
A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

An Unwritten Chapter by Anthony Trollope.

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IN 1857, the publication of "Barchester Towers" made the most important of additions to Anthony Trollope's literary fame, only established two years earlier by "The Warden." During the earlier sixties, Bishop Proudie, his wife, and Mr. Slope (his chaplain), became real personages to scores of English households. "Barchester Towers" appeared two years before the episcopal assistants, known as Suffragans, and the Act of Henry VIII. creating them, were revived from the seventeenth century; but the subject had already begun to attract attention, and was one of the few ecclesi astical topics that really interested the novelist. Among those disposed to complain of a tendency to caricature in the Barchester portrait-gallery was the learned and amiable publisher William Longman, who had given Trollope his first real chance with the public by bringing out "The Warden" in 1855. "A dozen years hence," rejoined the author, "you will admit what you to-day call the exaggeration, to have been a pretty close forecast of the facts. As for Mrs. Proudie being burlesque, detach her from cathedral surroundings, and you will find her the not overdrawn personification of feminine attributes, equally familiar to lay and to ecclesiastical households. I have never been inside the palace of a prelate, and can only guess how his lady looks and feels when she finds her husband my lorded by everybody, and herself on much the same footing as the governess, who comes in with the children after dinner. In secular circles the wife is far more often jealous of the husband's notoriety than the husband of the wife's attractions. That jealousy is incarnated in my bishopess."

In one of Chaucer's prose tales you find the question asked, "What is the strongest and most universally ruling passion of the petticoated race?" The love of power is the answer adjudged correct by the poet, whose knowledge of human nature shows itself in every line of "The Canterbury Tales."

The Bishop of Barchester's wife, therefore, only shows herself very woman of very woman, as in resenting the marital precedence as a wrong to herself. For her it is to prove that if her husband glories in the gaiters, it is she who wears the breeches. A conspiracy of two against the world, or a duel of one against one, is the alternative description of the married state given by a cynical Frenchman. "Mrs. Proudie," said Trollope, "exemplifies the second view. Wedlock, as a life partnership, is the conventional theory cordially despised by the intrepid lady, who would substitute for it wedlock as a tyranny for the stronger party over the weaker. And," warming to his theme, Trollope continued, "as the Duc de Sully puts it, James II. of England would never have gone so hopelessly to grief, but for the inveterate habit of doing the second thing before the first. That is a weakness which all women share with most clergymen. This feminine peculiarity gives a new sting to domestic life by keeping entire households, not less than individual husbands, on the tenterhooks of an exhausting anticipation. To mistake worry for work, fuss for energy, and incorrigible meddlesomeness for reforming zeal, gratifies Mrs. Proudie's lust of domination in exactly the same degree as it does that of her lay sisters. Lord Beaconsfield," he went on, "in his last novel, 'Endymion,' represented himself, not by the hero, but by his sister, Myra Ferrars. Very good. Without pretending to be an episcopal prophet, I have a presentiment that the essential type of the Bishop's curate, who will soon begin to increase and multiply, may be found in Mrs. Proudie rather than in her husband."

Before, however, proceeding to the historical points of the unwritten Trollopian chapter, something must be said about the prose realities that provided material for the novelist's imagination. A primitive institution, Suffragans were known in early times as *chorepiscopi*, or Country Bishops, to distinguish them from the City Bishops in chief. During the Norman Period, the political prelates, who conducted the secular affairs of the realm, were, necessarily so often in the capital or on foreign

embassies as to be strangers in the dioceses whose name they bore. During their absence substitutes appointed for that purpose performed the spiritual work of the sees.

From the fourteenth to the middle of the sixteenth century may be traced, in most ecclesiastical districts, a tolerably regular succession of Suffragans. A clause in the statutes for shaking off the Papal supremacy (24 Henry VIII.), added to their number on the express plea of the nation's spiritual needs. This provision ran as follows: for the more speedy administration of the Sacraments, as for other good, devout things, and laudable ceremonies. Suffragan sees were to have their centres at Thetford, Ipswich, Colchester, Dover, and Guildford. The Bishop's curates thus created gradually began to dwindle in number till, under the first Queen Mary, they disappeared. They were reintroduced by Elizabeth in 1558, but only with short-lived results. The twenty-four years of James I. only yielded one Suffragan, Sterne of Colchester. At the Restoration, Charles II.'s manifesto on ecclesiastical affairs shows the Court to have meditated new Suffragan appointments. Nothing, however, was actually done. The Stuart Suffragans are necessarily rather shadowy persons. It is not till the nineteenth-century revival of the Order that the pro-Episcopal names become historical personages.

The modern list opens with a man whose promotion was at least an attempt at the infusion of new blood into the Diocesan system. St. Paul, that he might not be chargeable to any, laboured with his own hands, entering into an industrial partnership with his fellow-tentmakers, Aquila and Priscilla. The precedent thus set has been followed more extensively than most people may know by those who have worn the mitre, not only in the Colonies, but in the Old Country. It seemed in accordance with the fitness of things that, at a clerical meeting held some years since, the Bishop of New Caledonia should speak of being his own, and a first-rate, cook; that the Bishop of Delaware should support himself on his diocesan tours by mending the clocks and umbrellas in return for a night's lodging;

that the Australian prelate of Grafton and Armidale should delight in grooming his own horses; and that the Bishop of Selkirk should exercise his skill in dentistry for the relief among his flock of sufferers from their teeth. It will, however, be generally heard now for the first time that the greatest of recent historians who has worn the lawn sleeves, Dr. Stubbs, knew practically only less of cabinet-making than of charters, actually patenting a special discovery in armchairs. So, too, Dr. Diggle of Carlisle has knitted pairs of socks and stockings by the hundred, and can make a shirt whose front does not bulge out.

These accomplishments were not, indeed, rivalled by the earliest of the nineteenth-century Suffragans; but Henry Mackenzie, who during the seventies acted as his lordship of Lincoln's sub. in the Nottingham district, had learned at Merchant Taylors' to put his hand to anything, and, to the great advantage of his household, retained so faithfully the accomplishments acquired by public school fagging, that he always counted for one specially skilled maid-of-all-work. From Merchant Taylors' he went to Pembroke, under Jeune. Then, after an apprenticeship to a commercial desk, he took Orders, and held two curacies, one in the City and the other in the East End, before being appointed to an English chaplainship at Rotterdam. That position was held for a little more than a year; then, on his return to England, 1836, there began a course of preferment, including the Bank Cross mastership, Mile End, and a canonry with the subdeanery at Lincoln. Amongst the benefices filled by Mackenzie at different times was that of Tydd St. Mary, Lincoln. His promotion thence connects itself with historic incidents in the Anglican history of the Victorian age. Tait's elevation to the Primacy, 1868, left London vacant. Bishop Jackson was translated thither from Lincoln, where his place was filled by Christopher Wordsworth, of Latin Grammar fame. Within the Lincoln See lay the district of the dukeries. The help that proved necessary to Wordsworth was forthcoming from the Lincoln parish clergyman who thus became the Nottingham Suffragan.

The most noticeable, if not the only, appointment made during this period was that of Edward Parry (1830-1890) at Dover, eldest son of Sir William Parry, the Arctic explorer, and himself one among the most interesting, as well as self-regardless, public servants in the Church and State of his time. He was also the earliest Englishman having Colonial association to bear an Episcopal title in this country, for his senior as regards years, Alfred Barry, the architect Sir Charles Barry's second son, successively head of Cheltenham College and of King's College, London, eventually Bishop of Sydney, was born in 1826. After his return to England Parry obtained, indeed, clerical preferment, but never filled any place in the English Episcopate; while the present Bath and Wells prelate, Dr. Kennion, an ex-Adelaide Diocesan, did not receive his Somerset mitre till 1894. Born seven years before the Victorian era, Edward Parry was prevented from standing for a Balliol scholarship by ill-health. As it was, having been head of the school at Rugby under Tait, whose examining chaplain in London he subsequently became, Parry stood high among Balliol commoners in the good books of Jenkyns. Before taking his degree he had won a classical first in the pre-Moderations period. A tutor at Durham University, he proved his pastoral earnestness by passing a long vacation amongst the Norham pitmen, whose social and spiritual benefactor he always remained. When, in 1870, he exchanged the Canterbury archdeaconship for the place of Dover Suffragan, he succeeded to an office unfilled since 1597.

Anthony Trollope, apropos of Edward Parry's career, confessed, it is interesting to recall, that he must change his anticipations about "Bishop's curates" should many more of Parry's calibre appear. They did not. Quantity, however, there was, if not quality. Between 1869 and 1889, the nine Suffragans called into existence contained none on whom Parry's mantle had fallen. And so it continued. In 1892 the Suffragans numbered sixteen; in 1898 they rose to twenty-three; at the present moment they amount to thirty, one of the latest appointments being Bishop Ridgeway's assistant in the Chichester See, Dr. Burrows, son of one of Goulburn's assistant masters at Rugby,

and nephew to Captain Hedley Vicars, whose biography by Miss Marsh long took rank as an evangelical classic.

The dignitaries now dealt with are the nominees, not of Court patronage, but of Episcopal selection. The overworked Diocesan submits two alternative assistants to the Crown, picked out because of their fitness to advance his particular views in local developments of discipline and ceremonial. The selected candidate receives consecration from the Primate and two Bishops. The Suffragan figures already given will probably soon receive considerable additions; thus, while these lines are being written, the Oxford See contemplates two, or even three (though, of course, these projects may be defeated by the sub-division of the Oxford Diocese into three smaller sees, just as Dr. Gore contrived to carve Birmingham out of the Worcester —a precedent whose adoption is now agitated both in Yorkshire and in the Home Counties) Suffragans, one, that is, for each county—Oxfordshire, Berks, and Bucks—which the diocese includes. Socially, predicted Trollope, the "Bishop's curate" will prove more of a stickler than the Bishop himself for the titular honours of his office, because, being only a reflection of the Episcopal authority, he can never be quite easy about his position. And yet, even more than his official employer, he will personify the ecclesiastical temper and needs of his time. First, his very existence is due to fussy churchmanship's periodical demand for smaller dioceses; secondly, he would not have been heard of but for the lasting impetus given to Church organization by the Oxford Movement of the thirties. Pledged, therefore, by his nineteenth-century origins, to instigate or support the clerical law breakers against the Privy Council, the Vice-Diocesan shows his breadth of mind by an appreciative tolerance of the excesses of the six-point men, and by an almost Mephistophelian adroitness in manipulating, when it seems more politic than snubbing, any stray evangelicals. Dr. Johnson, one knows, so redacted the Parliamentary speeches in the pre-verbatim report period, that the Whig dogs should have the worst of it. Thus, as the author of "Barchester Towers" foresaw, the Suffragan inevitably becomes *episcopalior episcopo ipso.* Never, for instance, did the palace of

the Snobbleton prelates harbour so astutely intriguing a promoter of decorative sacerdotalism as the present Bishop's deputy, his brevet lordship, who derives his Suffragan style from the local metropolis of Mozambique. During much of the Victorian age, this place was a modish Low church centre. Then came to one of its chief churches an earnest and accomplished literary incumbent, whose discourses exhaled poetic taste, together with a spirit of Christian charity and toleration. "Preaches agnosticism to young ladies and servant girls, does he?" murmured the Bishop of Snobbleton, "well, we shall see." His lordship did see, and led the peccant homilist such a life of it that, having a weak heart, weak lungs, morbidly brooding temperament, the eloquent offender delivered his last discourse on the poetry of the Scriptures. Before another year was over, he had been worried into his grave. Slowly the day of religious man-millinery dawned. The Court, from being partly Puritan and partly latitudinarian, became ritualistic. The heir-apparent, with the assistance of some maids of honour, designed sacrificial robes, of striking cut and colour, to be worn at the services which royalty frequented. Mozambique, or rather the fine flower of fashion which gave laws to the district, recalling a traditional connection with the palace, set to work on smartening up its places of worship, turned its back on those who wore the Genevan gown, waxed zealous for the ornaments rubric, and the ecclesiastical vocabulary, as amended by A. Welby Pugin, came once more into vogue. The Mozambique young ladies prattled pleasantly about matins and compline. What with early service, nocturns and watch nights, they appeared but little in the home circle, and had no time for subscription balls. The wealth of Mozambique went, of course, with the fashion, and the local landlords worked like one man at embellishing their town with fresh spiritual attractions, just as they had previously opened their purses for crowning its mineral spa with a spick and span new kursaal. Old fashioned churches were first deserted, then pulled down; Benjamin Disraeli's "Mass in masquerade" drew increasing crowds of all classes to temples gleaming with marble gilt, with rainbow tints, peopled by unfamiliar saints in statuary,

in an atmosphere heavy with the censer's ascending fumes. Beneath some consecrated roofs the new régime, however, established itself so slowly that the Snobbleton Diocesan sent his right hand man, the Rev. Cyprian Molineux, with instructions to quicken the pace. "You may find," were his lordship's parting words, "the old fashion Evangelical rump a little obstinate." "I think," was the modest rejoinder, "the pauper and peasant incumbent, the only Evangelical champion known at Mozambique, and his wife, will be too gratified by any personal attentions of Mrs. Molineux and myself not to give up anything that may seriously stand in our way. Snobbery is the besom with which to brush Puritanism away. Give me two years, and every Protestant curate shall be a sucking Jesuit."

No anticipation could have been more correct. The religious soil was soon weeded of such offensive clerical growth as remained. Not a "sim" or a Recordite but that within two years had recanted his errors and had been flattered or fooled into parting with his independence, to wear the Mozambique Suffragan's livery. Yet even this success was not without its shadow. The shopkeepers, and working classes generally, at Mozambique, unlike other places, had formerly been churchgoers. One after another they now gave up their Anglican sittings, and dribbled off, not in isolated cases only, but in groups, to the chapel. On the other hand the Mozambique *élite* thronged Suffragan Molineux' Sunday music halls, and socially cold-shouldered all the Evangelical dissidents. The triumph of the Bishop's curate was therefore unimpaired.

"If," to the present writer once said Bishop Proudie's creator, "I were to do another 'Barchester Towers,' I might have something to say concerning the irresistible attraction of sacerdotalism to a clergy which, recruited largely from the lower-middle class, has none of the position given by birth, learning, or wealth, and sees in the doctrines and displays which are the relics of Rome, the one way of effectually magnifying its apostleship and gaining the same sort of ascendancy that in the British Isles has so long only been enjoyed by the Irish priest."