

**Keynote Address by  
Ambassador The Hon. Burchell Whiteman  
At the Unveiling of the Enos Nuttall Exhibition  
At the National Library of Jamaica  
On Monday, May 30, 2016**

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**Acknowledgements**

- Lord Bishop, Distinguished Clergy....
- NLJ - Chairman..... Board Members....Executive Director, Staff
- Specially invited guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a pleasure and very great privilege to participate in and support the opening of this exhibition...which has all the hallmarks of quality.

Let me commend the National Library for conceiving the idea of marking the centenary of Enos Nuttall's passing in this way, and adding another important dimension to the appreciation of this rich heritage with which our country is blessed.

This event is yet another of the impressive initiatives embraced by the NLJ in recent times..... We recall the re-establishment of the designation of a Jamaican Poet Laureate, and the programme being undertaken by him as one of the most important cultural developments for many years...addressing both the recognition of emerging and mature creative talent, as well as, an urgent need to arrest the coarsening of our sensibilities.

Today, we are opening a window on an interesting, valuable and relevant portion of our history as we recall the life and times of Enos Nuttall, the longest serving Head of what we familiarly call the Anglican Church in Jamaica ... (now formally The Church of Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.)

Allow me to quote a reliable Anglican source in sharing some extraordinary facts about this ecclesiastical and administrative giant of a man, progressive in thought, abounding in energy and filled with genuine Christian zeal. And I quote from this Anglican source to insulate myself from any accusation of Methodist bias.

*Rev. Enos Nuttall, who had come to Jamaica in 1862 as a missionary in the Methodist Church and was ordained a priest in the Anglican Church in 1866, was elected Bishop at a special Synod in July 1880. He was consecrated in St Paul's Cathedral, London, in October of the same year. He was only 38 years old at his consecration and was to dominate the life of the Church for the next 36 years serving as Bishop of Jamaica as well as Primate and Archbishop of the West Indies.*

*Rt. Rev. Enos Nuttall, Bishop of Jamaica 1880 -1916, in an appeal to the Synod, in 1888, for assistance itemized his work over the preceding 8 years. This included 8 diocesan synods, 2 provincial synods, 28 ordinations, 20,000 persons confirmed, 11 churches consecrated, most of the churches visited three times each, 3,000 sermons, 1,400 meetings, 40,000 letters and several pamphlets.*

(end quote)

What a man. Incredible energy. Prodigious output. Major impact. His commitment was beyond question.

In many ways, he was inevitably a product of his time and yet in quite significant ways much ahead of it as well. He was aware of the assumptions of his day relating to race, class, colour, mental and spiritual capacity. As Professor Patrick Bryan points out, his policies as a leading churchman, were grounded in their relevance to the success of empire, and thus to the preservation of social order. He therefore espoused a brand of positivism which supported a hierarchical structure within the church.

And yet, his strategic path and ultimate aim clearly reflected a consciousness of the inherent possibilities of all Jamaicans - indeed of all peoples - and an understanding that one day, Jamaican people of African descent would be recognized and accepted for their intrinsic worth and as products of an ancient and vibrant civilisation.

He encouraged his American counterparts in the troubled and troubling Southern states of the USA to create opportunities for leadership by qualified black persons in the Communion there, and although he deferred to their seniority and their more intimate knowledge of the social landscape in their country, he shared with them positive examples from his Jamaican experience to illustrate the value of that constructive if gradual and nuanced approach.

In 1907, he concluded an address to American bishops in Richmond, Virginia with these words:

*But if you and we are afraid of these difficulties; and if any of us shrink from these efforts; and if we do not really want these people for Christ and His Church; or if we do not believe in the power of the grace of God, and wise spiritual training, to lift them up to the position of faithful and true brethren in Christ, fitted in due proportion, according to their several capacity, **to work and stand with us in all parts and functions***

*of the Lord's household—then we may escape much trouble and annoyance and difficulty in the present time; but we shall have in consequence many misgivings when we meet our Master to reckon with Him at His coming. (end quote)*

Without being facetious, I am tempted to say that the misgivings and worse would have occurred before they finally met their Master, and the consequences would be felt for generations.

But to focus particularly on his leadership and its impact on Jamaica's social development, we remind ourselves that Bishop Enos Nuttall was very clear on the importance of education for development.

*I expect that most Jamaicans would identify the Bishop today with the Memorial Hospital which bears his name. And that is both understandable and appropriate because Bishop Nuttall initiated a nursing service at a time when private nursing care did not exist. It could also be argued that through the appointed Deaconesses who led the process in the 1890s, the Church also started the training of nurses and health care providers to meet the unmet needs of many Jamaicans.*

*But his social activism was most visible in his promotion of access to relevant education of good quality.*

He publicly opposed moves towards stiffer vagrancy laws, seeing education and paid labour as a more just and progressive alternative. He saw education not only as having economic value to the country but as a vital individual and social need and entitlement.

It was in his time that the thrust to partner with the Government in the cause of education began in earnest. And under the leadership of his successors, the growth continued. The initiative began in 1897 with

Cathedral High School for Girls, which was later to merge with Beckford & Smith for Boys to create St. Jago High in St. Catherine, and that phase ended in 1962, with Bishop Gibson High in Mandeville, Manchester. (My fellow parishioner Omar Davies would have wished me to say that the high point of the expansion was the founding of Glenmuir High in May Pen, Clarendon in 1958..I leave that attribution to him.)

Suffice it to say that the Anglican Church today owns one Teachers College, nine High Schools and 101 Primary Schools, and the enlightened partnership with the Government remains alive and well.

A hundred years after his life and service to Jamaica ended, his work lives after him. We remind ourselves and give thanks for this visionary of the past. And we trust that as the Church and the citizenry celebrate his contribution, we can recapture the zeal, the commitment, the intellectual and spiritual energy which drove him on, and find our own inspiration and reason to persevere, in the building of a nation worthy of our heritage .... and a nation of influential voices in the interconnected world of the 21st century.

We give God thanks upon every remembrance of this outstanding servant and salute his memory.

Again, we thank NLJ for mounting this exhibition and I trust that it will prove a source of psychic, historical and spiritual enrichment for all who experience it.

Thank you.

(It gives me great pleasure to declare this exhibition .....open. Enjoy, be encouraged, and be enriched.)