

(No. 47.)



1868.

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T A S M A N I A.

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REV. E. FREEMAN.

CLAIM FOR HOUSE ALLOWANCE.

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Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, August 13, 1868.



*Hobart Town, 4th September, 1867,*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to bring under your notice my application for the usual allowance of house rent as enjoyed by other Chaplains.

You are doubtless aware of the particulars of this long-standing and vexed question.

The Synod refuses to give me house allowance, although the vote of Parliament virtually settled the question in my favour.

I was appointed by the Home Government in 1836, and gazetted as a Chaplain in this Island.

The terms were, that either a house should be provided or an allowance of house rent given. This was confirmed by "The Church Act," passed 1 Vict. No. 16. I accordingly was allowed house rent until a parsonage was provided, which I occupied until December 23rd, 1860, when a lighted leaf falling on the shingles of the parsonage caused its destruction.

The merits of the case are, that I, having been appointed with such allowance by the Home Government, cannot be deprived by the Synod; moreover, the justice of the claim was fully recognised by the Colonial Parliament of Tasmania, by a vote passed in September, 1864, without a division, by both Houses of Parliament, for £120 as allowance for my house rent for the two years intervening between the time of the fire and the period at which the Government ceased to distribute the Church funds. Therefore, from January 1863 to the present time, the Synod has exercised the power of Church distribution as regards the Church of England which was before exercised by the Government.

But the Synod consider they are now bound by the Schedule of "The State Aid Distribution Act," in which my name was omitted to be inserted for house rent,—and, consequently, the Synod refuses to pay me £60 per annum for house rent.

I must have been entitled to the same house allowance from the Synod when that body by law stepped into the place of the Government.

It is clear that, when "The State Aid Distribution Act" passed my claim upon the Colony on vested interests in my appointment, it consisted of a salary of £200, forage allowance £50, and house rent or its equivalent the usual allowance of house rent of £60, making in all £310 per annum, the sum stated by the Earl Derby as guaranteed. *Vide Debate in the House of Lords, February 21st, 1860. Vide Hobart Town Mercury, May 9th, 1860.*

The Legislature, therefore, has caused a failure of justice in not setting my name down for house rent. This can be rectified by passing a short Act to be read with "The State Aid Distribution Act," amending the Schedule by placing the sum of £60 opposite my name for house rent.

The Synod is now in a position to pay this sum out of the amount granted to the Church of England, owing to the death and resignation of Incumbents named in the Schedule. Therefore the Schedule might be amended as suggested without entailing any increase of the State Aid grant; such an amendment would only involve a revision of the existing financial arrangements of the Synod,—no additional outlay by the Treasury.

I trust that, as the mistake arose on the part of the Government, it is not too much to ask the Government to rectify a grievance which has borne very heavily upon me for nearly five years.

Among other duties of the Legislature is that of redressing grievances, whether pressing upon one individual or upon a community; and the Legislature has already vindicated my cause, the justice of which cannot be better expressed than by the speech made by Mr. Chapman, the present

Colonial Treasurer, in his place in the House of Assembly on September 10th, 1863, (*vide Mercury*, September 11th, 1863):—"The clergyman at Brown's River (Kingston) had clearly a vested interest in his place of residence. He considered that gentleman entitled to an allowance of rent from the time of the fire as was received by other clergymen throughout the Island." And this opinion was endorsed by that Parliament voting me £120, the two years' house rent. This surely ought to have been sufficient for the Synod without compelling me to appeal again to the Parliament for a decision, when that decision has already been given, simply because the Parliament in granting me an allowance for house rent for two years did not add, "and we hereby vote that the Rev. Edward Freeman's name be added to the Schedule of the State Aid Distribution Act for £60 per annum for the allowance of house rent as other Chaplains not occupying a parsonage." This information ought to have been sufficient for the guidance of the synodical body.

I scarcely need direct your attention that in case my name be inserted in the Schedule for house rent, I also hope that the Parliament will direct the Synod to pay me that amount of house rent from the period the State Aid Distribution Act came into operation; viz., January 1st, 1863.

Having every confidence in your desire to do justice in this as in all other cases,

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

EDWARD FREEMAN, A.M.  
*Chaplain of Kingston.*

*The Hon. SIR RICHARD DRY, Colonial Secretary, Hobart Town.*

*Colonial Secretary's Office, 25th September, 1867.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 4th instant, respecting your claim for house allowance as the Church of England Minister at Brown's River.

The Executive Government are not in a position to interfere with the action of the Synod in the appropriation of any funds placed at their disposal by the operation of the Redistribution Act, and I regret that I am therefore unable to interfere in your behalf or assist you in obtaining the object you have in view.

(Signed)

I have, &c.,

RICHARD DRY.

*The Rev. E. FREEMAN, Hobart Town.*