

**ON CLERICAL EDUCATION: A LETTER;
ON THE OFFICE OF DEACON, A
SECOND LETTER; A LETTER TO EARL
GREY, ON HIS RENUNCIATION OF
THE ENGLISH MONARCHY**

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On clerical education: a letter; On the office of deacon, a second letter; A letter to Earl Grey, on his renunciation of the english monarchy by Various

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VARIOUS

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THE ENGLISH MONARCHY**

ON
CLERICAL EDUCATION:

A
LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

EDWARD,
LORD BISHOP OF LLANDAFF.

BY A CLERGYMAN.

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A

LETTER,

§c.

MY LORD,

No one is better acquainted than your lordship with the complaints, which have been long made against our universities, as incapable, under their present management, of affording an adequate education to candidates for the office of the ministry : nor is any one better acquainted than yourself with their actual state in respect to discipline, instruction, and morals. In these two considerations I trust I may find an apology for addressing to your lordship the suggestions, which are contained in the following pages.

Most persons, who take an enlarged view of the exigencies of public education, will admit, that the expectation of finding in the universities of the land

a complete system of instruction to qualify men for the pastoral office, is an unreasonable one. The attempt to furnish such instruction, if made at all, must either be confined to those, who are under training for the service of the Church, or extended to all, who seek the advantages of an university education. In either case difficulties immediately present themselves to the execution of such a system, which cannot be satisfactorily removed, because they arise not so much from any complexity in its details as from a fundamental error in the design.

It is very undesirable to give to the instruction, provided in our universities, a professional character. They are now, and it is much to be desired they may continue, seminaries for affording a liberal education to the youth of all classes in the land, who have the means and the leisure to make use of it. Such an education ought indeed to partake largely of the religious character of all our public institutions, and would be essentially defective, if it failed to imbue the youth of the educated classes in this country with reverence for the ordinances of the Church, or to make them acquainted with its articles and doctrines, together with the scriptural evidences, on which they are founded. But, if it were once rendered exclusively or chiefly

theological, it would then be defective in another view: for, on the one hand, it would leave the wants of other classes of students unsupplied, or inadequately supplied; and, on the other, it would fail of imparting to our younger clergy that enlargement of mind and acquaintance with general science and literature, which would fit them to meet on equal terms with other members of the educated classes of the country. The thing to be desired is, that the degree of bachelor of arts should be a public testimonial and certificate, not of a person's present fitness for any profession whatever, but of his having made such acquirements by the due preparatory cultivation of all his faculties, as may fit him for entering with advantage upon those pursuits and studies, by which he may be prepared for any.

Still, however, though this should be admitted to be the true state of the case, the complaint of there being no adequate provision of a public kind in this country for the education of a young divine, remains unanswered. The complaint, indeed, when directed against our universities, misses its aim. But in its application to our ecclesiastical system, I do not see, that it is capable of any reply.

A graduate, who wishes to become a physician, has every advantage towards acquiring that pro-

fessional knowledge and skill, without which he cannot hope to succeed. He is not only put upon a course of medical study, but walks the hospitals, attends lectures, and devotes a considerable time to various collateral branches of knowledge, as chemistry, botany, and others, before he enters upon his professional career. If he wishes to become a lawyer, there are the inns of court for his accommodation, and he is not called to the bar, till he has been prepared by attending trials and receiving instruction in the chambers of some experienced practitioner for the business, in which he is to be occupied. A clergyman is the only member of any of the learned professions, who has strictly no regular provision for an education, suited to the office, to which he aspires. Very often he is admitted, as a candidate for orders, before he has actually taken his degree; and, even if any interval is left between the termination of his academical course and his ordination, he is not at all directed in his studies, with the single exception of the necessary attendance on the lectures of the professor of divinity, but may pass his time in idleness or in study, and that study, if prosecuted, may be either theological or general, and, if theological, may be selected from such quarters as himself or his friends may fancy;

and he comes ordinarily with no systematic training, and destitute of all practical acquaintance with his intended duties, to solicit ordination at the hands of the bishop. The bishop, in these circumstances, acts, as the circumstances themselves compel him to act. He cannot expect from candidates a sort or degree of knowledge, for which they have had no adequate discipline or instruction; nor can he hope to find in them that preparation of mind for encountering the actual difficulties of a clergyman's life, which in other professions is commonly attained, before the young aspirant is permitted to practise. He examines him, perhaps, in the evidences of Christianity, in the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures, and in some books, which may be read at home without any intercourse with officiating clergymen, and then sends him forth, raw and inexperienced in the work of the ministry, however learned he may be in other branches of knowledge, to acquire a practical acquaintance with parochial duties, as he may.

How many inconveniences result from these defects in clerical education, they best know, who have devoted their lives to the work of the ministry. Many of them have themselves only discovered, by painful experience, how much better they might