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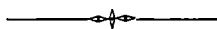
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which has been accomplished, and for the great and increasing usefulness and influence of the Church in the Metropolis—and, indeed, throughout the country—we hope and believe that in the future yet greater blessings may be in store, when a far larger number of those who profess membership with her body shall give of their time and their talents, their means and their prayers, for the still further extension of her work in this enormous population of London, and to the glory of God. Thus shall the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour be increased, “and peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, be established among us.”

A LAY WORKER.



### ART. III.—INCREASE OF DIOCESAN PROCTORS IN THE CONVOCATION OF CANTERBURY.

SINCE the action of the Convocations has been revived, complaints have continually been made that, in the Convocation of Canterbury at least, the parochial clergy were very inadequately represented. The great increase in their number, and still more in their activity and influence, seemed to demand a relative increase in their importance as a constituent part of the deliberative and consultative body of the Church. It appeared to be a preposterous thing, that while a Dean, however little he might understand of Church matters, might, by virtue of his office, vote in Convocation; while every Archdeacon, in whose appointment the clergy had had no part, might vote in matters affecting the whole presbyterate of the Church, the very large and active body principally concerned in working the machinery of the Church should have so small a voice in deciding questions. Hence an agitation early arose for the increase of the number of Diocesan Proctors in the Southern Convocation, and for the extension also of the suffrage in their election to all priests licensed in the diocese. This movement has always been favoured by the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation, which, conscious of its own weak point, has tried various ways to obtain an improvement. Its appeals to the Archbishop, as President of the Convocation, to enlarge the representation by his own act (which was thought by many to be quite within his power) having failed, a new method is being tried. The Lower House now appeals to the President to obtain for Convocation the royal license to put forth a Canon,

and a Canon has been already drafted and accepted by it, which raises the number of Diocesan Proctors to 104, and gives the suffrage to all priests of three years' standing licensed in the diocese. Whether this Canon will ultimately become the law for Convocation remains to be seen. But, at any rate, the Lower House of Canterbury has done its part, and can no longer be accused of vagueness, and of pretending to desire that which it really did not wish for. Meantime, it may not be unacceptable to our readers to have placed before them a rapid survey of the history of the representation of the clergy in the Synods of the Church of England, which is soon probably to receive a considerable extension and development.

All those who are acquainted with Church History are aware that in early times Presbyters usually attended their Bishops to Provincial Synods, sat, and in some cases voted in these Synods, though they may not have had the power of originating any motion. But these Presbyters who thus attended the Bishop were not representatives of the clergy. They were either selected by the Bishop, or they owed their place in the Synod to their being *Prelates*, i.e., men occupying some position of dignity and eminence. In this country such Presbyters would appear to have undoubtedly sat and voted in Councils during Anglo-Saxon times. Gradually, as custom had established their right to be present, they were recognised as constituent members of a Synod. Thus, in 1225, Archbishop Stephen Langton summons not only his suffragans, but the Deans of Cathedrals, the Archdeacons, the Abbots and Priors. As yet there was no *representation*, properly speaking, of the clergy. These men sat by virtue of their prelatial dignity, as corporations sole. But the representative principle soon began to show itself.

The thirteenth century is the cradle of our liberties, the birth-time of our great institutions. At this period the principle of representation—of one man deputed to act for a number, and able to commit and pledge a number by his acts—began to play an important part. Archbishop Langton's next summons to Convocation mentions not only the *prælati*, but also Proctors or representatives for cathedral churches and monasteries. As yet the parochial clergy were of small account. The rise and spread of the monastic system, and the immense development it received after the establishment of the Cistercian Order, completely obscured them. The parish priest, when not connected with a monastery, was a poor and feeble person. But this overweening power of the monasteries soon wrought its own cure. The Bishops began to grow jealous of the monasteries, and indignant at the exemptions from episcopal rule

claimed by them. They compelled them to establish vicarages. The vicarage implied the appointment by the religious house of a permanent parish priest at the stipend usually of about one half or one third of the value of the benefice. Vicarages were first established in England about the beginning of the thirteenth century. We trace immediately their influence in raising and strengthening the parochial clergy. Soon the clergy assume one special element of importance. They begin to be taxable.

Now, though it is not true to say that the English Convocation owed its existence to taxing purposes, it is certainly true to say that it was used for those purposes. In the year 1254 Convocation, or the Bishops in Parliament, had promised to the King a tenth of the goods of the Church. At the payment of this subsidy in the following year was made that indignant protest, which, as we take it, was the foundation of the representation of the parochial clergy in Convocation. The Proctors of the clergy of the Archdeaconry of Lincoln appeared in Parliament, and at the Legatine Council, which was being held concurrently under Rustand, the Pope's envoy, and declared their *gravamen* or grievance, viz., that a tenth of their goods had been disposed of when they themselves had not been summoned; and they assert as a general and axiomatic proposition that "When there is a question of committing any one to an obligation, the express consent of the person bound is necessary to be had."<sup>1</sup> This protest was seconded by other bodies of the clergy, and its effect was seen at once in the endeavour, at the next meeting of Convocation, to provide a method by which the parochial clergy could be legally committed through representatives to the subsidies voted. The representative principle was formally admitted, and henceforth the English Convocations were to be distinguished by this—found in no other Synods, save those of quite modern date—this wholesome and admirable principle, that the clergy, who are to be bound by Synodical acts, must have first, by their own representatives, assented to those acts. We now proceed to show how the principle of representation, once admitted, was developed, until it assumed its present form.

The first plan for the representation of the clergy in Convocation was to make the Archdeacons their representatives. In 1257 Archbishop Boniface issued his mandate for a Convocation, to which the Archdeacons are summoned, and are ordered to bring with them "procuratorial letters on the part of the clergy who are under them." This form of summons was repeated the following year for the Convocation held at Merton.

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<sup>1</sup> "Burton Annals," *Annal. Monast.*, i. 360.

It is evident that it could only be partially satisfactory to the parochial clergy. At this time the Archdeacons were usually only in Deacon's Orders, and were not parochial clergy, but were attached to a cathedral, or were part of the household of a Bishop. Probably the parochial clergy complained, and signified that they were not inclined to rest satisfied with this representation, for in the year 1273 we find a change in the summons to Convocation. In that year Archbishop Robert Kilwardby summoned the Bishops, and bade them bring with them three or four persons from among "the chief, the most discreet and prudent of their church and diocese." But the clergy had no part, so far as we know, in electing these persons. The Bishop was left free to select, and it is evident that the arrangement did not give satisfaction, for four years afterwards we have the same Archbishop again summoning Convocation, and bidding the Bishops convene with "*Proctors* for the whole clergy of each diocese." Nothing is said in this summons as to the number of Proctors, nor as to the method of their election, but it is probable that it was intended that the clergy of each diocese should name one Proctor. Clearly further arrangements were needed to be made in the matter, for in the Council of Reading, held 1279 (when Bishops only were present), a Canon or Constitution was enacted, which ran thus: "In our next meeting, at the time of the ensuing Parliament, besides the Bishops and the Proctors of the absent Bishops, there shall come to the assembly two persons at least, elected by the clergy in each diocese, who shall have authority to treat together with us touching the matters which may come before them."<sup>1</sup> This Canon of Reading may be regarded as the formal establishment of the system of clerical representation in the Southern Convocation which has thus existed for upwards of 600 years.

There is no doubt, however, that after the formal establishment of two Proctors for each diocese in the Provincial Synod, there was still considerable jealousy of these Proctors; and various attempts were made to place them in a position subordinate to the other members of the Synod. At first they did not always sit and vote regularly in the Synod. They brought up the resolutions of their constituents as to what amount of subsidy they would give, and no doubt debated this question, and probably with a spirit of sturdy independence. For after there had been a meeting of the newly organized Convocation concurrently with the Parliament, Archbishop Peckham, in a Convocation summoned to meet at Northampton, made a deliberate attempt to set aside the representatives of the parochial

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<sup>1</sup> Hody, "History of Convocations," iii. 127.

clergy. Bishops, Abbots, Priors, etc., were summoned, but neither Archdeacons nor clergy Proctors. The attempt, however, if it were deliberately made, signally miscarried. For a subsidy having been demanded of this Convocation, it was refused on the ground, among others, of the absence of the greater part of the clergy who had not been summoned in due manner. Some of the minor prelates present were no doubt ready to allege this informality. The Archbishop was constrained to rectify it.

By another writ of summons issued by Archbishop Peckham the clergy were convened for the Easter following, and each Bishop was bid to hold a sort of preliminary Diocesan Synod. They were to assemble the clergy in their several dioceses, and put before them the King's demands about to be proposed to the Convocation, so that they might duly weigh them, and, having done so, might choose two clergy of their body who "should be sufficiently instructed, and should have full and express power of treating with us and our brethren on the premisses, and of agreeing to those things which the general body of the clergy shall then and there put forward for the honour of the Church, the consolation of our Lord the King, and the peace of the kingdom." The names of the persons chosen were to be signified beforehand to the Archbishop.

It would only encumber this sketch to say anything of the summons of the clergy to Parliament under what was called the *Præmunientes* clause in the Bishops' writs. This was attempted about this time, as the King thought that the clergy would be more easily taxable in Parliament than in Convocation. But the clergy always resisted it, preferring their own Synods and the Archbishop's summons, and it gradually fell into disuse. It will suffice to say that endless confusion has arisen from confounding the two summonses and the two bodies growing out of them, and that the whole of Bishop Atterbury's argument in his famous book on "Convocation" is vitiated by this confusion.

About the time of the settlement of the Canterbury Convocation in its complete form, the York Convocation began to hold separate sessions, so that this period may be considered as the time of the settlement of the system of to-day, save that the representative Proctors were in some degree limited and confined in their office by the resolutions of the previous Diocesan Synods, and were more of deputies than of freely deliberating members of the Synods. This limited power of the clergy representatives appears further by a clause in the Archbishop's summons for the Convocation of 1283, where he states that the clergy had asked for more time, inasmuch as their procuratorial letters had "limited" them, either from having

been given only for a limited time, or from conferring upon them only a certain amount of discretionary power. In the fierce struggle which took place between Edward I. and the clergy, various irregularities are to be noted in the writs of summons to the clergy Proctors. In 1297, besides the two Proctors for the clergy, "all the dignified clergy, by whatever name they were known," were summoned. This would include the Rural Deans as well as the Precentors, Chancellors, Treasurers, etc., of cathedral churches. This Convocation having proved utterly unmanageable, and the clergy having been put out of the King's protection, another Convocation was summoned, to which only one Proctor for the clergy of each diocese was called. It was probably judged that the smaller body would prove more tractable. The next year, however, a return was made to the previous number of Proctors for the English Dioceses, though only one Proctor was to be summoned for each of the Welsh Dioceses. In the next summons the same arrangement is repeated, which may be accounted for by the disturbed state of Wales at the time. In 1309, in addition to the Proctors for the clergy, the Rural Deans were summoned to Convocation, and in 1311 the clergy were bid to send "either one or two Proctors."

But amidst varieties of application, the principle of representation still stood firm, and the clergy Proctors had gained a footing in the Synods as full members of them, and not merely as deputies sent up to present certain resolutions of their brethren. There is no doubt, indeed, that their presence in the Synods was principally desired that they might commit their brethren to certain financial obligations, for, during the fourteenth century, the power of the inferior clergy in regulating the affairs of the Church was practically *nil*. So long as the claims of the Popes to order everything in the Church according to their will were acquiesced in, Convocations and Synods of the clergy could have only a very limited use and value. Their true development and power require that the Church for which they act should be free from outside pressure and slavish enthrallment. It was only when the bands of Rome began to be loosed that the true value of the Convocations of the English Church begins to be perceived. It was from these bodies that the voice of the spirituality came forth in the Reformation settlement. It was they which settled the Royal Supremacy on a legitimate basis. It was they which gave us our Prayer Book and our Articles; which regulated the Reformed Church by numerous bodies of Canons, and which from time to time carefully reviewed then previous labours, correcting, amending, or supplementing. At the Revolution Convocation wisely refused to sanction the sweeping

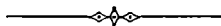
changes in our Formularies which were then rashly proposed. Unfortunately, after this period, its action became so complicated with political issues, that it was the theatre of bitter and acrimonious quarrels, which were stopped by the effectual though very unjust remedy of the complete suppression of its sessions. It will be generally admitted that the revived Convocation of modern times has been entirely free from these disputes and bitternesses. That while differences of opinion have, of course, been earnestly advocated, there has been an entire absence of personalities and unkind speeches, and that the proceedings of the Houses have been conducted in a way befitting Christian divines. If it be the case that the deliberations and resolutions of these bodies have not been received by the clergy generally with that deference which might fairly be claimed for them, probably the explanation of this is, that in the opinion of the clergy the principle of representation which ought to be a prominent feature in these Synods has been in a great measure obscured. Certainly it is altogether an anomaly, under the altered conditions and immense increase in number of the parochial clergy, to preserve in the present day the number of diocesan representatives which was thought sufficient 600 years ago.

The principle of representation is one that is dear to Englishmen. It falls in with what may be called one of the fundamental axioms of English sentiment, that where the interests of any are involved, there they may claim to have representatives, chosen by themselves, to appear and act on their behalf. It may safely be assumed that the revival of the action of the Archbishops' Synods will never fully commend itself to the general opinion of the Church until the great mass of the English clergy are more adequately represented by their own elected Proctors. It is sometimes urged that the dignified clergy who sit in Convocation by virtue of their offices, do, in fact, represent the clergy, belonging as they do to their body, and being fully able to enter into their opinions and interests. As well it might be urged that a county constituency would be adequately represented in Parliament by a number of respectable country gentlemen nominated by the Queen. The question is not as to the ability, the learning, or the power of the members of the Synod, but whether they have been deliberately selected by the voice of those interested, to represent their interests, and to stand in their place. It has been seen that the plan of investing the Archdeacons with procuratorial letters was a failure even in the Middle Ages. As a body of divines, the Archdeacons cannot be too highly estimated, but they are not, and cannot be made the representatives of the clergy. There is no other way of increasing



the representative body, strictly speaking, save by enlarging the number of Diocesan Proctors. And on this ground the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation has acted in its recent sessions. The value of representation, indeed, depends upon its being adequate and not partial. An insufficient representation may prove the greatest snare, inasmuch as it gives the appearance of the consent of the represented, and the legal sanction of their consent, whereas they are not really present by representation, but only apparently so present. Should the Convocations be considerably extended in their representative part, they will probably be able to perform in the future much useful work, which in their present state they could hardly accomplish with satisfactory results. The Church of England is now full of life and energy, and struggling to find a vent for its awakened earnestness in many ways. We want a variety of new services, which, if framed and sanctioned by adequate Church Synods, might be invested with sufficient authority for use. We want an enlarged and amended body of Canons, which shall recognise and regulate the new agencies for usefulness which have sprung up in the Church. We want an extended Diaconate, and the ordering of the office and work of lay helpers. Hymn books, manuals of prayer, missions, all need synodical attention and action. Much, indeed, has been done in most of these subjects, but the clergy look on somewhat superciliously, and do not altogether recognise that they are personally affected by the actions of their Synods. Should the representation be made more of a reality, this could hardly continue to be the case; and therefore we welcome with much satisfaction the definite action lately taken in this matter by the Convocation of Canterbury.

GEORGE G. PERRY.



#### ART. IV.—FOURTEEN DAYS AMONG THE FISHING FLEETS IN THE NORTH SEA.

“WHO'D ’a thought folks ’ud ’a cared for us like this!” ejaculated a rough, unwashed fisherman, the tears welling in his eyes as, clad in greasy oilskins, battered by the tear and wear of many a winter’s gale, he leant against the capstan of the new Mission-smack, the *Edward Auriol*, fairly overcome by the thought of kindness shown to fishermen. The