Wroxton Abbey\ Banbury *.

December \10th, 1887.

Owing to the recent circulation in the parish of a pamphlet containing correspondence which has passed between myself and the Vicar, relating to the ringing of\ the Church Bells, which is incomplete, I think it desirable that the following correspondence which has taken place since should also be published, so that you may be able to form a fair view of the question at issue.

NORTH.

"WROXTON ABBEY, BANBURY,

. DEC. 2nd, 1887.

DEAR Mr. IZAT;

I am in receipt of your note and pamphlet. It would, I think, have been more in accordance with the rules of society had you asked Lady North's and my permission to publish our private letters to you before doing so—a request we should have gladly granted. " "

You have apparently forgotten what took place on the 4th October, 1886. ••—''

Lady North's letter to you of the 5th of October, was written in consequence of what passed between you and Charles Parritt, the second bellringer, on the previous day. Charles Parritt reported that he asked you to allow the bells to be rung on my birthday, and that your reply was, "Botheration, why don't you let it slide?.. Why should the bells be rung for a Catholic?" He replied that all he wanted to know was whether the bells were to be rung or not. You told him you would let him know (which you never did), and that he, Parritt, had -nothing to do with the matter, as he was- not first, bellringer. I may here remark that H. Taylor, the first bellringer, had so lately been discharged from my service that you would hardly expect him to ask for the bells to be rung on my account. It is true that after the receipt of Lady North's letter you had the bells rung in the evening. On the 13th they were rung without your leave being asked, which resulted in your discharging Charles Parritt. •' Your reply to Lady North's letter 'conveys a very different impression of what had taken place, and certainly deprived the interview we had a few days afterwards of the significance it would otherwise have had. You must have known how impossible it was for me to ask for the bells to be rung on those days, because the ringing of them was a mark of goodwill to me and mine from my people in the village.

Being, however, anxious this year to prevent the occurrence of the disagreeable events of the previous year, I wrote to you on the 20th of September last, reminding you of the near approach of the 5th and 13th; and, again, in answer to yours of the 28th, I wrote on the 1st of October suggesting that the bells should be chimed or some explanation given, for I knew the unpleasant impression which had been left on my people's minds by the unfortunate occurrence of last year. Had you followed my suggestion I venture to think you would have avoided your present troubles. Lord, Hussey, and Bryan who were deputed to wait on you by my people on the 17th November, complain of the discourtesy of your reception. They describe the interview, which lasted an hour and a half, as follows: "Mr. Izat, on November 17th, in an excited manner, in the presence of Lord, Hussey, and Bryan, said that he had received some very insulting letters from Lord North, about which we knew nothing. He also said that he would not be ordered to ring the Bells by anybody, either by Lord North, Dukes, or Bishops. He did not want to court popularity in the village, and we could either come to the concert or stay away, in fact, do exactly as we thought best. He should do what he thought was his duty, and did not care what the people in the village thought of him. Whether people came to Church or not he should be thankful to Almighty God that he was allowed to be there to worship. With respect to the birthdays, he considered them all humbug, in which he was borne out by his superiors. He held as his opinion that as Lord North had left the threshold of the Church twenty years ago, never to enter it again, why should the Bells be rung for them (because they had lost a member of their flock.) But he agreed to sacrifice his private opinion, and said that the Bells should be rung if Lord North wished for it. He also said, in answer to a question, that if the Bells were not rung it would be Lord North's own fault in the way that he was asked. - ' '

" The greater portion of this is Mr. Izat's private opinion, which was not to be made public, but as he, has broken faith with us we don't scruple to do so with him. This is a condensed summary of an interview which lasted about an hour and a half.

" (Signed). THOMAS HUSSEY WM. BRYANT,

J. T. LORD.

Of course I pass over your allusions to me with the contempt they deserve, as being merely the result of excitement. 1 observe you describe yourself' in your pamphlet a* saying that you neither could nor would give any promise.. As you know they made it a condition of their assisting you with subscriptions for the restoration of the bells that they should be rung on my and my sons Birthdays days, and you declined to acceed to their request. I cannot see that you have anything to complain of, seeing that their non-attendance was due entirely to your own action.

My letters not only show a strong desire to smooth matters over for you, but my letter of the 19th expressly tells you how glad, I shall be to assist you in the restoration of the Bells, if used on joyous occasions, such as Xmas, New Year, Marriages, &c., but your reply entirely deprives me of the power of doing so. That letter also tells

you how glad I and my family will be, I use the words, "we all," will gladly take part &c, to assist you in any entertainment you may organise for any non-religious work.

I observe you omit to publish the address signed by over 40 of my people, and presented to me on the occasion of a concert given them by me to celebrate Miss North's Birthday.

I have hitherto subscribed £J5 a year to the Schools, and £5 a year to the Clothing Club. These subscriptions I shall now withdraw, but following the customs of my Cambridgeshire Estates, this £'20 will be spent by me in matters connected with the poor of the parish, under my own direction, and will not in future pass through your hands.

I consider myself free to make this letter as public as you have my former letters.

Faithfully yours,

NORTH. [No reply has been received to this letter.]

WROXTON' VICARAGE, BANBURY,

1st DECEMBER, 1887.

MY DEAR Sir.

I feel that it is my duty to hand to you, as an old friend of the parish, a copy of a correspondence which it has been my painful duty to circulate in our villages. The pamphlet contains none of those details which have accompanied the correspondence as *I have no wish to make the matter a personal one*. The fact that the labourers on the North Estates, together with their wives and families, were prohibited by some person or pcr-> ons, from attending a village concert on the 21st inst. on behalf of the restoration of our Church Bells is freely discussed in Banbury and this neighbourhood. You will gather from the correspondence that no meeting of the estate employees was ever held.

I most deeply deplore the fact that Lord North when the matter took place countenanced it by inviting the Estate employees and their families (who did not come to the concert) to a tea, &c., at the Abbey on Saturday evening, the 26th inst. I further deplore the fact that Lord North has countenanced the acts and letters of three servants (which appear in the pamphlet), all of them comparative strangers to this parish. Not the least unfortunate incident in this case, was the dismissal from the workshops of one of the most steady and respectable young men in the place, who when told that he must not attend the concert, protested most strongly against the exercise of control over his evening hours. It is of course wrong that he should have made use of strong language in his protest, but for this, I understand, he instantly apologised.

The fear of after consequences will, I am afraid, influence our poorer Church people on future occasions of concerts, &c., unless the ban now instituted be clearly removed, and it is thoroughly understood that Church people are to be able to enjoy their right to attend their Church and to support it without fear of after consequences.

I anij dear Sir, .

Yours very truly,

JOHN R. IZAT.

Thefacts are so generally known and understood that Lord North considers no comments are required on the above letter, ~ except that no apology was made by the workman to his foreman.

- - .

16, ARLINGTON STREET,

• '' 3rd DECEMBER, 1887.

DEAR MR. IZAT,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and its enclosure, and you must excuse my declining to take any part in the present controversy and confine my remarks to what has been for many years customary at Wroxton. I own that it was with great regret I heard, above a year ago, that any difficulty had arisen about ringing the Church Bells on certain occasions, such as the arrival at Wroxtori or on the Birthdays of members of my family. It certainly was customary when I first became acquainted with Wroxton in 1835, and I know that the custom prevailed previous to that from 1827, when my late brother-in-law, Lord Bute had charge of the Estates until I married, and I have no doubt that mark of respect for the family existed long before that. I was frequently asufferer from the custom for, during the Parliamentary Sessions^ when I was only able to get away for a day, when I had a great deal to do and but little time to do it in, the Bells announced my arrival, so there was an end to my privacy, when it entailed many visitors, but I felt it was a compliment kindly intended and of course made no remark upon it. I can most truly say that not only was.no objection taken to the ringing of the Bells by any Incumbent of the Parish from 1835 until your arrival, but that they took the greatest pleasure in carrying into effect the kind feelings of the parishioners for my family. You are aware that shortly after I presented you to the living, Lady North's state of health, unfortunately, obliged us to give up our residence at Wroxton, I therefore cannot say whether the bells were rang on our Birthdays or not, but as you never made any objection to me I suppose they were. You say the man who reminded you on the 4th October, 1886, was not the chief ringer, but that could hardly signify, as his object was to remind you of Lord North's Birthday, as the old custom was to ring the Bells the first thing in the morning before they went to work, and after their return from work the 'Bells

were rang again, and the men came down to the Abbey for refreshment. I mention, this as the custom which prevailed from the time. I first went to Wroxton.

You must allow, me to say I think Lord North's letter to yon of the 19th November deserved a more courteous answer than you sent him. No one can deny that Church Bells form an integral part of the Church. They may not be intended for secular use, being, as you say they are usually consecrated, but, living as I now do nearly the whole year in London, I can say that many of the Churches, whose Bells are probably consecrated, ring in honor of the Birthdays of members of the Royal Family, and some of the Churches even hoist the Royal Standard, which, you will admit is not Ecclesiastical. I cannot help remarking that from the early part of last August to the 17th of September, when I left Wroxton, the Bells were rang or chimed every Sunday, and I think the same might have been done a few days later on Lord North's Birthday, the 5th October.

- Faithfully yours,

J. SIDNEY NORTH.

As you have published Lord and Lady North's letters, I shall reserve to. myself the right to publish this letter, and perhaps you will not object to your letter to me being published at the same time.

wRoxton.

DEC. 8th, 1887.

To the Right Hon. LORD NORTH, •?.

We, the undersigned, having canvassed the village of Wroxton concerning the keeping up of all the old customs of ringing the Church Bells, we beg to forward you acopy of the list of those in favour of the same, Your obedient Servants,

JOHN TIMS. ANDREW FOX. W. THOMPSON.

[The following is the correspondence that has already been published.] -

Wroxton Vicarage Banbury . 30th Nov., 1887. '

Dear Lord North,

Im sure you will agree with me in thinking that it is better that the enclosed correspondence should be circulated, so as to give our people an opportunity of seeing for themselves the actual letters which have been distorted and misused to create a painful disturbance, and upset the village of late.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN ROBERT IZAT. -

[COPY.] *

WROXTON,

DEC. 5th, 1887.'

To the Kcv. J. E. IZAT,

The Vicarage, Wroxton.

REV. SIR, * . . •

We, the undersigned residents of the Parish of Wroxton, ask your kind permission to allow all the old customs of ringing the Church bells to be continued as in the past., Andrew Fox. John Tims. William Thompson. Job Carpenter, Emma Carpenter. Mary Fox. Thomas Palmer. C. Whing. C. Ward. R. Lamb.O. Hughes. John Miller. Thomas Hughes. Mary Hughes. John Ward. James Freeman. Daniel Taylor. Edward Taylor W. C. Philpot. Peter Betts. William Jakeman.

William Cox. George Harris. Jabez Hayes. B. P Hayes. W. Berry. . William Hughes. Henry Taylor. David Grant. H. Oxley. Jane Hughes. Mrs. Hayes. Thomas Barton. William Harris? S. A. Harris. Reuben Taylor. Caleb Hawtin. . George Goodman. Edward Taylor. H. W. Berry. Edmund Lake. Oliver Grant. William Grant Thomas Hussey.

Thomas Henry Mills. Ellen Allington.

William Gregory. Amos Grant.

Richard Hughes.

Mrs. Hughes

George Ingram.

John Betts.

John O. Pearson.

Jesse Hughes.

William Neville.

Richard Palmer.

Joseph Cleydon.

Arthur Freeman.

John Grant. William Ward. Geo. F. North. Joseph Harris. Henry Taylor, sen. Alfed Fisher. John Henry Hayes. Joseph Betts. John Bartlett.

Caleb Grant. William Berry. Charles Taylor. John Elfred. George Ping. Charles Allington. William Ward, jun. Esau Hemmings. Hugh Fox. John Taylor. John Hemmings. Samuel Hawkes. Robert Franklin. Janet Slatter.

Dennis Cross. Thomas Cross. S Carpenter. Henry Jakeman. Henry Tayler. George Cross. Jemima Cross. Joseph Cross. Louisa Cross. A. Jordan. C. Parrett. H. Neville, sen.-M. Neville. H, Neville. W. Bryant. Thomas Doherty. S. P. Sullivan. W. Herbert. George Cadd.

Frederick Blackwell, Joshua T. H. Lord. Henry Mills. . Eliza Grant.

To the Parishioners of Wroxton-cum-Balscote.

Wroxton Vicarage, Banbury,

30th November, 1887.

As certain misleading and erroneous statements have lately been freely circulated throughout the parish, and even beyond its bounds, with regard to my correspondence with LORD NORTH, as to the ringing of our Church Bells, I think it only right, as well to the parishioners as to those concerned, to print the letters in order. Two of these statements are—

i. That I have refused to allow the Church Bells to be rung on the 5th and 13th of October, in honour of the birthdays of LORD NORTH and The Hon. W. F. NORTH.

ii. That a certain letter of mine, dated 19th inst., was so wanting in courtesy to LORD NORTH, that it has caused a very strong protest to be entered against it on the part of the workmen on LORD NORTH'S estate, and that in consequence, the said workmen decline in any way to countenance or support the fund being raised for the rehanging of the Bells.

The correspondence etc. shall speak for itself.

On October 5th, 1886, the following letter was received by me from LADY NORTH; appended to which will be found my reply to her of the same date:—

WROXTON ABBEY,

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5_{TH}.

DBAR MR. IZAT, • .-••..

• I venture to write and ask how it is that the Bells have not been rung this morning, as they have been for the past fifty years, in honor of my husband's birthday. I have been told, on asking our men, that you would not give the necessary permission, but I cannot think this can be correct. I therefore write so that you may have time to give orders which will do away with this impression.

Believe me, Yours very truly,

F. NOKTH.