A HISTORY OF ANGLICANISM IN THE CARIBBEAN AND IN THE BAHAMAS

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In attempting to speak on a topic such as this, one recognises that it is impossible to deal with the topic in the space of a single lecture. I have of necessity to be selective. What I shall try to do, therefore, is to paint a picture of the Anglican Church over more than three hundred years of its life in these parts. I trust that the picture will enable you to understand better how our Church has grown and performed.

Ecclesia Anglican was the Church of England not only in England but also in the Caribbean area, where it gradually took root in the seventeenth century. Its advent into the region was part of the process of migration from England during that century. European trading nations had already successfully challenged the existence of a will by Adam giving to the Spaniards a title to the New World. The right of other nations to lands which their people had settled was, one may say, the new doctrine being evolved. The advent of the commercial rivals did not only make the Caribbean a theatre for military activity, it also made this region the stage on which religious intolerance was acted out. Just as residents of English Islands were expected to be Protestants. To be more precise, they were expected to be members of the Church of England.

The advent of Anglicanism to the region coincided with the political and religious unease of England in the early seventeenth century. Presbyterians had found advocates in England as well as in Scotland, and the puritan movement of the previous century was already advancing in the direction of Independence - the Congregational system. This ferment of thought means that one cannot be sure of the orthodoxy or the consistency of those who implanted the Anglican Church on our soil.

When the Anglican Church made its appearance on the West Indian stage in the 1620s, it was the Church of England for Englishmen. It came with the tide of settlers to these parts and it was regulated by the customs of the settlers and those who ministered to them. Like sugarcane or breadfruit, Anglicanism was an import which slowly took root in the new locale. The developments during the English Reformation had settled English religious attitudes for the future as far as Englishmen could see. The possibility of English settlers worshipping in any other way than that prescribed by the English law was beyond the realm of possibility. Strangely enough, Presbyterian seem to have been excluded. That system did not appeal to Elizabeth I; James I, her successor, put matters beyond doubt in his famous dictum: "No Bishop, no King." And it is significant that the words 'loyalty' and 'piety' became watch-words of the Royalists in 17th century Barbados. Loyalty was to the King, piety expressed itself through the medium of the Book of Common Prayer.

When Cromwell had banned the Prayer Book in England, his Commissioners met with almost total compliance in Barbados. The only minister who is on record as opposing the ban was the minister of 'All Saints' Church in the parish of St. Peter.[1] This does not prove that those who complied were adherents of the Parliamentary party and disloyal to the King. It may only indicate a lack of conviction both as regards the form of worship, and as regards the right to resist the authority in the Island. The banning of the Book of Common Prayer, however, was only a reflection of the intolerance which was characteristic of the age. It showed itself in the general hostility to Quakers in the West Indies - especially in Barbados. There, in addition to the hostility towards their religious practises, their kindness to slaves earned them enemies. So that the fact that the Church of England started the eighteenth century from such a position of strength may well be due to the elimination, by statutes, of groups like the Quakers. And the action was not instigated by the Church, but by legislators intolerant of any system that they could not themselves control

What of the Clergy who came out with the settlers? Very few names have come down to

us, but this does not alter the basic thesis that one can advance. For the most part, they were free lancers - persons whose function in these parts was not under the auspices of any ecclesiastical authority. Nicholas Leverton, who first served Barbados, promptly transferred to Tobago when the settlers in the former Island appeared to him recalcitrant. There is no indication as to the ecclesiastical authority from whom Leverton's successor, Kentlane, received his right to function. This is true for the greater part of the century, qualified only by the fact that Governors erected parishes and appointed Clergy to them from time to time.

The disorganized state of things is further evidenced by Cromwell's appointment of seven Chaplains to Jamaica. It can be taken for granted that these were neither Royalists nor Episcopalians. Some of them doubtless continued to minister after Cromwell's death, so that in 1661 a plea was made for the appointment of orthodox ministers. It was only after this date that any effort was made to ensure that the Clergy were the Clergy of the Church of England.

Having said this, I must perforce comment on the London episcopate. For it is staunchly held that the Bishop of London was, from the beginning, the Bishop of the West Indies. This is based on the erroneous belief that Laud was influential in getting an Order in Council passed giving jurisdiction to the Bishop of London for overseas work. This authority of the Bishops of London cannot be verified. There seems to have been an arrangement for that Bishop to be responsible for Englishmen in what was then called the Low Countries - that is Holland. But I have detected nothing about the extension of this authority to the Western Hemisphere, or vaguely to the Church overseas. Laud in 1633 was Archbishop of Canterbury, which fact would disqualify him for the office of 1st Bishop of the West Indies. His History of His Own Times, written in his last years, surprisingly omits any reference to this among his achievements. In default of better evidence we must adopt the position of historians: that the Bishop of London was reputedly Bishop of the Church in the West Indies.[2]

It was not until 1680 that one has clear evidence of the Bishop of London being actively involved in influencing the selection of Clergy for the West Indies. In a memorandum by the then Bishop of London concerning the Church in Barbados, the writer asked that the following steps inter alia be taken:

- An investigation should be carried out to discover whether every minister was a member of the Vestry as had been ordered.
- A Commissary should be appointed under the Governor to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction.
- An investigation should be carried out to determine whether every minister held orders according to the Church of England.
- Books of Homilies, Canons, and Articles were to be kept in every Parish Church.[3]

It is only after this that one can see an insistence that Clergy coming to work in the West Indies should have a licence from the Bishop of London. And later on it became customary for aspirants to ecclesiastical position to travel to London to be admitted to Orders. I use the expression "aspirants to ecclesiastical position" to emphasise the fact that not all those who went to England for Orders were interested in the Priesthood. Some were unsuccessful sons of planters or professionals, some were favourites of different Governors. In fact Bishops of London, had, on two occasions, rejected candidates recommended to them. One of these was not known by the person who recommended him, the other has failed in everything he had previously tried.[4]

In spite of the insistence that Clergy be licenced by the Bishop of London, some obviously obtained appointments without fulfilling the obligation. One Governor in Barbados once reported that 10 of the 11 Rectories were filled, and that most of the incumbents were in Orders. In the Bahamas there was the case of Thomas Curfey who functioned without a licence from the Bisho

of London, because there was no proof of his having been ordained. Yet Curfey continued his ministerial office for six years after his peculiar situation first became known. Similarly, John Mitchell in Jamaica functioned as a Rector without being ordained. Eventually he admitted that his letters of orders had been forged.[5] The Church, therefore, could not perform as it should have done because it was weak at precisely that level at which it needed to be strong - the level of leadership. Uncommitted jobbers, as some of them were, they gave very little to the task which was peculiar to the Church.

Without attempting any special pleading on behalf of the Church, it must be acknowledged that persons such as these - the ones who slipped through - are responsible for the negative picture of our Church which stares at us from the broad canvas of the eighteenth century. This is not to say that they were all bad either. There were countless numbers who worked diligently, but who remain unsung because so much attention is given to the failures of their colleagues.

The Bishops of London had no jurisdiction over these Clergy. Their functions ended when they had either ordained the candidates, or supplied the necessary licences for them to function. A Bishop could not appoint a man to a parish, nor deprive him of ecclesiastical office. This was because the Governor was the ecclesiastical officer in each colony, acting as the King's deputy. The situation may well be developed in this way because the Bishop was lethargic as far as the colonial Church was concerned. In this respect, it would not be unfair to accuse successive Bishops of London of exercising a sedentary ministry. The possibilities for mobilising the Church are seen by contrast with the "episcopate" of Thomas Coke. In approximately fifteen years he visited the West Indies three times, giving a filip to Methodism in the area. Had each Bishop of London visited the Western Hemisphere once in his episcopate, the story our historians narrated may well have been different. One only has to look at the developments after 1825 to see the truth of this.

At this stage it becomes necessary to say a word about the way the Church in the West Indies was organised. The parochial structure was inherited from England. This consisted of a Church, a Rectory, fees, and in come cases a glebe. In Barbados, which was first settled around 1627, the first parishes were marked out in 1628. The process was completed eleven years later. Thereafter, both Clergy and people fitted into the system, the insidious character of which was to be seen in later years. As the 17th century came to a close, the Vestry system was introduced. The Rector became a member, and the Vestry was not to meet in his absence unless he was ill;[6] but the summoning of the Vestry was not his to do. The Vestry was controlled by the proprietors of the parish; and their attitudes to the Church, as well as their relations with the Rector, determined the growth and functioning of the Church.

It is significant that this be remembered, since people have always tended to speak of the estbalished Church as a privileged body. That privilege began and ended with the legal acceptance of the Church of England as the state Church, and with the recognition that the legislature was to allocate funds for the maintenance of the Church. In reality the established Church became a dependent institution, not an arm of the state. In the early days, the stipend was computed by the acreage of the parish - one pound of sugar for every acre in the parish. At a later stage, the stipend was fixed at 16000 lbs. of sugar per year.[7] This raised two problems for the Clergy, one is that sugar was often of poor quality, as the noted historian Ragatz pointed out. Another, was that the value of sugar varied even within the same colony. Thus one clergyman got £60 sterling for his sugar, while another got £80 sterling - and both within the Leeward Islands Government. Finally, it is the Rector himself who attended to the sale of his sugar; and he may not have got what his sugar was worth.

It was a different matter when the Rectors were given their stipends in money, rather than sugar. This was a feature of the mid-eigteenth century. It happened, however, that in some colonies the Vestries were permitted by law to give to the Rector a certain sum over and above the actual stipend. this bonus was often used as a means of controlling the Clergy. So that if Clergy acted only in accordance with their conscience, or with what they believed to be Anglican policy, they were in danger of forfeiting their bonus. Not infrequently complaints were sent to successive Bishops of London to the effect that they were expected to be subservient and to close their

eyes to blatant immoralities on the part of Vestry members. In general, moral rectitude was not a characteristic of white planters, managers or officials in the West Indies. The practice of sexual licence with the female slaves was so ingrained that a challenge to the system was almost an unforgiveable offence. And Clergy silence was bought by a threat to withhold their stipends.

In many cases the stipend was withdrawn - sometimes for as long as three years. It is not surprising that the Church's performance was defective. If the Clergy were not comfortable, they could not be expected to perform a conclusion as true then as it is now. That is not to say that the only reason for their failure to perform was the non-payment of stipends. Their whole dependent situation was part of the reason. Poverty was another. There were, for instance, cases in which there were no rectories and the rectors had to accept accommodation with planters. So great was the poverty in some cases that here in the Bahamas - traditionally the poorest part of the region in those days - a rector found in Harbour Island a Church completed, but poverty had prevented the people from making pews. It is perhaps only in the Bahamas poverty proved to be the cause of the non-payment of salaries. In 1730, for one rector only £80 could be raised by subscription. Governor Rogers assured the Bishop of London of the colony's willingness to support a Clergyman, but the stipend could not be raised. As late as 1790 one rector's salary here consisted of an aggregate of £70 from the British Government, £50 from the S.P.G. and £24 raised locally.[8] These are some of the realities of life in the Anglican Church early in its West Indian history.

Attention has already been drawn to the fact that the Bishop of London had no jurisdiction in the West Indies. The absence of a resident Bishop posed a serious problem where Church discipline was concerned. In each colony or group of colonies one of the Clergy usually held the post of Commissary - in which office he was little more than a correspondent of the Bishop of London. The Commissary relayed to the Clergy such instructions as he received from the Bishop, collected and transmitted to him such information as the latter required. The Commissary had no disciplinary authority over the Clergy, that function resting solely with the Govenor. What the Governor winked at the Bishop could not redress; so that frequently complaints occur in the Bishop's correspondence about lack of discipline or neglect. Commissaries often came into conflict with Governors when they suggested the institution of ecclesiastical courts. Though these applied only to the Clergy, it was seen as suggesting a jurisdiction which the Bishop of London did not enjoy. They were never permitted to start.

The Commissary was often the incumbent in the chief town of a colony. As the Rector, he was also a member of the Vestry which, in those days, had certain civic responsibilities. The Vestry could levy taxes, run schools, administer poor relief, and so on. The demands made by the Commissary's civic and parochial responsibilities left him little time for visitations to other parishes; and few were ever undertaken. Similarly, the Clergy were seldom assembled for consultations. Scattered parishes in Jamaica made this impracticable. In the Leeward Islands, which formed one colony for a long time, assembling was more difficult. In the Bahamas where things could be regarded as reaching the height of ridiculous one man moved between several Islands as Rector. The separation from a leader, and the separation from a leader, and the separation from one another, compounded to render united action impossible. The Church could not function effectively.

To whom did the Church minister? To a very large extent, the focus of attention was on the English settlers and the white creoles. This is not to say that these were ever actively involved in the life of the Church. Given the quality of social life in the West Indies, and the exigencies of the plantation routine, there was little or no effort to give place to things spiritual. Sugar demanded the loyalty of the planters, and they were concerned to serve only one master.

One obvious result of this was that the plantation owner or attorney was seldom, if ever, a worshipper; and the vast slave population, totally under his control, was seldom allowed the time for worship. The picture of a Church-going planter whose slaves were forced to stand outside holding the horses needs to be carefully reexamined. It is an exaggeration, to say the least. We know for certain that Moravians, Methodists and other missionaries experienced considerable difficulty either

in getting to the slaves, or in having them come to Church. In some cases laws were passed prohibiting services before dawn or after sunset. And since that left only the working hours, slave worship was effectively proscribed. Any participation therefore, on their part, was necessarily clandestine. The difference between the Methodists and others and the established Church was that the latter was far less aggressive than the former. The established Church up to the early 19th century was not sufficiently missionary.

The lack of dynamism was to show itself with respect to the evangelisation of slaves when the Bishop of London in 1723 sought to find out what was being done where the slaves were concerned.[9] That so many Rectors reported so little activity testified to tremendous sloth on their part. The few who were trying were overshadowed by the negligence of the many who did not try. There is evidence, however, to show that letters of protest had been written by Clergy to successive Bishops of London protesting against the plantation system. Unlike the Methodist authorities, the Bishops of London did not publish the letters they received from their own missionaries. We can only surmise that more vigorous leadership at that level might have evoked greater energy on the part of the Clergy. Support from the top did help in the case of the missionaries; it was likely to help in the case of the established Church.

The first section of our history came to a close around the year 1824. The implanting of the Anglican Church was started in an atmosphere of disturbance with the struggles for basic rights against an unscrupulous monarch. In 1823-1824, the West Indies was caught up in the struggle for basic human rights for the majority of the population. The difference is that, whereas the fight in England was against one monarch, in the West Indies the system which prevailed produced several monarchs. Each plantation owner had absolute control over his slaves; and wherever his abuse of authority was challenged, or he was taken to court, planter juries acquitted him of that abuse. In 1823, a process of slave amelioration was initiated to correct these abuses.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, when the condition of the slaves were attracting more and more attention, relations betweem the Churches were at their worst. It is invidious to try to apportion blame, hence I would only indicate some of the factors which were responsible. At the very root of the intolerance was the system of establishment. This system left hardly any room for the exercise of tolerance in an unduly competitive atmosphere. Clergy of the Church of England were opposed to others entering the sphere they considered exclusively theirs. It happened for instance in Trinidad, where action was taken against missionaries for presuming to function as ministers.[10] It happened in Barbados where the activity of the missionaries was generally frowned on. In fact, it is a matter worthy of notice that, throughout his three-volume History of the West Indies, Thomas Coke spoke with unqualified approval of only one Clergyman of the established Church. This was the Rev. J. M. Dent, formerly a curate of St. Michael's Church in Barbados, and later the Rector of St. George's, Grenada. Dent was prepared to allow that the work was sufficient to be shared.

The very intolerance which Coke reprobated also leaps at the reader from the pages of his own History. He referred derisively to the Roman Catholic Church as 'popery' or 'papism' or as the 'Popish Church'. He was equally derogatory about the established Church, which in his view did not preach the pure gospel. Those Methodists who followed Coke, even when they themselves complained of intolerance, were anything but models of tolerance themselves. On the contrary, contemporary Moravian works do not contain any strictures on their fellow christians, and we shall look in vain for any strictures by the established Church against the Moravians.

The truth is that there was no need for the attitudes which were adopted. In such a time of stress, it was urgent that those who had the welfare of the slaves at heart should work together. But competition for the souls of men was fierce and no Church was happy to be outdone. The missionary bodies were advancing their work because they had been able to organise themselves and to hold meetings of their pastors to plan strategies. The established Church drifted because there was no one authority to act; and pastoral meetings were so rare as to be considered non-existant.

In 1824, at the height of the controversy surrounding the amelioration of slavery, the British Government decided to establish two episcopal Sees in the West Indies. At the root of this decision was the belief that religious instruction was vital to improving the condition of the slaves. So that Bishops were to be appointed in the hope that they would more effectively mobilise the Clergy. The ineffectiveness of the Clergy was too obvious for there to be any dispute. By letters patent the two Sees were created and the Bishops consecrated, both arriving in the West Indies in 1825. William Hart Coleridge arrived in Barbados on January 29th, 1825, to preside over a Diocese stretching from St. Kitts in the North to Guyana (then British Guiana) in the South. Christopher Lipscombe arrived in Jamaica on February 11th, 1825, his Diocese comprising that Island, the Bahamas and Belize (then British Honduras).

The advent of the two Bishops provided the Church in the West Indies with what had always been a serious deficiency. And I represent the improvement under five heads. First, it provided the Church with a visible head - someone with real authority - to whom the various insular and continental governments could relate. In the period prior to their arrival, the Commissaries only functioned as the channel through whom information passed to or from the Bishops of London. These Bishops had the ear of the British Government and could more effectively request of the Governments in the West Indies provision for their Clergy. Coleridge, for example, could do so in Trinidad in 1827, having previously been accorded a seat on the Legislative Council of that Island. In Jamaica arrangements were made for increased salaries for the Clergy, and an Act was passed rendering the ecclesiastical laws of England in force in Jamaica.

In the second place, the advent of Bishops provided an administrative head who could give direction to the activities of the Church. One notices at once the dynamism which attended the early years of both Bishops as they sought to increase the pastoral staff of the Dioceses and to urge on their Clergy greater zeal for the instruction of slaves and free coloured people. The transformation in both cases was perhaps far greater than statistics can adequately express, especially since the statistical information is inadequate. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in Jamaica the Clergy increased from 45 to 56 between 1825 and 1834; by 1834 the number of Churches was 61 and by that date there were 142 schools.[11] By comparison, the figure for the Diocese of Barbados (excluding the Leeward Islands) showed an increase in the number of Clergy from 31 to 52; in Barbados alone an increase of Churches from 14 to 21. From a mere handful, the number of schools rose to 258 in 1834.[12]

In the third place, the advent of Bishops provided a chief pastor for each Diocese. One aspect of the so-called London oversight which is not given any attention is the effect of the entire absence of episcopal ministrations within the West Indies. Admission to full memberships in this Church has always been by Confirmation administered by the Bishop. With the permanent absence of Bishops this sacrament could not be administered. The preparation of persons for full membership must undoubtedly have created a great degree of frustration to incumbents of parishes. It is the same frustration which faced a young West Indian missionary in West Africa as he and his people waited for the Bishop of Sierra Leone whose arrival seemed to be in the distant future.[13] It is the lack of such episcopal presence which saw the Governor of St. Vincent preside over the consecration of St. George's Church in 1820, and the Governor of Trinidad preside over the consecration of Holy Trinity Church in 1823.

Fourthly, the advent of Bishops provided an authority for ecclesiastical discipline. This is not to say that previously Clergy could act immorally with impunity. On the contrary, they were deprived of office by the Colonial Governor when the occasion merited such action. My point is that any lack of discipline among the Clergy was directly traceable to the quality of person recommended for ordination. Such recommendation was at the discretion of Governors or Officials who did not choose candidates on the basis of vocation. The Bishops chose their candidates for Orders, and their contact with those to be ordained ensured a better quality of person. Several of these persons were trained for ministry at Codrington College - the first

Theological College to be established anywhere in the Anglican communion. This College is older than those of Chichester and Wells; in fact; the first Principal of Wells was a man who resigned as Principal of Codrington. (Incidentally, it is this same institution whose existence is frequently at risk because we in the West Indies seem unwilling or unable to support our own notable heritage).

Finally, the advent of the Bishops imparted a pastoral sense to the Clergy. They actually became more diligent in their ministrations, sometimes attracting to themselves hostile criticism for attempting to infect the people with Tractarianism or "Puseyism". Yet a very able Methodist Minister, John Horsford, gave a testimony of the episcopate which indicated that its influence extended beyond its own membership. It is to this effect that the "English Church, prompted by her Bishop, also stimulated Methodism".[14] This is a compliment indeed when one considers that the high-churchmanship of men like Coleridge was anathema to Methodists.

It must not be thought, however, that the Anglican Church was merely inward looking - concerned with its own survival. A considerable amount of effort and funds were poured into the education of the ex-slaves. In this regard the established Church was aided by the governments which tended to depend on it for administering this area of work. So that all schools of this Church tended to be state schools in so far as their funding was concerned. On the other hand, large sums of money were contributed through the S.P.G. which enabled the continued development of this work. For example, in 1836 the Society supported no fewer than 28 Clergy in Jamaica and Barbados. In 1845 it was supporting four missionaries in the Bahamas; and giving about £1000 to Guyana. In the latest report we have available in the West Indies - that for 1853 - it was supporting the Amerindian mission financially. The 1845 Report noted that £24,000 had been raised by the Society for use in Negro Education. The list to the end of the century would certainly be impressive.[15]

As a further sign that the Church was merely looking inwards, we take note of the growth of a missionary consciousness in the West Indies. Not only was there the idea of the Church carrying the gospel to distant lands, there was also the conception of Africa being the destination of immediate concern. It probably originated in Jamaica where Baptist and Presbyterians were to launch schemes of their own. The man whom credit would be given for initiating a scheme in our Church was one J. M. Trew, a former Archdeacon of the Bahamas. Trew argued that a collosal injustice had been done to Africa by the removal of so many millions of her children; and that an evangelistic effort from the West Indies would be worthwhile though partial reparation.[16] It is one of the injustices of history that so much of the scheme has been attributed to Richard Rawle, while hardly a mention is made of Archdeacon Trew. While Rawle must be acknowledged as the man who helped to make the mission a reality, he added nothing to Trew's conception of it.

The missionary enterprise cannot but evoke commendation for two reasons. In the first place because it recognised the dynamic character of christianity. What the proponents and organisers of the mission were trying to stress was that christianity is essentially a missionary movement. It is a movement which thrives on growth and activity. It is at once a catalyst both for a change of life and for a change of society. In the second place, they strove to show that the injustice perpetrated on Africa needed some conscious effort on the part of those who profited by the labour of Africans. It may well be regarded as the local challenge to the view that emancipation had brought the issue of slavery to an end. Compensation had been given to those persons who lost the services of their slaves. This venture was the token compensation of the West Indian Church of Africa.

There were in the scheme defects to which attention must be draw. One of these was the belief that mission meant going to a distant land. Nothing so clearly ignored the tremendous significance of Acts 1:8 "You shall be my witness in Jerusalem and

in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth". The Church was prepared to leave a field of mission on its doorstep to engage in mission elsewhere. It is significant that neither Trinidad nor Guyana took any active part in the enterprise. A more crucial defect was that the mission was that the mission was not intended to have African leadership. When Rawle, Bishop Parry and Governor Colebrooke of Barbados spoke on the mission in 1850, they stressed the point that the area selected was well suited to Europeans. That consideration has no meaning except in terms of the personnel. It is now history that the effort nearly collapsed before anyone embarked for Africa, and that John Duport went only as a lay assistant to H. J. Leacock. What history has not yet recorded is that, were it not for John Duport, the mission could not have survived. For seventeen years he was, humanly speaking, its foundation and buttress. The West Indies gave several of her sons to that mission including the Bahamian Samuel Higgs, a plaque in memory of whom now adorns the Church of St. Agnes.

Happily any distortion in missionary perspective was corrected in other parts of the Province. The Church in Trinidad and Guyana saw the needs of mission close at hand, and both made determined efforts to grapple with those needs. In Trinidad, Richard Rawle (Bishop since 1872) pioneered the work among the indentured Indians. Rawle was uneasy at the influx of Indians whose language, in his view, rendered them inaccessible. Never daunted by such obstacles, he endeavoured to acquire a knowledge of Hindustani, and wrote to the S.P.G. seeking help. Yet Rawle was aware all along that mere preaching was not the way towards the conversion of these Indians. Only his words can adequately convey his lofty ideal:

> The Hindoo will not be brought to Christ by the rightness of the gospel to him ... he must be acted upon by christian love, in contact with some of those in whom Christ lives and works. The Gospel... as a converter, is not a book, but a loving human heart filled with Christ.[17]

The other factor of which Rawle was aware, and which exacerbated his difficulty was that the Indian population was essentially transitory. People were always returning to India: so that attempts at evangelisation constitutes merely a series of new beginnings.

Rawle was not without resources. Finding a christian Indian in the Colonial Hospital, Rawle lent him some Hindi tracts to read. This man spoke to others in adjacent beds, and thereby the work had its beginning. In the space of about four weeks, Rawle had baptised 2 converts and had other under instruction for baptism. In his zeal to extend this aspect of his episcopate, Rawle sent to Calcutta to acquire books for his Indian converts. So great was the importance which Rawle attached to this task, that in 1877 he ordained a deacon to work among them. By 1881 another was ordained - an East Indian of Greek parentage who spoke Hindi. To this effort the S.P.G. lent its aid, so that in 1883 a missionary from Chota Nagpur was appointed for the Indians. All of this work was being carried out as a cooperative venture with the Presbyterians but as a separate and distinct task. The Presbyterians had been engaged in this work some four or five years before Rawle. Religious rivalry was still a way of life, however, and was to continue so for many decades yet.

In Guyana there was similar work among the indentured Indians. This began in 1861 when a merchant company made available the sum of £150 for missionary work among them, and the S.P.G. later granted £100. So enthusiastically did Bishop Austin greet this response that he quickly secured the services of a missionary from Calcutta. Very rapidly schools were built for them, adding education to evangelisation.

Even before this, the Church had begun work among the Amerindians. Between 1835 and 1843 the work progressed slowly, but methodically, being superintended during the latter three years by William Henry Brett. Brett was significant less for his length of service than for his diligence in translating the scriptures into the language of the Amerindians. It was the kind of work done in our part of the world, and which was the distinctive contribution

of John Duport who laboured in West Africa. This work, which evoked great enthusiam under the leadership of Bishop Austin, seems to have declined early in this century. It became increasingly difficult to enlist persons for that enterprise. A new start, however, has been given to it through the setting up of the Alan Knight Training Centre where approximately twelve Amerindians are currently in training.

In the late 1860s and early 1870s, the Church in the West Indies faced perhaps its sternest test. With an eye on economy, the Anglican Church in the West Indies was disestablished and disendowed. Except for the Diocese of Barbados, the Anglican Church in the West Indies was left to provide its own funding; and though it continued to enjoy "most favoured status", it never received anything beyond the capitation grants given other Churches. In the new Diocese of Trinidad, the Bishop, began his ministry at the end of what must have been the shortest establishment in history. The Church was established in 1844 and disestablished in 1870. It was therefore not as well off as its sister Dioceses, many of which had at least secured sound Churches and schools before the axe fell. Barbados enjoyed status and funding for another hundred years before disestablishment finally came in 1969. These Dioceses, even under establishment, were poor. The kind of planning needed at the change had not been done, so that for many years thereafter the Church in the Province entered a stage of virtual mendicancy. Its finances were always shaky and Bishops were always seeking to recoup their deficits by appeals to contacts in the north. As we celebrate this centenary, we shall need to correct this trend if we are to pass on a solvent Church to the next generation.

It is said that in unity there is strength. And it is not insignificant that it was at this time that the thought of forming a Province was born. At a meeting of the Bishops in Guyana in 1873, a resolution was passed to the effect that this end be actively pursued. It was ten years before this was finally achieved, and the inaugural meeting of the Provincial Synod was held in St. Luke's Church, Jamaica, November 1883. That Synod comprised the Bishop of Guiana - Williams Piercy Austin who was elected Primate; the Bishop of Jamaica, Enos Nuttall; the Bishop Coadjutor of Antigua, C. J. Branch; the Bishop of Barbados, Herbert Bree; and the Bishop of Nassau, Edward Chaston. Those absent were the Bishop of Trinidad, Richard Rawle; and the Bishop of Antigua, W. W. Jackson. Their first task was the preparation of Canons for the infant Province.

The Provincial arrangement got off to a slow start; but it was considered to be of great benefit in that it renewed Church life. The author of this view indicated the ways in which this came about, by means of certain observations which it might be useful to record here. There were indications, he said, of a readiness on the part of the Diocesan Synods to strengthen the hands of Provincial Synod by carrying out the latter's wishes without surrendering "reasonable local predilections". He observed further a desire shown to make the Provincial Synod representative of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and Laity. His final observation was of an increase of interest in one another by the Dioceses, and a readiness to profit by the experiences of each.[18]

These views were written in 1889, six years after the institution of the Province. What the writer observed about the mutual relations of Provincial and Diocesan Synods is worthy of further reflection at this time. It is still a matter worth considering as to what extent Provincial Synod is upheld and strengthened by the Diocesan Synods, or whether the Diocesan Synods are "doing their own thing". In other words, we shall need to consider seriously where the strength of the Province lies: whether in a strong unifying organization or in decentralized, strongly individual units. In 1890, there was, to an observer, a clear indication that the Dioceses were making the Province strong. The other observation which deserves comments is that which speaks of the interest in each other generated among the Dioceses, and their willingness to learn from each other's experiences. When one considers the comparative lack of communication in those days, their sharing of information is highly commendable. Even more so was their willingness to learn from each other. We occupy a small section of what is now called global village. We may well ask

ourselves whether we share experiences as much as we might. Certainly it has become painfully obvious that we seem to believe we cannot learn from each other, and therefore always turn our eyes to those outside the region. What aggravates this tendency to look outwards is the fact that it comes at a time when the entire bench of Bishops is indigenous. Is there any significance in this? How do we account for the fact that under expatriate leaders we learned from one another? If we do not address these questions, the centenary observations will prove to be a farce.

The third observation has a bearing on the composition of Synod. Originally, Provincial Synod was composed solely of the Bishops, though there was an early desire for extension of the membership to comprise three houses. It took the Province just over three quarters of a century to attain that goal. So that 1959 marked a significant milestone in our Provincial history. Effectively one house has functioned since then - and that is the house of Bishops. The metamorphosis to triple house meeting has fittingly come in our centenary year, and it is to be hoped that the houses will be enabled to meet regularly. It can be opposed on the ground of cost, naturally. But from the point of view of equity, to persist in only one house meeting will continue the unfortunate and unforgiveable impression that the house of Bishops is the Province.

One of the failures of missionary enterprise in our region was the absence of any conscious effort to train persons for leadership at the highest level. The Anglican Church, emanating from England, seemed always to see its leadership arriving by boat or aeroplane from the same source. When our Church started a mission to Africa, it sought European leadership there. John Henry Duport, the first black West Indian to be ordained, was admitted to orders virtually by default. H. J. Leacock the leader had become too ill to function; and his two successors, after his death, died without being able to settle down. For a long time during this century Clergy were trained, but there was no conscious effort to groom persons for high office.

The present offers us our most severe challenge - and it does so from two perspectives. One concerns the very problem which faces the West Indian community as a whole: the inability to accept the leadership of its own people. And so we tend always to be more understanding and tolerant of the gross inequities of the outsider than of the merely human foibles of our own people. We shall have, before the end of the next century of our Church, to emancipate ourselves from the worst kind of slavery to which we have yet been subjected: slavery of the mind. The Church - the people of the region - needs to be sure that they are willing to accept West Indian leadership, and that they evince a conscious will to work with that leadership for the future. This means accepting and supporting our own people as Bishops, Archdeacons, Deans and Theologians. It would also be a challenge to those who hold leadership positions to desist from the infighting which often mars the transition from expatriate to local leadership.

There is a second perspective from which the challenge comes to the Church that is the perspective of the leadership itself. And here I shall be very brief. The future of the Church in the Province rests, in no small measure, on the shoulders of our present leaders. Those who currently bear office will be severely tested by those for whom local leadership at all levels is comparatively new. Either to overreact, or to seek greener pastures will expose the Church to a level of mediocrity in leadership from which it would deserve to be released. If the leaders of the past failed to train their successors, the leaders of the present must not succumb to the same error. It may only be our task to sow; in that case, let us ensure that there is a crop worthy of the reaper.

I wish to end with a word on the ecumenical dimension of Church life in the Caribbean. A mere thirteen years ago, a letter written in support of a candidate for election as a Bishop, contained these words: "He is ecumenical but not ecumaniac". I understood those words to mean that the candidate was willing to work with other

Churches, but not to the extent of eradicating all traces of his Anglican heritage. The task which may face us in the future is that of recognising that we are Anglicans, and knowing why we are Anglicans. And then, there will be the additional task of making an Anglican contribution to the ecumencial movement. I stress this point because I have often detected a desire on the part of some people to be so much "one with everybody" that they fail to be anything at all. That, to me, is to be ecumaniac. It fails to enrich the ecumenical dialogue, and it robs our partners of the opportunity to see and to share what we have. In emphasising what we have in common, our differences can enhance the dialogue and enlighten those of other traditions. And they will do so because our aim will not be to divide but, like the different functions of our different members, to strengthen the whole when the different parts are working towards a common goal.

NOTES

1. This incident is recorded in Vincent Harlow, A History of Barbados, 1625 - 1685, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1926, pp. 96f.

2. J. H. Rose, etal (Eds.) Cambridge History of the British Empire, vol. 2, p. 293.

3. Calendar of State Papers, American and Colonial Series (C.S.P. Col) 1677-80, No. 1488: "Memorandum by the Bishop of London Concerning the Church in Barbados", August 28, 1680.

4. Fulham Papers, XVIII, III: Bishop Portens to Lord Bakanas, February 10, 1801.

5. Ibid., XVII, 103-4: John Mitchell to the Archbishop of Duthan, London, July 31, 1711.

6. C.S.P. Col., 1677-80, No. 1270: Lords of Trade and Plantations to Sir Jonathan Atkins, January 16, 1680.

7. See, for example, R. H. Schomburgk, History of Barbados, London, 1848, pp. 92f.

8. Fulham Papers, XV, 80-2: Thomas Robertson to Bishop Portens, Harbour Island, June 17, 1790. For other examples of poverty see Ibid., 70-1: Woods Rogers to Bishop Gibson, New Providence, October 13, 1730; and 83-6: William Gordon to Bishop Portens, Exuma, June 18, 1792.

9. Ibid., XV, 203-14; XVII, 211-35; XIX, 116-20: Answers to Queries Addressed to the Clergy.

10. Trinidad Duplicate Despatches, Vol. 3, No. 254: Woodford to Bathurst, August 1, 1817, with enclosures. Cf. 3,290: Same to same, May 31, 1818, with enclosure.

11. These figures are taken from J. B. Ellis, The Diocese of Jamaica, Kingston, 1890, pp. 62-66.

12. See Schomburgk, op. cit. p. 99.

13. "Report of the Pongas Mission", 1865, pp. 9, 10.

14. J. Horsford, A Voice from the West Indies, London, 1856, p. 38.

15. The "Report of the S.P.G., 1845", pp. lii - lxx gives a wide coverage of work in the West Indies.

16. J. M.Trew, Africa Wasted by Britain and Restored by Native Agency, in a letter to the Right Honourable and Right Reverend The Lord Bishop of London, London, 1848.

17. G. Mather & C. J. Blagg, Bishop Rawle: A Memoir, London, p. 250.

18. West Indian Guardian, July 1, 1889.