

for us to lament, and much that we hope gradually to amend. Great exertions have been made during the last thirty years with the desire of providing the means of spiritual instruction for a population increasing beyond all former experience. Much has been done by the awakened liberality of individuals, assisted by recent legislative measures, towards enabling the Church to fulfil the ends of her divine mission. Much, however, still remains to be done; and we assure your Majesty that our heartiest endeavours shall be used to relieve, wherever they exist, the spiritual wants of the population. We feel a confident persuasion that these our endeavours will be seconded by the pious and ready co-operation of our lay brethren in the Church.

In connexion with this subject, we cannot but observe that although the population of England and Wales has been doubled in the last half century, the number of English and Welsh Bishops remains nearly the same as it was three centuries ago; a state of things to which we beg respectfully to invite your Majesty's consideration.

We trust, however, that if the Church has been unable to accomplish all that might be desired, it has yet given no slight proofs of activity and power. Fewer churches were built during the whole of the last century than are now consecrated to the service of God in every successive year. Inadequate as are the means of providing Christian education for the increasing numbers who require it, we thankfully acknowledge that great efforts have been made for its extension and improvement. And great and painful as are the privations of many of your Majesty's poorer subjects in our crowded cities, it must be a peculiar source of satisfaction to your Majesty, that, under the countenance and active encouragement of your Majesty's illustrious Consort, institutions have been formed, and are daily forming, to increase the comforts of the labouring classes, and to improve their moral and social condition. And, as all true charity has its origin in religious principle, we trust that in this instance also proof is given of the influence of that faith which it is the duty of the Clergy to inculcate and maintain amongst the people entrusted to their charge. For whatever has been done, or intended, of good, we desire to give God the glory, through our Lord Jesus Christ, being deeply conscious of the imperfection of all our endeavours.

In thus referring to the subjects which especially appear to us to concern the well-being of the Church, we cannot omit to speak of those deliberative functions of this Convocation, which many members of our Church desire to see again called into active exercise.

We do not indeed think it advisable at the present moment to petition your Majesty for the royal licence to transact such business as we may not now enter upon without it. But we consider it a duty respectfully to express our conviction, both that its Legislative Assemblies are an essential and most important part of the constitution of our Church, and that the circumstances of the present day make it the more imperative to preserve, and as far as possible to improve them; and also, the more probable that the resumption of their active functions, in such manner as your Majesty, by your Majesty's licence may permit, at no distant day, may be productive of much advantage.

We beg, indeed, that apprehensions have been entertained, that in such case Convocation might be called to the discussion of controverted questions of doctrine, and a spirit of strife and bitterness, thereby engendered fatal to Christian

charity, and dangerous alike to existing institutions and to our visible unity. We therefore humbly pray your Majesty to receive this, our solemn declaration of our hearty acceptance of the doctrinal formularies and liturgical offices of our Reformed Church, and our assurance that we regard them as inestimable blessings, and are resolved, by the help of God, to transmit them unimpaired to posterity.

And further, that we not only recognize but highly prize your Majesty's undoubted supremacy in all causes, ecclesiastical and civil, over all persons, and in every part of your Majesty's dominions, as it was maintained in ancient times against the usurpations of the See of Rome, and was recovered and reasserted at our Reformation.

In connexion with this grave subject, we feel that your Majesty may expect from us the expression of our solemn protest against that fresh aggression of the Bishop of Rome, by which he has arrogated to himself the spiritual charge of this Nation, thereby denying the existence of that branch of the Church Catholic, which was planted in Britain in the primitive ages of Christianity and has been preserved by a merciful Providence to this day. Against this last usurpation of the Roman See, as well as against many which have preceded it, we desire, on this our first occasion of addressing your Majesty since its occurrence, solemnly to protest in the face of Christendom, and to lay this our protest before your Most Gracious Majesty.

To which Address Her Majesty was pleased to return the following most gracious Answer:—

"I receive with cordial satisfaction the assurances of your loyal and affectionate attachment to my Throne and Person.

"It is my earnest desire to promote the welfare and happiness of all classes of my subjects, by continuing to them the blessings of peace abroad, and by assisting to extend at home the holy influence of religion, which is the only sure foundation on which National prosperity can permanently rest.

"I thank you for the sympathy which you have expressed in my sorrow for the recent loss of the most distinguished of my subjects; and I appreciate the value which you attach to that high sense of duty by which he was invariably inspired.

"I rely with confidence on your assurances of your desire to preserve harmony in the Church, and to increase its efficiency, while maintaining its doctrines and my supremacy unimpaired; and I pray that the blessing of God may attend your endeavours to extend widely throughout all classes of my people the inestimable benefit of pure and deeply felt religion."

BUCKINGAM-PALACE, February 17, 1853.

This day had audience of the Queen:—

His Excellency the Count Walewski, Ambassador from the Emperor of the French, upon his return to Her Majesty's Court, after a temporary absence;

To which audience his Excellency was introduced by the Right Honourable Lord John Russell, M.P., Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and conducted by Major-General the Honourable Sir Edward Cust, K.C.H., Master of the Ceremonies.

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