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In the course of a recent sermon in St. Andrew's Church, London, Rev. Dr. Ross, the pastor, spoke boldly on the question of political corruption. He urged the Christian men of the congregation and the community to get into politics in order that better methods might be adopted. Among other things he said:—

"We have not yet risen above the vulgar practice of buying votes. It has been proven that men who possess the glorious privilege of citizenship in this young and free country were bought for two dollars a head, the price of a spring lamb, and that not in benighted Quebec, but in good, godly Ontario. I have no doubt their are many respectable Liberals who have succeeded in persuading themselves that such things never happened—that they are vile slanders of some enemy of the good cause. But when men have been unseated by our courts on such evidence or have resigned under fear of exposure does not this afford tolerable certain proof of the truth of these charges? Others, while admitting the truth of these charges, say that we must not blame the best men of the party or the party leaders for the indiscreet zeal of some of the least conscientious men in it. No! The policy, apparently, has been to import certain scoundrels from no one knows where, and let them do the dark work and keep the candidate and the best men studiously ignorant of these proceedings. But these unscrupulous adventurers are not in the business of corrupting men for their health. Some one must furnish the five-dollar bills that are found near the gray mare or in the bottom of the buggy." Dr. Ross adds: "Let not the respectable men of either party who are studying the planets or looking for some kind of weather, while these things are going on in their party think that we will absolve them from all responsibility for it."


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THE CHANNEL ISLANDS.
 Jersey, Guernsey, Sark and Herm Are Constitutional Curiosities—Strange Laws Which Prevail There.

In view of the feeling aroused in the Channel Islands by the announcement of the intention of the Government to withdraw the British garrison thence, a great deal more is likely to be heard of the question in this country before long. The constitutional position of the islands in the Empire is a curiosity. "Every schoolboy knows" that they are the sole remnant of the Norman possessions of the Norman dynasty of 1066. But their relation to Parliament is peculiar. As a matter of fact, Parliament legislates for them, when it thinks fit, which is not often, and in the Interpretation Act of 1889 Parliament ordained that the expression "British Islands" should include, as a general rule, the Channel Islands.

But the islanders maintain their territory never did belong to the King of England, as King of England, but as Duke of Normandy, and that Parliament has not more right to legislate for them than it had to legislate for Hanover in the reigns of the Georges (Sir William Anson, "The Constitution.") What happens, in fact, is that when a statute affects the islands, the Crown in Council transmits it through the Home Secretary—for they are not "Colonies"—to the Lieutenant-Governors for registration by the Royal Court. This satisfies the theory of the islanders that they are bound by the act of the Crown and not of Parliament. The basis of the local law is the old Norman law.

In Jersey the Poyal Court till 1771 was what political philosophers have always abhorred—at once a legislative and a judicial body. It is now only the judiciary. It consists of the baltic appointed by the Crown, and twelve "jurats"—that is, sworn men, who are elected for life by the whole of the ratepayers in Jersey. The whole of the judicial work is done by different distributions of the jurats in number—namely, as Courts of First Instance or of Appeal, but always with the bailiff presiding, and there is a final appeal to the Crown in Council. "The constitution of the court," quietly observes Sir William Anson, "is not calculated to further the ends of justice." This is probably the only tribunal in the whole Empire of which a dispassionate technical writer could make this observation. "The jurats, who act as judges, are elected for legislative as well as judicial purposes. They are not paid, and no security is taken that they should possess any legal training. The bailiff, who is appointed by the Crown, who is always a qualified lawyer, and whose income from direct payment and fees amounts to about £750, is not allowed to express an opinion, unless the jurats are equally divided. Change has constantly been desired and expected in the constitution of these courts, but no change would seem to have been effected."

The state of things in the judiciary of Guernsey and Alderney seems to be much the same, and, according to the same authority, equally unsatisfactory. Each of the islands has its law officers (of the Crown) and a staff of executive officials, and Alderney apparently appeals to Guernsey. "Sark has a court which exercises limited criminal jurisdiction. The tiny island of Herm"—surely Sark and Herm correspond in our Empire to Andorra or San Marino—"once attempted to assert its independence of Guernsey, but the attempt was not successful." ("Encyclopaedia of Laws.") The Legislature in Jersey has been since 1771 "the states," i.e., the Royal Court plus the twelve parsons (rectors) and the twelve constables of the twelve parishes. The constables are elected by parishioners (princeps) possessing property of the annual value of from £160 to £400. Here, too, the bailiff presides. The relations between this body and the Privy Council have been much discussed with much antiquarian lore. The present position is thus summed up by Sir W. Anson (ubi supra): "The Crown can by Order-in-Council extend to the islands the operations of statutes in which the islands are not named, or may legislate independently of statute, by Order-in-Council. In such cases the order must be registered by the Royal Court, and it is accepted custom that the order to register should be addressed to the States, that they may have an opportunity of addressing the Crown on the subject of the proposed legislation." This they have often done successfully: they are not heard by the judicial committee, but by a special one for the islands.

The States may themselves, and do, initiate legislation, subject to the approval of the Crown in Council, and they may, even without this consent, make enactments which are valid for three years, unless the Crown vetoes. The powers of the Guernsey Legislature are also very limited.

Lord Basil Blackwood.
 Lord Basil Blackwood, who has been home on holiday for the last six months, is now on the Atlantic on his way back to Bloemfontein to resume his place as Assistant Colonial Secretary of the Orange River Colony. Lord Basil went out to South Africa early in the war as a Deputy Judge-Advocate, and after the general settlement was given a place in the Colonial Secretary's office in the new Orange Colony. His elder brother, Lord Ava, who would now have been Marquis of Dufferin had he lived, lost his life, it will be remembered, during the siege of Ladysmith in one of the sorties by the garrison against the Boers.

Outfitted.
 Frederick the Great, the famous commander, sent to Dresden for Dr. Baylies, an English physician, to introduce inoculation into his dominions. When the doctor arrived in Berlin the King did not forget to ask his favorite question: "Well, doctor, how many have you despatched to the other world?" "Not so many as you, sir," was the quick and witty retort.

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