

To the Editor of the British American.

MR. EDITOR

When reading your excellent paper of the 1st September, I glanced at a few hints respecting the conduct of Commissioners, in this Island; but was sorry to see so little said on a subject that might occupy several pages of your paper. It is there said, that Commissioners are in the habit of making private contracts without the knowledge of the people, and with those related to them, this assertion Sir, appears to be too true. Some of our Commissioners of Roads, are become Lords of the Manor, and hesitate not to say, we can do as we please, for all power is invested in us, as it regards the appropriation of road monies. I would ask Mr. Editor, whether a Commissioner can be contractor, labourer, and inspector, I think when this is the case the public need not expect Justice done to them. I have heard of a commissioner commencing a piece of road in September, 1831, for which he received his money at that time, but the road was not finished until June, 1832. If the commissioner had died in that lapse of time who was to finish the road for the public? When a commissioner will advertise for the lowest tender, according to a plan to be seen at his house, and afterwards award the same to his own son Thirteen Pounds above the lowest tender, with this cunning apology, that his said son had found out a better plan! How reproachful to Church and State is such conduct! I have heard of a commissioner selling a piece of road among Acadians the very day on which he advertised, in the presence of two or three of the poor and ignorant people who scarcely understood what he said, and who think you step in for that prize, consisting of two grants in one?—The commissioner's own son, who went privately with his father for that very purpose! When a commissioner will give one son eighty-four pounds of our money in one year in this clandestine manner, how much will three or four more get when they are all grasping for the spoil? And I am credibly informed that forty pounds would complete the job! Money Sir, is the root of all evil, and when once men are swayed by the love of it, they care not if they become abhorrent both to Church and State, if they can but obtain their object. Some commissioners will say I do not care for what you can say or do, I have a friend in Court in Mr.

I am a subscriber to your paper, and if you will please to insert these hints you will very much oblige,

Your's &c

A NATIVE.

September, 17, 1832.

* Money.

Osuley's character of the Clergy of the United States.—In asserting the clergy have no connection with the government, or with any political party, directly or indirectly; they are not magistrates, nor do they take part in any of the lighter recreations of society that in this country are looked upon as at least, harmless amusements. Clergymen are rarely, if ever, seen at a ball or party; nor do they mix much in general and large companies, unless when brought together for the promotion of some charitable measure, or some association connected with their religious duties. It is not intended to institute a comparison between the habits and principles of the American Clergy and those of the Church of England, but to mention facts that account for their total difference of feeling in the two countries is so great, that if a clergyman were, in most parts of the United States, to be seen at a theatre, at a dance, or to join a card party, he would certainly fall in the esteem and opinion of his flock; but if he were to become habitually a frequenter of balls, plays, &c. or be tempted to become a sportsman or fox hunter, he certainly would not long continue to fill the station of a pastor to any congregation. I do not pretend to give any opinion as to the comparative merits of the two systems, nor is either censure or approbation implied of the severity of public opinion in America on this subject. These facts, however, joined to the absence of all political or worldly dignitaries in the ecclesiastical body in the United States, render large incomes quite unnecessary to the clergy of that country; and the assertion, therefore, of the mean amount of their emoluments being greater than, or nearly equal to, that of the clergymen of England, is the more surprising.

WEALTH OF THE SPANISH CLERGY.

(From the Athenæum.)

The annual income of the Spanish Clergy has been generally valued at 16,000,000. although the clergy themselves have always denied that it was more than twelve to thirteen millions.

Up to 1792, all the taxes and contributions paid to the government did not exceed 5,500,000, yearly, so that the Spanish people paid nearly three times as much for their religious as for their civil government.

From the beginning of the 18th century to 1792, we do not find that the clergy ever contributed to the charges of the state more than 130,000. lent to the government in 1780, and a donation of 400,000. in 1792.

From 1792 to 1808, the clergy advanced to the government either by loan or donation 1,890,000. and received from the people within the same period at least 195,000,000. so that they contributed much less than one per cent. of their income, while the people in addition to the payment of 7,500,000. annually, a ordinary contribution to the government, were obliged to pay within that same period 56,000,000. as extraordinary contributions.

Up to the year 1808 the clergy enjoyed great privileges; and they and their property were exempt from all contribution and taxes, and they pushed this privilege to so monstrous an extent that every clergyman received yearly from the Royal Treasury a sum of money in repayment, of such tax, as it was presumed he might have paid, in the purchase of provisions bought at the open markets; such provisions being subjected to a municipal tax at the gates of the city.

From 1808 to 1814 they were obliged to disgorge of their enormous wealth, for

neither French nor Spaniards spared them. The Cortes were of opinion that they ought not to be exempt from contributing to the charges of the state; that, having possessed themselves of their enormous wealth by illegal and foul means, it was high time to deprive them of it; that the important interests of religion required a more just and impartial distribution, and not to allow a great majority of the Rectors of parishes to starve on thirty or forty pounds a year, while the Prelates, the Canons, in a word the whole of the high clergy enjoyed immense revenues. In consequence of the termination the Bishops, Canons, and Pluralists conspired against the Cortes, and in 1814 eventually triumphed—but their triumph was of short duration. In 1817 the king deprived them of their privilege of exemption, and having imposed a property-tax, the Spanish people everywhere contrived to make the church land property pay, perhaps, twice as much as in justice it ought. The clergy, growing weary of these burdens, beheld with indifference the resolutions of 1820,—concluding that their condition could not be worse under the dominion of the Cortes than it had been under the absolute king. In this they were mistaken; for the Cortes applied part of the Church property to the payment of the national debt, which caused the dissensions between the clergy and the Cortes to break out afresh. There cannot be the least doubt that the contest would have terminated in favour of the Cortes, had not the Duke d'Angouleme invaded Spain, with his numerous French troops, for the avowed purpose of compelling the Spaniards to pay more for their religion than they were disposed to do. From that period the clergy have enjoyed their former privileges; but there is a great falling off in their revenues, owing to the little value of every description of agricultural produce, and to its having become a common practice among the Spaniards to use every endeavour to cheat them of their tithes. The clergy on the other hand, have resorted to the most violent measures to compel their flock to pay the full amount; they have generally been unsuccessful, and have rendered themselves objects of detestation, without finding a remedy for the evil.

To the Editor of the British American.

Mr. Editor,

Your article in No. 9 under the head of "varieties," may carry some humour with it, but in my mind the moral of the piece is of serious moment. Mr. Hobler at the Mansion House is supposed to address a man about a case of Surgeon's instruments.—"I bocht them, said the applicant in a strong Scotch accent Mr. Hobler.—For what purpose? Applicant.—I am engaged to gang as medical attendant to a vessel that's ganging out till Canada. Why, said Mr. Hobler, evidently surprised, are you properly qualified? Applicant.—I cannot say justly, but I've been two years as porter in a Pottery's shop in Edinbro'." The conversation might have terminated more serviceably if Mr. Hobler had enquired the name of the vessel and its owner, and let both go together in the report.—At a season when a dreadful contagious distemper rages in some of the Colonies, it is shocking to hear of such imposition and inhumanity. Even should the tale be told