pursued, viz., the spiritual and ecclesiastical welfare of this ancient diocese, in our joint cure of souls. In promoting this object by every means in our power, we ought to be bound together as one man, governed in all we do by one sense of duty, dependent in all our hopes upon one God and Saviour, "Who puts into our hearts good desires," and "enables us to bring the same to good effect." If I have spoken of my own disappointed hopes, I have done so with no feelings of bitterness. If I have addressed you in a tone of admonition, I have done so from no other impulse than a sense of duty. If I have suggested to you the propriety and the policy of some more distinctive instruction in your preaching and teaching, it is from no desire to provoke dissenters to hostility, but to win their respect, and so their love. If I have seemed to desire any restriction of your liberty in reference to religious societies, it is not through any disposition unduly to exercise episcopal authority or influence, but from an anxiety to promote unity and concord among ourselves as ministers of our Church. I am painfully aware of the danger of losing influence, for the time at least, in pursuing the course which my conscience calls me to adopt. It would have been far more agreeable to myself to have spoken to you in terms of hopeful encouragement, if I could have seen justification for so doing. It is no uncommon thing to hear a man accused of presumptuous dictation, and of needless interference, when, settling down in a new neighbourhood, he complains of things which he deems perilous to life, and therefore agitates for measures of sanitary reform. Human nature, alas! engenders the

same temperament in regard to spiritual matters ; and there is, no doubt, in certain localities, under peculiar circumstances, a perilous contentment with things as they are, which indisposes men either to retrace their steps, or to move onward in any path to which they are not accustomed. They wilfully close their eyes to the necessity for reformation of any kind ; they rather pride themselves on their resolution to abide as they are, saying that they are not like other men, " given to change," forgetting all the time that if their forefathers had acted in this spirit, they would themselves be now in thralldom to the superstitious system of Romish faith and discipline.

Be it our care, then, my Reverend Friends, to try and convince those who are committed to our care, how dangerous a thing it is to be looking for salvation in any other Name but that of our Blessed Redeemer, in any other faith than that which His Gospel sets forth, in any other way of salvation than that which He and His Apostles have prescribed to us in Holy Writ. And may we ourselves, as their examples, beware of ignorance of " times and seasons," " knowing perfectly that the Day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night"—when men around us are saying " Peace and safety"—then " sudden destruction" may " come upon us, as travail upon a woman with child, and we shall not escape." " We are not in darkness that that day should overtake us a thief ;" " as children of the light and of the day," " let us not sleep as do others," but " let us watch and be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation, knowing that God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ."









