THE PROPERTY AND REVENUES OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT

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The Property and Revenues of the English Church Establishment by Frederick Martin

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BY

FREDERICK MARTIN.

AUTHOR OF THE "STATESMAN'S YEAR-BOOK."



Society for the Liberation of Beligion from State-Patronage and Control,

2, SERJEANTS' INN, FLEET STREET.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The prevalence of a conviction that the disestablishment of the Church of England is rapidly passing from the region of abstract speculation into that of practical politics, has naturally increased the public desire to possess fuller information relative to the property and revenues in the possession of that Church than has hitherto been accessible. It is, however, a desire by no means easily gratified; since the facts are either withheld by the authorities, both in Church and State, or are published in such a form as to be of no utility to any but those who make ecclesiastical statistics a special study. There is, probably, no public department in regard to which the public has so little reliable knowledge, or in which there is so much obscurity.

The Society for the Liberation of Religion from State-Patronage and Control-popularly known as the "Liberation Society"-has from time to time devoted considerable attention to the subject, and published in detached portions the results of its inquiries. These have been widely issued, and—notwithstanding special liability to error in the treatment of such a subject-have, for the most part, stood the test of the severest scrutiny of opponents, as well as of friends. The Executive Committee, however, in 1875, resolved upon a new effort to collect, and to complete, all the information on the subject which could be obtained by the most careful search, and statistical skill and experience. And to afford some pledge of their determination to secure both accuracy and impartiality, they also resolved to entrust the investigation, not to one of the Society's official staff, but to a professional statist, not only of admitted competency, but unbiassed-so far as was known-in favour of the Society's object. For this purpose they applied to Mr. FREDERICK MARTIN, the author of the wellknown and highly esteemed Statesman's Year Book, to undertake the inquiry, who, after some consideration, consented to comply with their request.

That request was couched in the following terms—which are now published as evidence of the Committee's anxiety that the inquiry should be conducted in such a way as to justify the public in placing confidence in the results:—

"The Executive Committee of this Society wish to present to "the public as complete, and accurate, a statement of the extent, "nature, and value of the property in possession of the Church of "England as it is possible to obtain.

"They are desirous that the inquiries needed for that purpose should be prosecuted, and the results made public, in a strictly impartial spirit, and without any bias in regard to the object which the Society seeks to promote. They also wish that those results should be published with the name of the writer, and that he should be considered to be responsible for their accuracy.

"Believing that the long experience which you have had in con"ducting statistical inquiries, in connection with public topics
"qualify you for the task, they hope that you will be willing to
"undertake the preparation of such a statement as that now de"scribed in general terms, and the character of which is further
"indicated by the schedule of particulars annexed."

The following pages contain the conclusions at which Mr. MARTIN has arrived. He has executed the important work confided to him with the utmost painstaking, and, it is believed, with scrupulous care; and as his statements have been subjected to careful revision, they are published with the conviction that they form a trustworthy, as well as a highly valuable, body of facts on a subject the practical importance and interest of which increases day by day.

 Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, London. April, 1877.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The task undertaken by me of ascertaining the Revenues of the Church of England has been one of considerable difficulty, owing to the want of recent official documents on the subject, and the frequent contradictions in the returns that are in existence. All these have undergone the most careful examination and comparison, which permits me to hope that, although there may be minor errors in the statements, the facts and figures given will be found, on the whole, to be trustworthy.

It may be necessary for me to give the assurance that my work has been purely and entirely statistical, and influenced by no partisan views whatever as regards the great questions involved in the establishment of the Church of England.

FREDERICK MARTIN.

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