

THE  
PRELITICAL DOCTRINE  
OF THE  
APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION EXAMINED  
WITH A DELINEATION  
OF THE  
HIGH-CHURCH SYSTEM.

*Henry Augustus*

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## P R E F A C E.



I MAKE no apology for writing a book on the Prelatical controversy. Matters have reached such a pass that Non-Episcopalians must either defend themselves, or submit to be extruded from the house of God. The High-Church party have come into the Church of Christ, where we and our fathers have been for ages, and gravely undertaken to partition it off among themselves and the corrupt Romish and Oriental Hierarchies. They say to us, and by *us* I mean<sup>1</sup> thirteen out of fourteen of all the evangelical ministers, and thirty-three out of thirty-four of all the evangelical Christians, of this country—"You are no ministers, but schismatical intruders into the sacred office—You have

<sup>1</sup> See page 312.

no ordinances, no part in the promises, no covenanted title to eternal life—You are out of the Church, mere ‘sectaries’ and ‘dissenters,’ and if you are saved at all, it must be through ‘uncovenanted mercy.’ ” They must count upon our having at least *one* Christian grace in perfection, whether we are in the Church or out of it, if they expect us to bear all this in silence. But we are not at liberty to be silent. If it were a mere personal matter, we could put up with abuse from this quarter as well as from any other. But this is the least important aspect of the movement. We regard it as a systematic and violent attack upon “the faith once delivered to the saints”—as a daring attempt to seize upon “THE CROWN RIGHTS OF THE REDEEMER,” and entail them upon the Bishops. We look upon it as an organized scheme for establishing an EXCLUSIVE AND LORDLY HIERARCHY in this country. We believe the whole tendency of the system is to substitute a MERE RITUAL RELIGION FOR TRUE CHRISTIANITY. We feel called upon, therefore, by every consideration of patriotism, of fealty to the Great Head of the Church, and of fidelity to the spiritual interests of those around

us, to bring the pretensions of this party to the test of Scripture and History.

These remarks will explain the design of the present volume—the substance of which has been laid before my own congregation, in a course of Lectures. The standard works of the Rev. Drs. Miller and Mason, have long been before the public, and are not likely, on the main question between Prelatists and their opposers, to be superseded by any future publications. To the writings of these eminent divines, the author has been largely indebted—especially in conducting the first branch of the argument. I have also consulted freely the works of the Rev. Dr. Smyth of Charleston, S. C., whose learned and elaborate volumes on the “Apostolical Succession,” and “Presbytery and Prelacy,” with his numerous smaller treatises on kindred subjects, entitle him to the cordial gratitude of the Non-Prelatical Churches. My object has been to do something towards supplying a deficiency which appeared to me not to have been fully met by any of the able and valuable works I have named, nor, indeed, by any other which has as yet fallen under my observation. I have

felt the want, and the inquiries put to me as a Pastor, have convinced me that it was felt by others, of *a work comprising within a single portable volume, a concise discussion of the leading points at issue between High-Churchmen and ourselves, and adapted to the present stage of the controversy.* I cannot flatter myself that I have succeeded in producing *the* work that is needed to fill this hiatus. But flooded as the country is with High-Church publications, of all grades and dimensions, I trust the present volume may answer a useful purpose *for the time*, until some one more competent and with more leisure, shall furnish a work better adapted to meet the existing deficiency.

As to the plan of this work, it will be seen by a glance at the table of contents, that it comprises two parts, the first of which treats of "THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION;" and the second, of "THE CHARACTERISTICS AND TENDENCIES OF THE HIGH-CHURCH SYSTEM." I set out with the intention of discussing the former of these topics only; but I found it impracticable to do justice to that subject, without sketching the other features of the system to which it belongs. They mutually illustrate each other.

I have aimed throughout, not at novelty, but utility. My book is *for the people*. Familiar as the scriptural argument against Prelacy is to the learned, there are many intelligent laymen who have neglected to make themselves acquainted with it. In so far as I have gone into that argument, I have presented it in the usual form, — not caring to affect an air of originality where originality was out of the question, nor solicitous to strengthen by new authorities, a position which, though often assailed, has thus far proved impregnable. The other sources of argument are still less familiar to the general reader; but these also have been so well explored of late, that the chief labour an author has to perform, consists in the mere selection and arrangement of materials.

It may, perhaps, be objected to the work, in certain quarters, that it confounds High-Church-ism with Puseyism. I am aware that while all Puseyites are High-Churchmen, all High-Churchmen are not Puseyites. I would not impute to individuals sentiments they do not hold. I am dealing, however, with **THE HIGH-CHURCH SYSTEM**. No one, I presume, will deny that this system and the system of

the Oxford Tracts, are identical in all their essential features. It was the publication of those Tracts, which revived the torpid High-Church-ism of the Episcopal clergy. They are read, quoted, recommended, as the best exposition of the system extant. They are the armory from which its champions have furnished themselves for their present attack upon the Non-Prelatical Churches. To allege, therefore, that there are High-Churchmen who reject a part of the mummeries and a part of the Popery of some of the Oxford writers, while it releases them as individuals from the responsibility of those tenets which they disclaim, does not touch the fact that the High-Church and Tractarian *systems* are substantially one. Indeed, the very circumstance here urged in abatement of the condemnation pronounced upon the High-Church system, to wit, that certain of the leading expounders of it have well-nigh become Papists, furnishes a legitimate ground of argument against the system, as disclosing its strong affinity for Popery.

As to the tone of this book, I have only to say, that I have endeavoured to treat the party whose views I have controverted, with candour,

and shall deeply regret it if I have, in any instance, done them injustice. I have, however, felt it due to all concerned, "to call things by their right names."

I commit the work to the press, praying that it may please God to use it as an humble instrument in checking the progress of error and formalism, and promoting the cause of truth and righteousness.

PHILADELPHIA, April, 1844.





THE  
HIGH-CHURCH DOCTRINE  
OF THE  
APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

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CHAPTER I.

HIGH-CHURCH PRETENSIONS.

THE controversy which now agitates the Church of England, and its daughter in this country, has a two-fold aspect,—one internal, the other external; or a domestic and a foreign aspect. Viewed in its domestic relations merely, Christian courtesy would forbid other churches to interfere in it. But regarded in its more general characteristics and tendencies, it is not only their right, but has become their imperative duty to notice it.

Owing to causes which need not now be specified, there has always been—as candid and intelligent Episcopalians have admitted—a party in the Church of England, whose doctrinal sentiments and personal sympathies, have had a marked bias towards the Church of Rome, associated with a corresponding hostility to Protestantism. This party, after placing

themselves at the head of the late Oxford-Tract movement, avowed it, in so many words, as their object, to "UNPROTESTANIZE THE NATIONAL CHURCH." "We cannot," is their language, "stand where we are; we must go backwards or forwards; and it will surely be the latter. And as we go on, *we must recede more and more from the principles, if any such there be, of the English Reformation.*"<sup>1</sup> This prediction, or purpose, has been faithfully carried out. The Puseyite party, on both sides the Atlantic, has gone on assimilating itself to the Church of Rome, until at length there seem to be only a few impediments, and these mostly circumstantial rather than essentials, to a formal union between them.

It has been part and parcel of this movement, from the beginning, to disparage all unprelatical churches, or rather to deny their very existence as churches. The doctrine of its authors and abettors, is, *no (Diocesan) Bishop, no Church*. No matter though a Christian denomination may hold, in simplicity and purity, the distinctive doctrines of the Bible, and abound in those fruits of holiness which inspired men have made the sure evidence of a genuine faith and of the presence of the Spirit; if they are without prelates descended in an unbroken line from the Apostles, they have only the outward semblance of real Christianity; they are no part of the Church of Christ. The mere possession of prelacy, on the other hand, is held to countervail the grossest corruptions of faith and practice, in so far, at least, that the body thus distinguished is to be recognised as a genuine branch of the church.

This doctrine, so repugnant to Scripture and reason, and so revolting to every sentiment of humble

<sup>1</sup> British Critic, for July, 1841, pp. 44, 5.

piety, has not been thrown out in mere hints and implications; nor is it now confined to the ultra-Puseyites of Great Britain, and a few vain and noisy individuals inoculated with the semi-popery virus in this country. It is the doctrine of *the school*—openly avowed, and zealously disseminated by the pulpit and the press. That there are multitudes in the Episcopal Church who detest the doctrine and the whole system of which it is a part, is shown by the state of that Church at the present time. What proportion these may constitute, of that communion, it is neither practicable nor important to determine. It is undeniable that the system in question has the approbation of many of their bishops, and a large number of the inferior clergy, including some who two or three years ago, were regarded as Evangelical Low Churchmen. The writings of the sect find a large and ready sale here. A very influential portion of the Episcopal periodical press, is devoted to the propagation of their principles. And, not content with public and official agencies for disseminating their views, a meddlesome, proselyting spirit has diffused itself among the laity. The courtesies of social intercourse are pressed into the service of "*the church*," and private homilies on the Apostolical Succession, the divine right of Bishops, and the nullity of Presbyterian Sacraments, are delivered from house to house by fluent lecturers and *lecturesses*, the sum of whose theological reading amounts, perhaps, to three or four polemical tracts!

The Protestant Churches can ill afford at the present juncture to fall out among themselves; and a controversy with this party cannot, in the nature of things, be carried on, without producing some incidental evils. But the responsibility of it belongs ex-

clusively to those who have commenced the warfare. On the part of non-Episcopalians, it is a work of SELF-DEFENCE. The alternative is forced upon us, either to vindicate our polity against the repeated and furious assaults of Puseyites and High-Churchmen, or to leave our people exposed to the insidious influences of a system which would substitute a foundation of sand for the rock, Christ Jesus.—How foreign a controversy respecting points of ecclesiastical order is from the ordinary tastes and habits of our ministry, must be known to every enlightened Presbyterian. We are trained from infancy to regard points of this kind as of very subordinate importance. The truth we *are* jealous of. Believing as we do that no Church can enjoy permanent spiritual prosperity, which tolerates grave theological errors, we are more rigid than most of the Churches around us, in insisting upon substantial uniformity of doctrine among our ministers. But questions of form and organization, are seldom discussed in our pulpits. It is a rare thing—too rare, indeed—to hear a Presbyterian pastor preach on the distinctive features of our own polity; still rarer, to find one bringing the polity of a sister-church to the test of Scripture. Nevertheless, we have our polity, and in its place and for its appropriate ends, as a framework and scaffolding for the spiritual, uses and functions of the Church, we set a high value upon it. We believe that it is more nearly conformed to the primitive model than any other. And we should be faithless to our Master, if we were not prepared to defend it when it is assailed.

The assault we have now to repel, is not, it is true, directed against our own Church alone. It is a warfare waged against all Churches which hold to the

parity of the ministry. The party engaged in it—confessedly large, wealthy, and influential—have come forward in the face of the world, and challenged for their own and other Prelatical Churches, a monopoly of all the rights, privileges, and endowments of the Church of Christ. With a sacrilegious hand they would sever the cords which have hitherto bound the Episcopal Church to the sisterhood of the Reformed Churches, and link her in interest and in destiny to the corrupt Romish and Oriental Churches. They style their Church in this country, in official documents, “THE CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES;”<sup>1</sup> and with an insolence equalled only by its fatuity, they designate non-Episcopalians by the epithet of *dissenters*. They claim to be the only Church in the Union, except the Roman Catholic, their “Roman Sister,” as they are fond of calling her. They affirm that all other societies claiming to be Churches, are “schismatical organizations”—that our ministers are “self-appointed teachers,” without authority to preach or to administer the sacraments—that our ordinances

<sup>1</sup> The “Church Almanac,” for the year 1843, contains a list of the Episcopal Bishops and Clergy, under the head of “DIOCESES OF THE CHURCH OF THE UNITED STATES.” The Hon. Judge Jay, himself an Episcopalian, in his recent letter, rebukes the arrogance and absurdity of this title, in terms of just severity. “You will with me (he says) thank God that there is no Church of the United States, and that there can be none so long as the Federal Constitution is in force. The fanatics assembled in the city of Nauvoo have as much right to assume this arrogant title as we have.

“And by what authority is this false and impudent title substituted for our constitutional name, the ‘Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America?’ The Almanac professes to be published by the Protestant Episcopal Tract Society. And who is the President of this society? The gentleman who ordained Mr. Carey.”

(See the whole letter, in the *Presbyterian* of December 2d, 1843.)

are invalid—that it is “unlawful to attend our ministry,” and that to hear us, is “rebellion against God.” You shall judge for yourselves whether this picture is overdrawn.

Dr. Hook, the Vicar of Leeds, in his sermon entitled, “Hear the Church,” says of this country, “there you may see the Church, *like an oasis in the desert*, blessed by the dews of heaven, and shedding heavenly blessings around her in a land where, because no religion is established, *if it were not for her, nothing but the extremes of infidelity or fanaticism* would prevail.” If the sermon containing this sentence had not been republished here with the endorsement of one of the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, it would not be worth noticing. As it is, it must strike every sensible American (Puseyites always excepted,) as a very ludicrous statement, that if it were not for the Episcopal Church, the smallest of the four leading denominations, there would be nothing here but “the extremes of infidelity or fanaticism.”

We have Dr. Hook’s figure repeated by Bishop Brownell, of Connecticut, in his late charge:—“The Protestant Episcopal Church in this country appears as ‘an oasis in the desert.’ ” (p. 9.)

“It is not,” say the Oxford Tracts, “merely that Episcopacy is a better or more scriptural form than Presbyterianism, (true as this may be in itself) that Episcopalians are right, and Presbyterians are wrong, but because the *Presbyterian ministers have assumed a power which was never entrusted to them*. This is a standing condemnation from which they cannot escape, except by artifices of argument which will serve equally to protect the self-authorized teachers of religion.”—(*Tract No. 7, p. 2.*)



Again: "So far from its being a strange thing that Protestant sects are not 'in Christ' in the same fulness that *we* are, it is more accordant to the scheme of the world that they should *lie between us and heathenism.*" (*Tract No. 47.*)

High-Churchmen in the United States are no longer timid about maintaining that there is no Church in this country except the Roman Catholic and their own. While these sheets are passing through the press, the Rev. Dr. Wainwright of New York is publishing in the newspapers a series of elaborate articles in vindication of the sentiment uttered by him at the late dinner of the "New England Society," that "*there cannot be a Church without a Bishop.*"

"I have lived," says Bishop Doane of New Jersey, "in a land peopled by those who emigrated from this country. It is the fashion to call some of them the Pilgrim Fathers—men who fancied themselves somewhat straitened in the enjoyment of religious liberty—who, in the claim of greater freedom in God's worship and service, set out for distant shores, and planted themselves in a region now called New England. I enter not into the inquiry as to the character of these men, the justice of their complaints, or the motives for their proceedings. I will accord to them all that charity can ask. They went from here, *as they thought*, and truly believed, the true followers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; preaching, *as they thought*, the very principles of the Reformation; but *without a Church*—without a liturgy—*with no transmitted authority from God to minister in holy things.*" (From a speech made in St. Mary's Hall, Coventry, England.)

The same prelate, in his sermon entitled, "The Office

of a Bishop," says: "Yes, could I swell my voice till it should reach from Canada to Mexico, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific shore, it should be lifted up to entreat all who heard it, not to be content with the word of God without that ministry and those sacraments, which are equally his ordinances, *and equally essential to salvation.*" (p. 26.)

Again: "The seeming harshness of the inference, the conclusion that the *loss of salvation* must follow the failure in any of these essentials, may be safely left to the depth of the riches of grace."—(*Bishop Doane: Office of Bishop, p. 28.*)

"The attempt, (says Mr. Froude,) to substitute any other form of ordination for it, (Episcopal ordination,) or to seek *communion with Christ* through any non-Episcopal association, is to be regarded not as a *schism*, but as an *impossibility.*" (*Froude's Remains, iii. 43.*)

"A person not commissioned from the bishop, may use the words of baptism, and sprinkle or bathe with water on earth, but there is no promise from Christ, that such a man shall admit souls into the kingdom of heaven. A person not commissioned, may break bread, pour out wine, and proceed to give the Lord's Supper, but it can afford no comfort to any to receive it at his hands, because there is no warrant from Christ to lead communicants to suppose that while he does so here on earth, they will be partakers of the Saviour's heavenly body and blood. And as to the person himself, who takes upon himself without warrant, [that is, without having had the hands of a Diocesan Bishop laid upon his head,] to minister in holy things, he is all the while *treading in the steps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*, whose



awful punishment we read of in the book of Numbers." (*Tract No. 35.*)

The following passage is given in the Oxford Tracts from Dodwell, and copied into one of their organs in this country.

"None but the Bishops can unite us to the Father and the Son. Whence it will follow, that whosoever is disunited from the visible communion of the Church on earth, and *particularly* from the visible communion of the *Bishops*, must consequently be disunited from the whole visible Catholic Church on earth; and not only so, but from the invisible communion of the holy angels and saints in heaven, and, what is yet more, *from Christ and God himself*. It is one of the most dreadful aggravations of the condition of the *damned*, that they are banished from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power. The SAME is their condition also who are disunited from Christ, by being disunited from his VISIBLE REPRESENTATIVE!"

Seldom has a poor worm of the dust gone further in challenging to himself the prerogatives of Jehovah, than this writer has in thus dealing out damnation to all of every character and condition who happen not to belong to a prelatial sect. The late Episcopal Bishop of one of the neighbouring dioceses was not, however, far behind him.

"But where the Gospel is proclaimed (he says in one of his works,<sup>1</sup>) communion with the Church, by the participation of its ordinances, at the hands of the duly authorized priesthood, *is the indispensable condition of salvation.*" He afterwards makes an excep-

<sup>1</sup> See Bishop Hobart's "Companion for the Altar."

tion in favour of those who separate themselves from the regular priesthood through "involuntary ignorance or error," provided they be "humble, penitent, and obedient." But every one can judge how far this should be regarded as modifying the offensive statement.

The present Bishop of the same diocese has inherited his predecessor's principles, and is equally explicit in avowing them.

"None but the bishops (is his language) can unite us to the Father, in the way of Christ's appointment, and these bishops must be such as receive their mission from the first commissioned Apostles."

This Bishop has softened his arrogant claim of exclusive salvation for prelatical churches, by throwing in a qualifying clause: "None but the bishops can unite us to the Father, *in the way of Christ's appointment.*" Other High-Church writers in this country have usually done the same thing. Shrinking from the direct affirmation that all non-Episcopalians will certainly be damned, and aware that in a country where people think for themselves, such a sentiment would recoil upon them, they are accustomed to make over sincere and well-meaning members of other churches, not to the wrath, but to the "*uncovenanted mercies*" of God. But "*uncovenanted mercy*" is a non-entity. *All* the mercy manifested towards our race is manifested in and through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, in virtue of the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son. And as to union with the Father, the Saviour uses this strong language: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: *neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.*"—

(Matt. xi. 27.) And again, (John xiv. 6,) "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no MAN cometh unto the Father but by me." If the Bishop whose words have been quoted did not know what is here so plainly asserted, that there can be *no* union with the Father, except "in the way of Christ's appointment," what is to be thought of his theological attainments? If he did know it, what is to be thought of his *candor*?<sup>1</sup>

These quotations may serve as a sample of the manner in which the great body of the Christian people of this country, and their pastors, are spoken of by this Puseyite party in the Episcopal Church. Their great and apparently increasing influence in their own communion, the arrogance of their claims, the violence of their attacks upon the rights and liberties of other Churches, the pernicious tendency of their doctrines,

<sup>1</sup> The author has recently met with a pamphlet from the pen of a distinguished Episcopal writer and divine, in which the notion of uncovenanted mercy is thus disposed of:—

"As to the consignment of all who are not favoured with Episcopal ordinances, 'to the uncovenanted mercies of God,' Mr. M. knows no such mercies; he can find nothing in the Bible about any mercy for sinners, but that which the precious blood of the everlasting covenant has purchased, and which God hath promised but to members of the covenant of grace. Should he offer his Christian brethren of other churches no better consolation than 'uncovenanted mercy,' he would think it equivalent to an opinion that their souls are utterly destitute of hope. But, blessed be God, he is not obliged to regard them as in a condition so miserable. With all his heart he can carry to them, as beloved brethren in Christ, the overflowing 'cup of blessing;' and can say to all that 'love the Lord Jesus in sincerity,' of whatever name or form, 'He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life;' and 'there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,'"—*Statement of "the Rev. Mr. (now Bishop) McIlvaine, in answer to the Rev. (now Bishop) H. U. Onderdonk, D. D.," dated West Point, Oct. 15, 1827.*

and their activity in labouring to substitute a lifeless formalism for genuine Christianity, have left it no longer an open question, whether it is the duty of true Protestants, both in the Episcopal and other Churches, to use all appropriate means for repelling their bold and dangerous aggressions. If we refuse to do this, we betray the cause of truth and righteousness, the defence of which is committed, in his measure, to every friend and follower of the Saviour.

The author yields to no one in the respect he entertains for the feelings of those excellent persons who deprecate religious controversy, and to whose minds a discussion like the present suggests no idea but that of an attack on another denomination. But surely a Presbyterian is not to be charged with disturbing the harmony of the Christian sects, because he ventures, in the face of many rude and flagrant allegations to the contrary, to maintain that he is a member of the Church of Christ! If our title to a place at the Lord's table is not worth vindicating, it is not worth having. And let it not be supposed that these lordly pretensions against which we are contending, will die away of themselves. This is not the course of such things. The doctrines in question are too congenial to corrupt human nature, and find too much nutriment in the love of pomp and power so characteristic of hierarchies, to be readily relinquished. It is only a few years since they re-appeared, in their present offensive form, in this country; and their progress has, up to this time, been as rapid as it has been desolating among the clergy of our sister-church. Not a few even have been carried away by them, who, before the publication of the Oxford Tracts, were regarded as the decided opposers of all such exclusive and unscriptural

sentiments. And, besides, if these usurpations are not resisted, it will soon come to be taken for granted that they are well-founded. Let this party have the public ear to themselves, and go on for a few years longer proclaiming with ceaseless iteration that they are “the Church,” and that all others are “sectaries,” and “dissenters,” and the world will believe that it *is* so. Our protest, to be effective, must be made now.—And even if we could forget ourselves, something is due to the *sainted dead*. The doctrine we are opposing goes to declare, that “all those glorious churches which have flourished in Geneva, Holland, France, Scotland, England, Ireland, &c., since the Reformation; and all which have spread and are spreading through this vast continent; that those heroes of the truth, who, though they bowed not to the mitre, rescued millions from the man of sin, lighted up the lamp of genuine religion, and left it, burning with a pure and steady flame, to the generation following; that all those faithful ministers and all those private Christians, who, though not of the hierarchy, adorned the doctrine of God, their Saviour, living in faith, dying in faith, scores, hundreds, thousands of them, going away to their Father’s house, under the strong consolations of the Holy Ghost, with anticipated heaven in their hearts, and its hallelujahs on their lips; that all, all were without the pale of the visible Church; were destitute of covenanted grace; and left the world without any chance for eternal life but that unpledged, unpromised mercy which their accusers *charitably* hope may be extended to such as labour under involuntary or unavoidable error!”<sup>1</sup>—

<sup>1</sup> Dr. John M. Mason.

It would be treachery to the dead, then, to remain silent.

Opposition, able and vigorous, this party does meet with from the evangelical portion of their own communion. If any of this class of Episcopalians are surprised that *we* should begin to resent the unchristian treatment we have met with from their High Church brethren, let me put the case to them in the language of one of their own ministers—the late excellent Rector of St. Andrew's Church, Philadelphia, in whom his own denomination has lost a faithful and zealous pastor, and the "common Christianity" a pious, able, and resolute defender. "How would it strike us (asks Dr. Clark, in his 'Letters on the Church,') if another denomination were to assert, to preach from the pulpit, and publish through religious papers, that the Episcopal Church was no Church at all—a mere unauthorized human institution—that it had no valid or authorized ministry—that its preachers were nothing more than laymen—that it had no sacraments—that baptism and the holy supper, being administered by unauthorized hands, were of no efficacy; and that if any belonging to this body were saved, it would not be because they had been brought within the covenant promises, but because God in his sovereignty, 'will have mercy on whom He will have mercy.' Were a large and influential denomination of Christians, to assume this stand and proclaim these views, would not our prejudices be aroused? Would you not then say, with some reason, 'Shall we sit still and see ourselves swept off the face of Christendom by the restless spirits of the age?'" Such, precisely, is the course the High-Church party has been for several years pursuing towards all the unprelati-



churches. The indications are numerous and decisive throughout the country, that these churches have borne with it until their meekness and patience are well-nigh exhausted. And it may be safely left to candid Episcopalians to say, whether they can with reason be required to keep silence any longer. We look upon the party which is spreading such ruin through their communion, notwithstanding their strong protestations against Popery, as virtually in league with Rome. We regard the scheme of religion they are inculcating, as a system of formalism eminently adapted to ensnare and destroy the souls of men. And when we see them putting forth the most strenuous exertions to propagate this system, and, as a means of bringing people to submit to it, proclaiming in sermons and in pamphlets, in the house and by the way, that their Church is the only true Church, and that all the Christian Ministers in this land, except the Romish Ecclesiastics and themselves, are "treading in the steps of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram," we cannot, in justice to the Master we serve, remain silent. We cannot suffer them to disseminate their pernicious heresies, without lifting up a warning voice against them. We cannot see them abetting the Papal Anti-Christ in his warfare against Christ and his Church, without doing what we can to convince Protestants of every name, that it is as much their duty to oppose the Popery of Puseyism as the Popery of Rome.

Such are some of the considerations which have led the author to undertake the preparation of a small volume, on the HIGH-CHURCH DOCTRINE OF THE APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION. It is his purpose to bring the lofty and exclusive claims which have been of late, so ambitiously thrust upon the public attention, to the

test of Scripture and history. If in doing this, the question between *Prelacy and Parity* shall be found to require a somewhat minute investigation, it will be borne in mind, that there can be no controversy between non-Episcopalians and those who disavow the arrogant assumptions which have been adverted to, and who, with the British as well as continental Reformers, acknowledge the scriptural character of Churches organized on the principles of ministerial parity. With Episcopalians of this sort, we desire to cherish that intimate and sacred fellowship which ought ever to prevail among the various branches of the one household of faith. We cheerfully concede to them the privilege we claim for ourselves, of choosing that form of ecclesiastical polity which they believe to be most conformable to the Apostolic model. We look, it is true, upon Diocesan Episcopacy, as incompatible with the *perfection* of a Church; but we admit that it is compatible with the *being* of a Church. While lamenting that our Episcopal brethren should be deprived of the advantages of that "more excellent way" which *we* find laid down in the word of God, we are far from believing that they are no part of the Church of Christ. Our controversy is not with that portion of their communion who reciprocate the truly catholic sentiments on this subject, which have ever characterized the Presbyterian Church, but with those who maintain that Prelacy *alone* is authorized by the word of God, and that there is *no* Ministry excepting that which has descended from the Apostles through an unbroken and distinctly traceable line of Prelates.



## CHAPTER II.

## STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION.

WE come now to inquire into the doctrine of the "Apostolical Succession," as held by High-Churchmen and Puseyites. This shall be stated in their own words.

"We live in a Church (says Bishop Beveridge<sup>1</sup>) wherein the Apostolical line hath, through all ages, been preserved entire, there having been a constant succession of such Bishops in it as were truly and properly successors to the Apostles by virtue of that Apostolical imposition of hands which, being begun by the Apostles, hath been continued from one to another, ever since their time, down to ours. *By which means, the same spirit* which was breathed by our Lord into his Apostles is, together with their office, transmitted to their lawful successors, the pastors and governors of our Church at this time; and acts, moves, and assists, at the administration of the several parts of the Apostolical office in our days as much as ever."

Dr. Hickee, denominated Bishop and Confessor by the Oxford Tract writers, thus speaks:—"Bishops are appointed to succeed the Apostles, and like them to stand in Christ's place, and exercise the Kingly,

<sup>1</sup> This and most of the following quotations are given as furnished either by Mr. Powell, the able Methodist Episcopal writer, or by Dr. Smyth, in his elaborate and valuable work on the Apostolical Succession.

Priestly, and Prophetical office over their flocks. . . . They stand in God's and Christ's stead over their flocks; the clergy as well as the people, are to be subject to them, as to the *Vice-Gerents* of our Lord."

Dr. Hook, the present Vicar of Leeds, already mentioned, says,—“The officer whom we now call a Bishop, was at first called an Apostle, although afterwards it was thought better to confine the title of Apostle to those who had seen the Lord Jesus, while their *successors*, EXERCISING THE SAME RIGHTS AND AUTHORITY, though unendowed with miraculous powers, contented themselves (!) with the designation of Bishops. After this, the title was never given to the second order of the ministry. . . The Prelates who at this present time, rule the Churches of these realms, were validly ordained by others, who by means of an unbroken spiritual descent of ordination, derived their mission from the Apostles and from our Lord. . . . Our ordinations descend in a direct, *unbroken line* from Peter and Paul.”

“Before Jesus Christ left the world, he *breathed the Holy Spirit* into the apostles, giving them the power of *transmitting this precious gift* to others by prayer, and the imposition of hands: the apostles did so transmit it to others, and they again to others; and in this way it has been preserved in the world to the present day.” (*Outline of the doctrine, as drawn by Bishop Meade, himself an opposer of Puseyism.*)

“The real ground of our authority (say the Oxford Tract writers) is our Apostolical descent.” “The spirit, the sacred gift, has been handed down to our present bishops.” “We must necessarily consider none ordained, who have not been thus ordained.”

“The supposition is, (says Dr. How, of New York,)

that Christ established distinct grades of ministers, and conferred upon the highest grade the exclusive power of ordaining. When a minister of the highest grade, then, ordains, Christ ordains; when a minister of the second grade ordains, it is not Christ that ordains, but man. Thus Episcopal ordination confers the sacerdotal office; Presbyterial ordination does not. If, therefore, the former ordination be laid aside, and the latter be substituted in its place, the sacerdotal office must cease to exist; and as there can be no church without a ministry, the church must cease to exist also." Again he says, "Wilful opposition to Episcopacy is certainly *rebellion against God*, and must, therefore, exclude from his presence."

The views of Dodwell and of the Bishop of the Diocese of New York, have already been presented, to the effect, that "the bishops alone can unite us with the Father," and that all who are not connected with prelatical churches, are in a fair way to be lost.

It should be added, that many Episcopalians who hold to the doctrine that their prelates are lineal successors of the Apostles, reject the sentiment that salvation is restricted to churches under Diocesan Bishops. The passages that have been quoted, however, exhibit the High Church doctrine, so popular just now, on both sides the Atlantic. According to this theory, the Christian Ministry was originally established in three orders, called, ever since the apostolic age, bishops, presbyters or elders, and deacons. The first of these orders, are the successors of the Apostles, and can trace up their spiritual descent in an unbroken personal line to the twelve. They possess, miraculous gifts alone excepted, the same authority and powers with the Apostles. They have received, by regular

transmission, that peculiar gift or grace, sometimes called "the grace of the Episcopal order," and at other times the "gift of the Holy Ghost." This gift was communicated by our Saviour to the Apostles when he breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," and it has been transmitted from one generation of Prelates to another, down to the present day, by prayer and the imposition of hands. All who have been properly ordained, have inherited it and the capacity of communicating it to others, irrespective of their moral characters. Impalpable and undefinable as it is, this gift is a real *depositum*, by virtue of which the recipient "obtains the power of enduing the element of water in the Sacrament of Baptism with mysterious efficacy for the remission of sins, and of converting bread and wine in the Lord's Supper into the real body and blood of Christ;" while *these*, in turn, (not the word of God,) become the instruments of regeneration and justification. With this extraordinary endowment, is associated the sole power of ordination and of governing the church. The church is committed to the exclusive control and guardianship of the Bishops. They are *the only channel through which God communicates grace to mankind*. No man is ordained who has not been ordained by a Prelate. No organization which declines prelatival jurisdiction, is a branch of the church. No individual who is disconnected with a Bishop, can safely conclude that he is in the way of salvation.

Such is a summary of the High-Church theory. It is incumbent on them to establish every one of the positions just stated. If they fail in a single instance, the whole system falls to the ground. Their proofs, too, must be cogent and irrefutable. They must pro-

duce a *Divine right* for the system. Conjecture, probability, mere human authority, will not suffice. If they have not a "Thus saith the Lord," to rest upon, they have nothing which we are bound to respect. They must have this in an explicit form. "Whatever binds Christians (says the learned Stillingfleet,) as a universal, standing *law*, must be clearly revealed *as such*, and laid down in Scripture in such evident terms as all who have their senses exercised therein, may discern to have been the will of Christ that it should perpetually oblige all believers to the world's end, as is clear in the case of Baptism and the Lord's Supper."<sup>1</sup> Every impartial judge will admit the reasonableness of this canon, as applied to the case under consideration. Here is a scheme which challenges universal acquiescence and obedience, under penalty of everlasting perdition. It looks with complacency upon the Greek and Roman Churches, and pronounces four-fifths of Protestant Christendom to be without ministers, churches, or ordinances. It differs in so many and such radical particulars from the commonly received doctrines of Christianity, that the two systems may be fairly regarded as two Gospels. Now such a scheme, we maintain, must be able to vindicate its high and exclusive pretensions, by *clear and undoubted scriptural authority*. It is not enough to adduce isolated texts which will *bear* a construction favourable to it. It is not enough to bring forward indirect and inferential arguments in support of it. It will not answer to prove merely (if that *could* be done) that the Christian ministry was originally instituted in three distinct orders. It must be shown by express Scripture testi-

<sup>1</sup> Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, part i. chap. i.

mony that the apostolic office was intended to be *permanent*; that diocesan bishops were ordained to be their successors, and their sole successors; that they were to receive and transmit through an unbroken line of prelates, the gift of the Holy Ghost; that the grace and mercy of God were to be dispensed *only* through these bishops, and from them, through the church over which they were to preside as a visible corporation; and that God, instead of dealing with men individually, and regenerating them by means of his truth, designed to renew and justify and save them only through the sacraments duly administered by a prelatie priesthood. Since this, I say, is affirmed to be the way of salvation provided for man, its advocates must be able to show that it stands forth on the pages of the Bible, with a distinctness and prominence which leave without excuse any humble and diligent reader of the Scriptures, if he fails to discover it. This doctrine, indeed, of the Church and the Apostolical Succession, ought, if the theory before us be correct, to be the GREAT theme of the New Testament. For, on the principles of this school, the great question with every man must be, not "what must I do to be saved?" but "*where is the church?*" This being the case, it is preposterous to suppose that the sacred writers would thrust into a corner a subject of such fundamental and absorbing interest to every human being. It is an impeachment of the wisdom and benevolence of the Deity, to pretend that in a volume designed to instruct men as to the plan of salvation, He would assign the *essential* parts of that plan to a subordinate place, and teach them only in an informal and obscure manner. On this ground, therefore, as well as others, we demand a *clear and authoritative* Divine warrant for every part of this system.



## CHAPTER III.

## THE ARGUMENT FROM SCRIPTURE.

WE proceed now to inquire, *how this requisition for proof is met.* And here, at the outset, we encounter a very curious division among the advocates of High-Church principles. For while one class contend for their polity as the only form of Church Government sanctioned in the Scriptures; another, including the leading Puseyites, affirm that the *Bible furnishes no adequate ground for their system*, and that it can be vindicated only by the authority of TRADITION. Thus in Tract No 8, the Oxford writers say, “there is no part of the ecclesiastical system which is not *faintly traced* in Scripture, and no part which is *much more than faintly traced.*” In Tract 85, it is conceded that “the *divine right of Episcopacy, the Apostolical Succession, the power of the Church, &c.*, are wanting in direct or satisfactory proof, and are to be established if at all, only by the aid of *very attenuated and nicely managed inferential arguments.*” “Every one must allow,” observes the writer, “that there is *next to nothing* on the surface of Scripture about them, and *very little* even under the surface, *of a satisfactory character*,—a few striking texts at most, scattered up and down the inspired volume, or one or two particular passages of one particular Epistle, or a number of texts which *may mean, but need not mean*, what they are said by Churchmen to mean, which say something looking like what is needed, but with very little point and strength, inadequately and unsatisfactorily.”—Such, in the view of many of its



most learned and able expounders, is the *scriptural* warrant for a system which all men are required to believe on pain of damnation!—Two observations may be made respecting them and their doctrine, before we proceed with our argument.

1. Every one will see the substantial *identity between this system and Popery*. The radical question between Protestantism and Popery, is that respecting the rule of faith: and on this point, these writers maintain, with the Church of Rome, that *tradition* is equally a part of the rule of faith, with the Bible.

Where this principle is recognised, a door is opened which must eventually let in all the errors and abominations of that apostate Church.

2. It is evident that this class of High-Churchmen and the other, are more *at variance with each other*, in relation to their ecclesiastical polity, than either of them is with the Protestant world.<sup>1</sup> Neither of them “can succeed in establishing their own position without subverting the position of the other.” The one party “cannot possibly demonstrate that Episcopacy, though divine in origin and absolutely binding, is known to be so only by tradition, without thereby disproving that its necessity is taught in Scripture.” Nor can the other party demonstrate that it is clearly and adequately taught in Scripture, without thereby nullifying the argument drawn from the alleged absence of any such scriptural warrant, in favour of tradition.—Such is the harmony on this point among those who glory in their “Catholic unity,” and who agree in consigning all unprelatical Churches to “uncovenanted mercy.”

With these comments, we take our leave of that

<sup>1</sup> See on this point, *Bib. Repertory*, vol. xv. p. 402.

portion of the Puseyite body whose views have been quoted; for argument could add nothing to the force of their confession, that *their system is not to be found in the Word of God*. This position we are now to vindicate against the other division of the High Church party, who contend that the system is distinctly and *exclusively* taught in the Scriptures.

The first position it is incumbent upon those to establish, with whom we are now to argue, is, *that the Apostolic office was designed to be permanent*. We do not ask for proof that a permanent government of some kind was prescribed for the Church, but we want the point specifically made out, that the *Apostolic office* was designed to be, not extraordinary and temporary, but ordinary and perpetual. No direct Scripture statement to this effect has yet been produced. It is not pretended that the sacred writers say, in so many words, that this was to be a permanent office. All the evidence adduced in support of the opinion is inferential. Before we examine this evidence, it is necessary to inquire into *the qualifications and powers of the Apostleship*. It may be well to note, in passing, how well the qualifications and powers of the so-called Apostles of our day, correspond with those of the primitive Apostles.

The simple, primitive meaning of the term apostle, is, *one sent, a messenger*. In this general sense it is several times used in the New Testament. Thus, 2 Cor. viii. 23, the persons chosen and sent by the Churches to carry the money collected in Greece to the poor brethren at Jerusalem, are called *Apostles*. "Whether our brethren be inquired of, they are the *messengers* (Gr. *αποστολοι*, Apostles,) of the Churches, and the glory of Christ" Paul also applies the term

to Epaphroditus who had been sent to him by the Church at Philippi, during his imprisonment at Rome. "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger (Gr. *αποστολος*, Apostle,) and he that ministered to my wants." (Phil. ii. 25.) In this general sense it is applied, in one instance, to our *Saviour* himself, as being *sent* of the Father to be the Saviour of men. (Heb. iii. 1.) "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the *Apostle* and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."

The word, however, is usually employed in the New Testament in a more restricted sense, viz. to denote *the twelve Apostles*, or those who were Apostles by way of eminence. When our Saviour sent forth the twelve, "he *named* them APOSTLES." (Luke vi. 13.) They are thenceforward spoken of as "*the Apostles*," "the Apostles of Christ," and "the Twelve." To this band, on the death of Judas, Matthias was added: "He was numbered with the eleven Apostles:"—and, after him, Paul, who, in all that he says in his epistles on the subject of his Apostleship, is evidently to be understood as using the expression in that peculiar and emphatic sense in which it was applied to the twelve. As this is the sense in which modern prelates claim to be their successors, it is of radical importance to ascertain what were the functions and powers of the original Apostles.

This subject has been well treated by various writers; but no one has presented the scriptural account of the Apostleship in a more lucid and comprehensive manner, than Dr. Isaac Barrow a learned and candid

Episcopal Divine, in his treatise on the Pope's Supremacy.<sup>1</sup> I am happy to borrow the argument which he wielded so effectively in confuting the Pope's pretensions to the Apostleship, to repel those of the High Church Bishops of his own sect.

“The Apostolical office, as such, was personal and temporary; and therefore, according to its nature and design, *not successive* or communicable to others in perpetual descendance from them.”

“It was, as such, in all respects extraordinary, conferred in a special manner, designed for special purposes, discharged by special aids, endowed with special privileges, as was needful for the propagation of Christianity and founding of Churches.

To that office it was requisite that the person should have *an immediate designation and commission from God*; such as St. Paul so often doth insist on for asserting his title to the office: “Paul, an Apostle, not from men or by man”—“Not by men,” saith Chrysostom; “this is a property of the Apostles.”

It was requisite that an Apostle *should be able to attest concerning our Lord's resurrection or ascension*, either immediately, as the twelve, or by evident consequence, as St. Paul: thus St. Peter implied, at the choice of Matthias: “Wherefore of those men which have companied with us—must one be ordained to be a *witness* with us of the resurrection:” And, “Am I not,” saith St. Paul, “an Apostle? Have I not seen the Lord?” According to that of Ananias, “The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and *see that Just One*, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth; for thou shalt

<sup>1</sup> Vide pp. 201-4, Hughes' Ed. Lond. 1831.

bear witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.”

It was needful also, that an Apostle *should be endowed with miraculous gifts and graces*, enabling him both to assure his authority and to execute his office: wherefore St. Paul calleth these the “marks of an Apostle,” the “which were wrought by him among the Corinthians in all patience (or perseveringly) in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.”

It was also, in St. Chrysostom’s opinion, proper to an Apostle, that he should be able, according to his discretion, in a certain and conspicuous manner, *to impart spiritual gifts*; as St. Peter and St. John did at Samaria, which to do, according to that father, was “the peculiar gift and privilege of the Apostles.”

It was also a privilege of an Apostle, by virtue of his commission from Christ, *to instruct all nations* in the doctrine and law of Christ: he had right and warrant to exercise his function *every where*—“His charge was universal and indefinite; the whole world was his province;” he was not affixed to any one place, nor could be excluded from any, he was (as St. Cyril calleth him) “an œcumenical judge,” and “an instructor of all the sub-celestial world.”

Apostles also *did govern in an absolute manner, according to discretion, as being guided by infallible assistance*, to the which they might, on occasion, appeal, and affirm, “It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us.” Whence their writings have passed for inspired, and, therefore, canonical, or certain rules of faith and practice.

It did belong to them to found churches, to constitute pastors, to settle orders, to correct offences, to perform all such acts of sovereign spiritual power, in



virtue of the same divine assistance, 'according to the authority which the Lord had given them for edification,' as we see practised by St. Paul."

Such, in the view of this learned and eminent divine, was the Apostolic office. Many other Episcopal writers give the same account of it. Indeed, it is one of those subjects on which there has been until lately very little difference of opinion among Protestants—(nor, indeed, is there among real *Protestants* now, for the Puseyites consistently spurn this appellation.) Accordingly on turning to the History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines,<sup>1</sup> we find that in that body, "the office of Apostles was declared to be only *pro tempore* and extraordinary, for the eight following reasons:—1. They were immediately called by Christ. 2. They had seen Christ. 3. Their commission was through the whole world. 4. They were endued with the spirit of infallibility in delivering the truths of doctrine to the Churches. 5. They only by special commission were set apart to be personal witnesses of Christ's resurrection. 6. They had power to give the Holy Ghost. 7. They were appointed to go through the world to settle Churches in a new form appointed by Christ. 8. They had the inspection and care of all the Churches."

These authorities are quoted at length, because, if they are to be relied upon, *they settle the whole question*. Unless the Protestant world has totally misconceived the nature of the Apostolic office, it is preposterous to argue that that office is in existence still—or, indeed, that it *could* be perpetuated without a constant display of miracles. To prove this, it is only necessary to take the specification of its powers and

<sup>1</sup> Hetherington, p. 133.

functions, as furnished by Barrow or any other competent writer, and apply it to the lofty pretensions of any modern Bishop. Who among them was "immediately called" to the "Apostleship" by Christ? Who of them has seen Christ? Who was a witness of His resurrection? Whose diocese is co-extensive with the globe? Who possesses miraculous gifts? Who can impart the Holy Ghost? The last of these functions, it is true, is claimed: and it is not long since a Protestant Episcopal Bishop was understood to assert on a public occasion, that "the Holy Ghost was as really communicated when a Bishop lays his hands upon the head of a candidate for the priesthood in the ordination service, and says, '*Receive the Holy Ghost,*' as it was by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles." But it will be time enough to believe a statement which it revolts one's Christian sensibilities even to repeat, when it is proved. And as regards the power of bestowing "miraculous gifts," if it be conceded that Bishops lack this endowment, the obvious reply is, that their office must, then, differ in a very important particular from that of the Apostles. And if it be still further conceded, that these Bishops "were not called by immediate revelation" from Christ—that they were neither "witnesses of his resurrection," nor have "seen him" since—and that their "commissions are not universal"—then, we would ask on what conceivable ground they pretend to have inherited the "Apostleship," when, on their own confession, they lack several of the most essential attributes of the office. It is like a man's pretending to be a king, who is without royal descent, without a crown, throne, kingdom, or subjects.

We do not, however, acknowledge their right to be



so modest. If men set themselves up to be apostles, and challenge our homage as “the vicegerents of Christ,” we insist upon it that they shall authenticate their claim to the *Apostleship*, and not to a figment of their own creation, which under the same name, they would put in the place of it. Let them attempt this, and the world will soon see the emptiness of their pretensions, and will conclude, with Dr. Barrow, (whose language I shall again quote,) that the Apostles as such had no successors.

“Now such an office,” he says, “consisting of so many extraordinary privileges and miraculous powers, which were requisite for the foundation of the Church, and the diffusion of Christianity against the manifold difficulties and disadvantages which it must then needs encounter, *was not designed to continue by derivation*; for it containeth in it divers things which apparently were not communicated, and WHICH NO MAN WITHOUT GROSS IMPOSTURE AND HYPOCRISY COULD CHALLENGE TO HIMSELF.

“*Neither did the apostles pretend to communicate it*: they did indeed appoint standing pastors and teachers in each church; they did assume fellow-labourers or assistants in the work of preaching and governance; but they did not constitute apostles equal to themselves in authority, privileges, or gifts; for, ‘who knoweth not,’ saith St. Austin, ‘that principate of apostleship to be preferred before any Episcopacy?’ And, ‘The Bishops,’ saith Bellarmine, ‘have no part of the true apostolical authority.’”

With this conclusion of Dr. Barrow, agrees the celebrated Dodwell, a High-Churchman of very extensive and profound erudition, who says, “The office

of the Apostles *perished* with the Apostles; in which office there never was any *succession* to any of them, EXCEPT TO JUDAS THE TRAITOR.”

This conclusion is so well fortified that the idea of controverting it is out of the question. Aware of this, Prelatists insist upon taking the term “Apostleship” in a modified sense, as the only expedient by which they can hope to make out their title to the office. *The Apostles*, they tell us, *were clothed with the exclusive powers of government and ordination. In reference to these functions, their office was designed to be perpetual. And Episcopal Bishops are their true and only successors.* These three propositions (which involve, it will be seen, a virtual abandonment of all claim to the *Apostleship*,) comprise the substance of their theory. Each of them must be established separately. For the first does not include the others; nor do the first two include the third.

Before proceeding to the consideration of them, it may be proper to state two or three principles in which Prelatists and non-Episcopalians agree.

1. We agree that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted a Church, and appointed officers to minister in it.
2. We agree that the Church was designed to be permanent, and to have permanent officers.
3. We agree, (such at least is the view entertained by most of the advocates for ministerial parity,) that the Apostles were in some respects superior to other ministers, and that they were invested with universal jurisdiction over the Churches.

Wherein we differ, shall be stated in connexion with the three propositions which comprise the prelatist theory—as follows:—

1. "The powers of ordination and jurisdiction pertained exclusively to the Apostleship."

We admit that these powers pertained in a pre-eminent degree to the Apostleship; but they were also, we contend, exercised by Presbyters.

2. "The Apostleship, in reference to its prerogatives of jurisdiction and ordination, was designed to be permanent."

As ordination and jurisdiction were not, in our view, functions peculiar to the Apostleship, we maintain the perpetuity of those powers in the Church, and yet deny the permanency of that office. In respect to their distinctive gifts and powers as Apostles, they were to have no successors: in their other powers and functions, they were to be succeeded by the ordinary Ministers of the word, called indifferently in the New Testament, Presbyters, and Bishops.

3. "Episcopal Bishops are the only successors of the Apostles."

Denying as we do that the Apostles were to have successors, in the sense here intended, we of course deny that Episcopal Bishops succeeded them, or that "the Episcopal Bishops" of our day, can trace up their ecclesiastical genealogy through a line of Prelates to the Apostles.

I proceed now to examine these several propositions in their order.—The first is, that "THE POWERS OF JURISDICTION AND ORDINATION PERTAINED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE APOSTLESHIP."

This proposition is the foundation of the High Church theory. If they fail in establishing it, their system is subverted: though if they succeed, they have still to establish the other two propositions, which are independent of it.

The theory, it will be perceived, is, that ordination and government, are higher functions than preaching the Gospel, and administering the sacraments. The difference between them is so great, as to mark, or rather to demand, a diversity of rank in the ministry. Ordinary ministers may preach and administer the sacraments, but a superior grade must be created who alone shall ordain and govern. Now there is obviously nothing in *the nature of the case*, to suggest such a distinction. If it is proper for physicians to license a physician—for lawyers to license a lawyer—why may not those, who are authorized to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments, ministerially invest others with the same office? Bishop Burnet makes the administration of the sacraments, the highest function of the ministry. “Since the sacramental actions,” he says, “are the highest of sacred performances, those that are empowered for them, must be of the highest office in the Church.” The New Testament, in its general tone, certainly represents public teaching and the “sacramental actions,” especially the former, as the *chief business* of the Christian ministry. If then, it is alleged that these are only secondary functions of the office, it must be a matter of positive institution, and we demand clear scriptural authority for it. If such authority cannot be produced, we shall hold that the Prelates who in the first instance wrested the powers of jurisdiction and ordination from presbyters, were guilty of a flagrant usurpation; and that any monopoly of those powers by Prelates, on a pretended *jure divino* warrant, is in contravention of the inherent rights of the ministry.

It happens, very unfortunately for this theory, that no hint of it occurs in the account of the *original*

*calling* of the Apostles, nor in the instructions the Saviour gave them upon that occasion. Their appointment is mentioned by three of the Evangelists, and one of them (see Matt. ch. x.) records at length, *the charge* addressed to them. We have no evidence from these sources that the least intimation was given them of such a diversity in their several functions as is now claimed to have existed. Nay, the "charge" is mainly occupied with the subject of *preaching*, and does not contain a syllable, except by implication, about the *higher* duties of ordaining and governing. This is a very remarkable omission on High-Church principles.

It will be said, however, that the twelve, although called at this period, and employed in preaching during the Saviour's ministry, were not clothed with the plenitude of the Apostleship, until after his resurrection: and we shall be referred to John xx. 21—23; xxi. 15—17; and to the Saviour's final command, in proof that ordination and government, were to be restricted to the Apostles. The former of these passages is as follows: "Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." The second passage is that in which the Saviour addresses the injunction to Peter, "Feed my sheep." The third is the commission, "Go ye into all the world," &c. In the first passage, he renews their appointment as his ambassadors and representatives. Some will have it, that in the clause, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you,"

our Saviour actually *transfers his Headship over the Church* to his Apostles, and delegates to them, in so far as the government of the Church in this world is concerned, *all* the power which He as Mediator, had received from the Father. This extraordinary interpretation, so derogatory to the Redeemer and to the ministry—as stripping *Him* of his crown, and making *them* the ministers, not of Christ, but of the Apostles—will be noticed in another connexion. For the present, it is sufficient to remark that the language neither denotes the perpetuity of the Apostolic office, nor hints at any distribution of their powers among different grades of ministers. It is a simple declaration, to this effect,—that as He had received an immediate commission from the Father for his Mediatorial work, so He immediately commissions them to disciple all nations and teach whatever he had commanded. On the principle of the opposite interpretation, it might with equal propriety be urged that when our Saviour says, (John xviii. 18,) “As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world,” he means, that he has transferred his authority and headship to *his people* severally;—for it is his *people*, not the ministry as such, who are intended in this verse. As an earnest of that baptism of the Spirit they were about to receive on the day of Pentecost as well as to show that the blessing would be bestowed by *Him*, He breathed on them and said, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.”<sup>1</sup> He then authorized them to

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Scott has this note on the phrase, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” “It does not appear that the Apostles, on any occasion, used these words. Peter and John prayed for the disciples in Samaria, that ‘they might receive the Holy Ghost.’ . . . ‘Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.’



declare the only method in which sin would be forgiven, and the character and experience of those who actually were pardoned, or the contrary. Or, as others interpret the words, he empowered them to inflict and remit *Church censures*—in conformity, of course, to the rules prescribed by himself.—The injunction, “Feed my sheep,” is usually taken to include the functions of teaching and governing the Church.—The last command is in these words, “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: [or, as Mark has it, ‘Go ye, into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature:’] teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Now, what evidence have we in any or all of these passages, that ordaining, and governing, were *superior functions* to preaching and baptizing? What countenance do they give to the doctrine, that the Apostles were to retain the two former functions in their own hands, and share the two others with an order of inferior ministers? Here, if any where, we

(Acts viii. 15, 17.) The language of authority used by our Lord on this single occasion, seems exclusively appropriate to the great Head of the Church, and marks the immense disparity between Him and His most eminent servants.—How far the words, ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost,’ in some of the forms of our Church, is *scriptural* or *warrantable*, may be worthy the consideration of all persons more immediately concerned in the important transactions referred to.”—It may be added, that the formula to which these strictures relate, was not, as there is good reason to believe, used in the ordination service, for upwards of a thousand years after the Apostolic age, and that it was first introduced by the Romish Church, when her corruptions were nearly at their height, and has been borrowed from her by the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in this country.

might expect this classification of their powers to be distinctly stated. Especially might we expect the Saviour, in his last counsels and instructions, to give great prominence to the *paramount* functions of the Apostleship, and to the manner in which these should be exercised. The theory is—let it be remembered—that the powers of ordination and jurisdiction constituted the **DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTIC** of the office, and the **SOLE GROUND FOR ITS BEING PERPETUATED**. They made the Apostleship what it was: and the only men to be recognized as the *successors* of the Apostles, were to have that character *solely* in virtue of their possessing these powers. What more natural, then—what more unavoidable—than that the Saviour, in issuing his final directions to them, should assign to this topic the prominence so justly due to it? What more natural, than that He should at least remind them in solemn terms, that the powers of ordination and of government, were confided to them and their successors in the Apostleship alone, while they might share with others the *subordinate* functions of preaching and baptizing? What would be thought of the Federal Constitution, if in prescribing the duties of the President of the United States, it merely *hinted* at his **EXECUTIVE** powers? Or what would be thought of a government, which in sending out an ambassador, should include in his instructions only a slight allusion to the most grave and important objects of his mission? Not less remarkable, are the omissions in the case before us, if the Prelatic theory be true. It is not denied that the powers of jurisdiction and ordination, are by implication conveyed in these passages. But it is denied that they furnish the slightest warrant for the idea, that the powers just named

are superior to the other ministerial functions, or for the doctrine that the Apostles and their successors were to retain those powers, and communicate these to a lower order of ministers. Nay, it is affirmed with confidence, that there is nothing even in the record of the effusion of the Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, nor in the commission given by our Saviour to Paul, which affords the least support to this hypothesis of a division in the functions of the Apostleship. The only peculiarity in all these cases, is, that a great deal more is said about preaching, than about ordaining or governing. It is the burden of the Saviour's original charge to the twelve, "Preach the Gospel." When he sends out the seventy, the injunction again is, "Preach the Gospel." The substance of his parting command to the Apostles still is, "Preach the Gospel." And when another Apostle is miraculously called and commissioned, the great work his Master assigns to him, is, to "Preach the Gospel," (see Acts xxvi. 16—18.)—On our principles, all this is intelligible. Believing as we do, that "it has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe," we should *expect* to see this duty occupy the first place in the Apostolic commission. But no adequate or even plausible solution of it has been given, on their principles who hold that preaching the Gospel is one of the subordinate functions of the ministry.

If there is anything in the nature of the case to suggest a classification of these powers in respect to dignity and utility, it is by no means clear that it would be the one here contended for. Milton was not alone in his opinion upon this point. "The employment of preaching," he says, "is as holy (as *ordination*,) and

far more excellent; the care, also, and judgment to be used in the winning of souls, which is thought to be sufficient in every worthy minister, is an ability above that which is required in ordination; for many may be able to judge who is fit to be made a minister, that would not be found fit to be made ministers themselves; as it will not be denied that he may be the competent judge of a neat picture or elegant poem, that cannot limn the like. Why, therefore, we should constitute a superior order in the Church to perform an office which is not only every minister's function, but inferior also to that which he has a confessed right to; and why this superiority should remain thus usurped, some wise Epimenides tell us.—Now for *jurisdiction*, this dear saint of the prelates, it will be best to consider, first, what it is. That sovereign Lord, who, in the discharge of his holy anointment from God the Father, which made him Supreme Bishop of our souls, was so humble as to say, “Who made me a judge or a divider over you?” hath taught us that a churchman's jurisdiction is no more but to watch over his flock in season and out of season; to deal by sweet and efficacious instructions, gentle admonitions, and sometimes sounder reproofs; against negligence or obstinacy, will be required a rousing volley of pastorly threatenings; against a persisting stubbornness, or the fear of a reprobate sense, a timely separation from the flock by that interdictive sentence, lest his conversation unprohibited or unbranded, might breathe a pestilential murrain into the other sheep. In sum, his jurisdiction is to see to the thriving and prospering of that which he hath planted. What other work the Prelates have found for chancellors and suffragans, delegates and officials, with all the . . . rabble of sum-

ners and apparitors, is but an invasion upon the temporal magistrate, and affected by them as men that are not ashamed of the ensign and banner of Antichrist. But true evangelical jurisdiction or discipline, is no more, as was said, than for a minister to see to the thriving and prospering of that which he hath planted. And which is the worthiest work of these two, to plant, as every minister's office is equally with the Bishop's, or to tend that which is planted, which the blind and undiscerning prelates call jurisdiction, and would appropriate to themselves as a business of higher dignity?"<sup>1</sup>

Both the nature of the case, then, and the several commissions given to the Apostles, furnish a strong presumption against the doctrine that two or more grades of ministers were to be appointed, the highest of which only should be clothed with the powers of jurisdiction and ordination. We now affirm it, as a matter of fact, that *these powers were conferred on the ordinary, stated ministers of the word, called indifferently in the New Testament, Presbyters, or Elders, and Bishops.*

Let it be noted here that Prelatists now concede that in so far as the scriptural use of the title *Bishop* is concerned, the whole argument is in our favour. They admit that this title is *uniformly* employed in the New Testament to denote a *Presbyterian* Bishop, not a *Diocesan* Bishop. Thus the Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, in his Tract entitled, "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," says, "The name 'Bishop,' which now designates the highest grade of the Ministry, is not appropriated to that office in

<sup>1</sup> Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence, &c.



Scripture. That name is there given to the middle order, or Presbyters; and ALL that we read in the New Testament concerning ‘Bishops,’ (including of course the words ‘overseers’ and ‘oversight,’ which have the same derivation) is to be regarded as pertaining to that middle grade.” This is a very important admission. It is for Prelatists to show how the highest grade of Ministers came to lay aside the title, “Apostles,” and to appropriate to themselves as their exclusive designation the title of an inferior order. If, as they contend, the Apostles were succeeded by “Apostles,” why were not their successors styled Apostles? If the Bishops of our day are really Apostles, why do they not call themselves Apostles? “It was after the Apostolic age,” says the author of the tract just quoted, (p. 12.) “that the name ‘Bishop’ was taken from the second order and appropriated to the first; as we learn from Theodoret, one of the fathers.”—If it had also been stated that Theodoret lived *four hundred years* after the Apostles, unlearned readers of the Tract would have known better how to estimate his authority on a question of this kind. But even Theodoret does not say that Bishops were of the same rank as Apostles. His language implies the very reverse. His words are as follows:—“The same persons were anciently called promiscuously both Bishops and Presbyters; whilst those who are now called Bishops were called Apostles. But shortly after the name of Apostles was appropriated to such only as were Apostles indeed, (*αληθως Αποστολοι*, truly Apostles;) and then the name Bishop, was given to those who were before called Apostles.” It appears from this that the names, Bishop and Presbyter, were originally used interchangeably. This is a point con-



ceded, as we have seen, by the writer of the Tract, and admitted, it is believed, by all the Episcopalians of the present day. Again; it appears that after the Apostolic age, the title, Apostle, was restricted to those who were "Apostles *indeed*," or "*truly* Apostles," that is, those who had received their commissions immediately from the Saviour. This implies that those who now began to appropriate to themselves the exclusive title of "Bishops," were not "truly Apostles." They were regarded as of a different rank from the Apostles; otherwise they would have retained the same title. They thought it "not decent," as Ambrose says, to assume that title. This was a confession of their inferiority—an acknowledgment that they did not consider themselves as Apostles. If they had thought otherwise, they must have been very different men from some would-be Apostles of our day, to lay aside voluntarily their appropriate title and take that of an inferior order. It is the same as though the Prelates now living should put away the title of "Bishop," and adopt that of "Presbyter" or "Elder" exclusively. Such an act would import that they considered their true rank as that of Presbyters only. So—allowing Theodoret's statement to be correct—the relinquishment of the title, Apostle, for that of Bishop, at a time when *Bishop and Presbyter denoted one class of officers*, implied that the parties concerned in it viewed themselves as belonging only to the order of Presbyters. We demand further testimony, however, than has yet been furnished, that *any* class of officers was as such designated by the name Apostles, after the death of the twelve. That the title continued to be used in its general import as synonymous, or

nearly so, with our word "missionaries," is not questioned. But the evidence is yet to be adduced that it was appropriated in its higher signification to any except "*the Apostles*" mentioned in the New Testament. The disappearance of the *name* from the early Church, shows that those who lived in the time of the Apostles and immediately thereafter, were much less positive about this doctrine of a perpetual succession of Apostles, than some who live eighteen centuries later.—Not to insist upon this point, however, let us see whether the Presbyters and Bishops of the New Testament churches were officers without any power of government or discipline.

These officers, let it be remembered, were the officers stately appointed by the Apostles in organizing churches. Wherever a church was established, there—as is allowed on all hands—one or more Bishops or Presbyters were, after a suitable time, ordained as its spiritual overseers. The legitimate inference from this fact is, that it was as much their business to exercise discipline as to preach the Gospel. To invalidate this inference, it must be shown that there is at least an antecedent presumption that discipline was to be lodged in other hands—whereas the presumption is all the other way.—Nor can it be of any avail to prove that the Apostles in some few instances exercised discipline in churches provided with Bishops of their own. For (1.) A general jurisdiction over the Church is conceded to the Apostles in their extraordinary character. (2.) The circumstances of the cases in question might have been so peculiar as to take them out of the line of ordinary precedents. Nothing, certainly, would appear more natural, in the infancy of the churches and while their own

officers were as yet inexperienced, than that they should solicit, wherever it was practicable, the aid of an Apostle in difficult cases of discipline. The churches composed of converted heathen, in the present day, are in this way accustomed to invoke the assistance of the missionaries by whom they have been planted, in administering discipline. (3.) If Prelatists deny that Presbyters exercised discipline in *any* of the Apostolic churches, we demand the *proof* of the position. The presumption is against them; and this presumption is not to be set aside by adducing two or three isolated examples of interposition on the part of the Apostles, out of perhaps one or two hundred churches.

Even this point, however, may be waived: for there is *direct evidence* that the power of government was committed to Presbyters or Bishops.<sup>1</sup>

There are three terms employed in the New Testament to express the authority which is to be exercised in the Christian Church, and they are *all* applied to Presbyters. These terms are,

1. *ηγεσμαι*—To take the lead.
2. *προιστημι*—To stand before—to preside.
3. *ποιμαινω*—To act the part, to fulfil the duties, of a Shepherd.

Every power which Christ hath deputed to his officers, is conveyed by one or other of these terms. Let us now turn to a few passages in the New Testament.

Heb. xiii. 7. “Remember them which *have the rule over you*” (*των ἡγουμενων υμων*, your rulers.) The context shows that the Apostle is speaking of their deceased *Pastors*. Again,

Verse 17. “Obey them that *have the rule over you*,

<sup>1</sup> On this point and some others which follow, I have quoted freely from Dr. Mason.

(same word) for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." It is undeniable that the reference here also is to their ordinary Pastors, *i. e.* to Presbyters.

The general term here used is that employed in Matt. ii. 6. "Thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the *Princes* (*ηγεμοσιν*) of Juda; for out of thee shall come a *Governor* (*ηγουμενος*) that shall *rule* my people Israel."

1 Tim. iii. 4. "A Bishop must be one that *ruleth well* (*καλως προϊσταμενον*) his own house." This shows not only the force of the term, but also that a capacity to *rule well* is an essential characteristic of a scriptural Bishop or Presbyter—for it is conceded, as we have seen, that the names Bishop and Presbyter, in Scripture, both belong to ordinary ministers. Again, 1 Tim. v. 17. "Let the Elders that *rule well* be counted worthy of double honour; especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." Not only is the power of ruling here ascribed to the Eldership, but it is represented as a less dignified and honourable function than preaching. Yet Presbyters, we are told, may preach, but Bishops only can rule! The same term occurs 1 Thess. v. 12. "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you and are *over you* in the Lord." As there were *several* of this class of officers at Thessalonica, they could not have been Diocesan Bishops, but must have been ordinary Pastors.

The word *ποιμαινω* means, according to the lexicographers, not merely to *feed*, but to *govern*, to take care of, as a shepherd does his flock. It is the word translated *rule* in Matt. ii. 6, already quoted: "Out of thee shall come a *Governor* that shall *rule* (*ποιμανει*)

my people Israel." This term, likewise, is applied to Presbyters.

Acts xx. 17, 28, "From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus and called the Elders (or Presbyters) of the Church, and said unto them—Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers* (*επισκοπους*, *Bishops*), to *feed* (*ποιμανειν*) the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood."

1 Peter v. 1—4, "The Elders (Presbyters) which are among you I exhort, *who am also an Elder* (Presbyter,) and a witness of the sufferings of Christ. *Feed* (*ποιμανατε*) the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight (*επισκοπουντες*, discharging the duty of *Bishops*) thereof, not by constraint but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being *lords* over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

"By instructing Presbyters, in this passage, *how* they were to govern the Church, the Apostle (himself a 'Presbyter') has decided that the *power of government* was committed to them. No higher authority than he has recognized in them, can belong to the order of Prelates. . . . The term which both Paul and Peter apply to the office of Presbyters, undoubtedly expresses the power of government; seeing it is the term which expresses the office of CHRIST, as the GOVERNOR of his people Israel, (Matt. ii. 6, quoted above.) And as this term, applied to the office of Christ, expresses the highest power of government in him as the chief Shepherd; so when applied to the office of the under-shepherds, it expresses the highest



power of government which he has delegated to be exercised in his name for the welfare of his Church. But this power is vested, Paul and Peter being judges, in *Presbyters*; therefore Presbyters, by the appointment of Jesus Christ, are invested with *the highest power of government known in his Church.*" It may be added, in confirmation of this view, that by calling himself *συνπρεσβυτερος* (a fellow-presbyter) he seems to intimate that they (*i. e.* Presbyters) possessed all the authority in the Christian Church which was to remain after the death of the Apostles: and the introduction of the *αρχιποιμην* (or chief Shepherd) appears inconsistent with the idea of the *πρεσβυτεροι* (Presbyters) being accountable to any individual teacher, after the Apostles ceased to represent the authority of the chief Shepherd upon earth.

Thus much for the claim of Presbyters to the power of *jurisdiction*. Let us next inquire whether they had *the right of ordination*.

Here, as in the former case, the burden of proof properly lies upon the Prelatists. There is nothing *in the nature of the case* to denote that ordination is a higher function than preaching and administering the sacraments. Nor is there (as has been shown) any intimation in the Apostolic commission, that those who were to be appointed as *Overseers* or *Bishops* in the churches, should be prohibited from ordaining. But we need not rest the case here.

"In the first primitive Church," says the learned Stillingfleet,<sup>1</sup> "the Presbyters all acted in common for

<sup>1</sup> *Irenicum*, ch. vi. p. 298. As I shall have further occasion to quote from the "*Irenicum*," it may be well to introduce here the following statement from the Rev. Dr. Miller's "*Letters on the Christian Ministry*," 8vo. ed. p. 173.

"To destroy the force of Dr. Stillingfleet's concessions, it is urged



the welfare of the Church, and either did or might *ordain others to the same authority with themselves*; because the intrinsical power of order is equally in them, and in those who were after appointed governors over Presbyteries. And the collation of orders doth come from the power of order, and not merely from the power of jurisdiction. It being likewise fully acknowledged by the schoolmen, that Bishops are not superior above Presbyters, as to the power of order." If this view can be substantiated by the production of a solitary example of ordination by Presbyters in the Apostolic Church, the whole High-Church theory is prostrated—as they themselves admit.

Of the few instances of ordination described in the New Testament, I shall examine only two. The first of these is recorded in Acts xiii. 1—3. "Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas and Simeon that

that he afterwards became dissatisfied with this work, and retracted the leading opinion which it maintains [that is, that no one form of church government is exclusively prescribed in the word of God.] To this suggestion I will reply by a quotation from *Bishop White*, of Pennsylvania, who in a pamphlet published a few years since, having occasion to adduce the 'Irenicum' as an authority against High Church notions, speaks of the performance and its author in the following terms: 'As that learned prelate was afterwards dissatisfied with his work, (though most probably not with that part of it which would have been to our purpose,) it might seem uncandid to cite the authority of his opinion. Bishop Burnet, his cotemporary and friend, says, (*History of his Own Times*, anno 1661,) 'To avoid the imputation that book brought on him, he went into the humours of an high sort of people, beyond what became him, perhaps beyond his own sense of things.' 'The book, however,' Bishop White adds, 'was, it seems, easier *retracted* than *refuted*; for though offensive to many of both parties, it was managed (says the same author) with so much learning and skill, that none of either side ever undertook to answer it.' "

was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.”

Many eminent Episcopalians, including Mr. Palmer, in his treatise on the Church, Whateley, Wake, Potter, Jeremy Taylor, Beveridge, Hooker, Dr. Pusey, and others,<sup>1</sup> have held that this was a case of ordination. The ordainers were “prophets and teachers.” Teachers were ordinary Presbyters: and the same individuals might be both teachers and prophets. The titles are not supposed to denote so much a difference of rank as a difference of endowments and functions: but they both ranked below Apostles. If, then, this was an ordination, it was performed by *Presbyters*, not by Apostles.

Others, however, regard this transaction, and, as the writer thinks, with more reason, not as an ordination, but as the solemn designation of Saul and Barnabas, to a specific and temporary mission. On this view, the transaction was but one remove from an ordination, and is not easily to be explained on prelatial principles. For how does it comport with those principles, that Presbyters should “lay their hands” upon the head of an Apostle? Is there a High-Church Bishop to be found, the world over, who would allow a company of his Presbyters to set him apart in this way to a missionary or any other undertaking? There are some among them to whom the bare suggestion of such a thing would probably appear sacrilegious. To Presbyterians, however, the whole transaction

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Smyth.

is perfectly natural and *canonical*. And the conclusion we draw from it, is, that if Presbyters might lawfully set apart an Apostle to a specific work, on so solemn an occasion as this, it will be difficult to show that they have no right to officiate in an *actual ordination*.

The other instance referred to, is that of Timothy. This is mentioned by the Apostle, in addressing him, in the following terms: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, *with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*." 1 Tim. iv. 14. To this verse may be added another from the second Epistle, (ch. i. 6.) "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee, *by the putting on of my hands*."

There are few verses in the Bible which have given Prelatists more perplexity than the former of these. All that learning, ingenuity, and zeal could do, has been done, to make it say something else than that Timothy was *ordained by a Presbytery*. It is a fundamental principle of Prelacy, that *Presbyters cannot ordain*. If Timothy was ordained by Presbyters, or by a Presbytery, this principle is subverted, and the whole imposing superstructure built upon it, is overthrown. Hence the solicitude to silence the clear, straightforward testimony of this passage, to the groundlessness of their assumptions.

There are strong reasons for doubting whether the verse quoted from the second Epistle, refers to Timothy's ordination at all. *Miraculous gifts* were usually imparted by the imposition of the hands of the Apostles, and this seems to be intended by the Apostle when he exhorts Timothy to "stir up the gift that is in him by the putting on of his hands." The context

also favours this interpretation; and it has the sanction of many eminent critics, and of a number of distinguished Episcopal writers. I waive the question, however, for the present.

Among the expedients relied upon to destroy the authority of the other passage, as a warrant for Presbyterianial ordination, the following are the principal.

1. It is contended that the word *πρεσβυτερειον*, translated *Presbytery*, denotes not the persons who ordained Timothy, but the *office* to which he was ordained: so that the passage should read, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, even the *Presbyterate*, which was given thee with the laying on of hands." And Calvin's name is quoted in support of this interpretation. On this construction, I observe,

(1.) That the established, habitual meaning of the term as used in the Scriptures, is, an assemblage, council, or senate of Presbyters. (2.) That this is its true import in the place under consideration is allowed by a great body of learned Episcopal writers. It will be sufficient to mention Beveridge, Saravia, Lord Barrington, and Dr. Bloomfield, who, in his *Critical Digest*, says, "I cannot agree with Benson, that the *Elders* did not confer this gift. They, it should seem, contributed to confer it." (3.) As to Calvin, he admits that the word will *bear* the interpretation mentioned above, but declares, that "in his judgment, those who think *Presbytery* to be a collective noun, put for the *college of Presbyters*, think rightly." (4.) This interpretation, even if admitted, goes to overthrow the Prelatic doctrine. For on this construction, Timothy was ordained to the *Presbyterate*, i. e. to *the office of a Presbyter*—as we maintain. And we call for the evidence that he

received any subsequent ordination to the *Prelacy* or *Apostleship*.<sup>1</sup>

2. A second interpretation which it is sought to force upon this text, is, that by the "Presbytery" that laid hands upon Timothy, is to be understood *a council of Apostles*.—On this I remark, (1.) That it does great violence to the language of the Apostle. The word *Presbytery* denotes not a council of *Apostles*, but a council of *Presbyters*. (2.) This construction *assumes* the whole point in debate. We deny and Prelatists affirm, that ordination could be performed only by Apostles. We produce a passage in which it is asserted that a certain ordination was performed by a *Presbytery*. And hereupon they claim, without proof and against the natural, legitimate import of the term, and the *usus loquendi* of the Scriptures, that this Presbytery was a *college of Apostles*. (3.) If this Presbytery was composed of Apostles, how could Paul say (as they maintain he does say) that he *alone* ordained Timothy—"by the putting on of my hands?" For they argue, as we shall see presently, that Paul was the ordainer, and the Presbytery laid on hands merely to express their *concurrence* in the act. Was it *seemly* in Paul to claim all the efficacy and honour of the ordination as his own, when several of his *fellow-Apostles* united with him in the laying on of hands? Thus much for the second evasion.

3. The third has been hinted at. It is maintained that Paul *alone* ordained Timothy, and that the Presbytery only laid on their hands, to signify their approbation of the act. In support of this view, we are

<sup>1</sup> We might extend this call and ask for the production of a single instance from the New Testament, of the ordination of a minister by *piece-meal*.



told that in speaking of his own part in the transaction, the Apostle uses the preposition  $\delta\iota\alpha$ , signifying the *cause* of a thing,—“which is in thee ( $\delta\iota\alpha$ ) *by* the putting on of my hands,”—and that in speaking of the agency of the Presbytery, he uses another preposition  $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$ , denoting merely “nearness, concurrence, agreement”—“which was given thee by prophecy ( $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$ ) *with* the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.”

The obvious answer to this, is, that the prepositions in question are frequently used interchangeably; and that  $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$  with a genitive often signifies *by*, or *by means of*. A single example will suffice. In Acts ii. 43, we read that “many signs and wonders were done *by* ( $\delta\iota\alpha$ ) the Apostles.” While in Acts xv. 4, we are told that Barnabas and Paul “rehearsed all things that God had done *with* ( $\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$ ) them.” Here the prepositions are synonymous, and both signify the *instrumental cause*. We reject the criticism, therefore, and with it the doctrine it is brought to establish, that the Presbytery united with the Apostle in the imposition of hands only to express their approbation of the act.

Allowing that the two passages involved in this controversy both relate to Timothy’s ordination, he was ordained by a *Presbytery* in which Paul *presided*; the President, or, as we would style him, the Moderator, and the other members, *uniting* in the imposition of hands. The outward act was the same precisely on their part as on his; and the evidence is yet to be adduced that the laying on of Paul’s hands signified one thing, and the laying on of their hands signified something else. It is a palpable confession of the weakness of a cause, when such arguments are resorted to to sustain it.



Having thus exposed the fallacy of the various expedients employed by Prelatists to elude the fair import of the verses we have been examining, we affirm with confidence that Timothy's ordination was a *Presbyterial* ordination. This view, it may be added, has been vindicated by eminent Episcopalians, among whom it will be sufficient to name the learned Dr. Whitaker, regius professor of theology at Cambridge, a man of whom the pious Bishop Hall said, "No man ever saw him without reverence, or heard him without wonder." "This place," says Whitaker, (referring to 1 Tim. iv. 14,) in arguing with Cardinal Bellarmine, "serves our purpose mightily; for from hence we understand, that *Timothy had hands laid upon him by Presbyters, who at that time governed the Church by a common council.*" "Whereupon," adds Dr. Calamy, from whom I quote, "he falls upon Bellarmine and the Romanists, for denying the authority of ordaining to *Presbyters* and confining it to Bishops. If this was right doctrine in the Church of England in his days, we are certainly much altered since." Dr. C's closing remark is too good to be omitted. "Though some are unwilling to allow of any inference drawn from hence in favour of *Presbyters*, yet had it been expressed accommodately to their mind; had the Apostle said, 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of *the hands of the Episcopate;*' we have little reason to question but that they would triumphantly have concluded thence for the appropriating ordination to *Bishops*, and have warmly inveighed against us, should we have offered to dispute it."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Calamy's Defence of Mod. Non-Conf. i. 83.

This case is conclusive as to the point that the *right of ordination belonged as well to Presbyters as Apostles*. It also settles another point of great importance in this controversy, viz. that Timothy was ordained a *Presbyter*, not a *Prelate*. For he was ordained, as has been proved, by Presbyters. Of course, on High-Church principles, he could only have been ordained a *Presbyter*. If, however, it is contended that he was ordained an *Apostle*, it follows that Apostles and Presbyters were really of *one order*—for on no other principle could Presbyters ordain an *Apostle*. Either conclusion is fatal to *Prelacy*.

This is not the place to inquire how the right of Presbyters to ordain ever came to be denied. It may be well to state, however, that according to the eminent German Historian, Planck, that right “was never called in question until the Bishops began, about the middle of the third century, to assert the doctrine of the *Apostolical Succession*. With the name it seemed desirable also to inherit the authority of the Apostles. For this purpose they availed themselves of the right of ordination. The right of ordination, of course, devolved exclusively upon the Bishops, as alone competent rightly to administer it. As they had been duly constituted the successors of the Apostles, so also had they alone the right to communicate the same in part or fully, by the imposition of hands. From this time onward, to give the rite more effect, it was administered with more imposing solemnity.”<sup>1</sup>

We have now finished our examination of the first position which must be established in order to make

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Mr. Coleman in his interesting work on the “*Primitive Church*,” which has appeared while these sheets are passing through the press.

out the High-Church theory, to wit: that “*the powers of government and ordination pertained exclusively to the Apostleship.*” Clear and decisive scriptural authorities have been adduced to show that both these powers were shared by *Presbyters*. The result of this inquiry is destructive to the High-Church doctrine of the *Apostolical Succession*. That doctrine is, that the Apostolic order was to be perpetuated, because Apostles alone could exercise the functions of ordination and government. The office being shorn of the exclusive possession of these powers, the alleged necessity for its being perpetuated, ceases. The powers in question having been proved to belong to *Presbyters*, a *succession of Presbyters* is the only Ministerial succession the Church requires, and (as we maintain) the only one asserted in the Scriptures.

The second position it is incumbent on High-Churchmen to establish, was stated in these words:—  
“THE APOSTLESHIP, IN REFERENCE TO ITS PREROGATIVES OF ORDINATION AND GOVERNMENT, WAS DESIGNED TO BE PERMANENT.”

This position assumes the truth of the first, viz. that ordination and government, were exclusive attributes of the Apostleship. This having been disproved, the position built upon it falls to the ground. It may be satisfactory, however, to notice a few of the arguments relied upon to prove that the Apostolic office was designed to be perpetuated.

Dr. Pusey and some of his associates frankly admit, as we have seen, not only that there is no passage of Scripture which affirms in so many words that this office was to be permanent, but that the Bible furnishes no clear and satisfactory warrant for the system of which this doctrine is so radical a feature. Other

High-Churchmen profess to find a warrant for the perpetuity of the Apostleship, in the promise annexed to the Saviour's last command—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." It is, however, a mere begging of the question to assume that this was designed exclusively for "Apostles." The common interpretation is that it was intended both for the Church, that is, the *true* Israel of God, and for such a ministry as the commission itself describes, viz. a ministry who should "preach the Gospel." The promise can belong only to such ministers as comply with the condition on which it is suspended. But this has not usually been done by those who claim to be the "successors of the Apostles." A large proportion of them have not been stately engaged in "preaching;" and of those who have preached with more or less frequency, very many have preached any thing beside the pure "Gospel" of Christ. High-Churchmen must admit this; for they know too well the character of the great mass of the *Romish* prelates for ages together, to say nothing of the Bishops of any other Churches, to call it in question. The promise, then, cannot be restricted to "Apostles" or prelates; and it gives no countenance to the idea that the Apostolic office was to be a permanent office in the Church.<sup>1</sup>

The appointment of *Matthias and Paul* to the Apostleship, has been urged as a proof that the office was designed to be perpetuated. The fact is admitted, but the inference reversed. We draw from these cases an argument to show that the office was extra-

<sup>1</sup> The same train of reasoning which would restrict the promise, "Lo, I am with you always," to the Apostles, would prove that they alone were to partake of the Lord's Supper. For if that promise was immediately *addressed* to the Apostles only, so also was the command, "This do in remembrance of me."

ordinary and temporary. Peter lays it down, on the occasion of Matthias' appointment (see Acts i. 15—26) to fill the place of Judas, that an individual must be selected who could be, with the eleven, *a witness of the Saviour's resurrection*. This was an essential qualification for the Apostleship, and it was one Matthias possessed. Then, in the second place, like all the other Apostles, he received what may, under the circumstances be fairly regarded as an *immediate designation* to the office from heaven: for he was chosen *by lot*, after a solemn appeal to God.

Paul was not called to the Apostleship until several years after the Saviour's ascension. Yet even in his case an *immediate vocation*, and a *sight of the Saviour*, to enable him to *bear witness* to the fact of his resurrection, were recognized as indispensable requisites to the office. Ananias says to him, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldest know his will, and *SEE that Just One*, and shouldest hear the words of his mouth." Paul himself mentions this fact in proof his Apostleship, 1 Cor. ix. 1, 2. "Am I not an *Apostle*? Am I not free? *Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord*?" And in his speech before Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 16, he quotes the words addressed to him by Christ in his original commission: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a Minister, and a *Witness* both of these things which thou hast seen and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."

Here, then, we have the only clear and indisputable instances of appointments to the Apostleship, after the Saviour's resurrection.<sup>1</sup> Do these examples coun-

<sup>1</sup> There is a difference of opinion respecting the Apostleship of *Barnabas*. Many Prelatists and others hold that he was an Apostle



tenance the idea that the Apostleship was to be an ordinary, standing office in the Church? So far from it, the clear implication from the facts in each case, is, that the office was not to be perpetuated. For these facts show that no one could be an Apostle unless he had SEEN Christ, and received his appointment to the Apostleship by an immediate designation from heaven. And as these qualifications will not be claimed for those who are alleged to have been in the succession since that period, not only must the argument drawn from the cases of Matthias and Paul in favour of the prelatical theory be given up, but we must be allowed to plead these cases as furnishing a strong argument against it.

The next witnesses brought forward to prove that the Apostles were to have successors, are *Timothy and Titus*. It is alleged that these ministers were Diocesan Bishops, or, as the argument runs now-a-days, Apostles, the former of Ephesus, and the latter of Crete. The argument is in this form. The Apostles alone possessed the powers of jurisdiction and

in the higher sense, and was ordained to that office on the occasion mentioned Acts xiii. 1-3. There are serious objections to that view, but they need not be stated here. It is rejected, among others, by Bishop H. U. Onderdonk, in his Tract already quoted, who maintains that Barnabas was an Apostle prior to the transaction referred to. If this was the case, we have no record whatever of his call to the office. In the absence of all testimony, it cannot, obviously, be *assumed* that he was made an Apostle without being qualified to bear witness to the Saviour's resurrection, or in any other mode than by a direct vocation from heaven. If he was an Apostle, it is fair to presume that the same conditions were fulfilled in his case which we *know* were fulfilled in that of each of the others.—Most persons, however, will probably conclude, after a careful examination of his history, that the title, Apostle, is given him in the New Testament only in its secondary import.



ordination. But these powers were exercised by Timothy and Titus. Therefore Timothy and Titus were Apostles.

The major proposition of this syllogism, it will be seen, involves a *petitio principii*. It assumes the point in debate, viz. that government and ordination were exclusive attributes of the Apostles—a doctrine already examined and disproved.

However, we admit that the Apostles exercised a general jurisdiction over the whole Church, and over ministers as well as congregations. This power is claimed for Timothy and Titus, in regard to the churches and ministers respectively of Ephesus and Crete. To the former, Paul says, "I besought thee still to abide at Ephesus, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine." He specifies the qualifications of Bishops or Presbyters, and Deacons—directs him to "lay hands suddenly on no man"—and "against an elder, to receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses." To *Titus*, the Apostle says, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city." He tells him further, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject;" and, as in writing to Timothy, he prescribes the proper qualifications of Bishops or Presbyters.

These are the principal passages relied upon to sustain the Prelatic doctrine. They teach, we are told, the superiority of Timothy and Titus to the other ministers of Ephesus and Crete; and thereby establish the position that there was to be a *permanent* order of ministers in the Church, superior to Presbyters.

Our High-Church friends find it very convenient to shift ever and anon the terms of their theory. The doctrine they have to prove, is, that the Apostolic office was designed to be permanent. Their method of proof, is, to show that the Apostles actually appointed successors. We inquire who they were, and they reply, (inter alios) Timothy and Titus. We demand now *the record of their appointment to the Apostleship*. This they do not pretend to be able to produce. Vital as the chain of succession is to the very existence of the Church, and pre-eminently essential as its *first links* are to its integrity; they are obliged to confess that there is no clear and indisputable account of the appointment of these early Apostles. Their Apostleship, however, we are informed, is *implied* in the powers ascribed to them. Let us see. An Apostle must be one who has seen the Lord Jesus: was this the case with Timothy and Titus? An Apostle must receive an immediate vocation to the Apostleship, from heaven: were Timothy and Titus thus called? The Apostles were not restricted to particular dioceses, but had universal commissions: had Timothy and Titus such commissions?—Still, it will be maintained, they were Apostles in respect to the functions of *ordination and government*. If this was the case, they must of course have been independent of the other Apostles, or, what amounts to the same thing, clothed with co-ordinate powers: for the Apostles, it is very certain, possessed equal powers one with another. But here, again, the theory and the fact are at variance; for nothing is clearer than that Paul exercised *a controlling authority* over Timothy and Titus. It follows, therefore, that whatever these two ministers were, they were not *Apostles* in the strict sense of that

term, and it is idle to bring them forward as links in the pretended chain of the Apostolical succession.—Aware of this flaw in the demonstration, Prelatists quietly dismiss the term Apostle for the time, and produce arguments to prove that Timothy and Titus were simply Diocesan Bishops. Diocesan Bishops, then, were *subordinate to Apostles*, on their own admission. This control of the Apostles over them, must have been either in virtue of an extraordinary or of their ordinary authority. If they say the former, they concede that the Apostles were, in their general jurisdiction over other ministers, *extraordinary officers*, which is precisely our doctrine. If, on the other hand, they allege that the Apostles governed other ministers, these Diocesan Bishops included, in virtue of an *ordinary* power, then it follows that “there is a divine warrant for a permanent order of ministers, in the Church, *superior to Bishops*, and invested with *authority over them*; thus making *four* instead of three orders of clergy. It is not possible to avoid one or the other of these conclusions; and they are equally destructive to the prelatical system.”<sup>1</sup>

The considerations just presented must be deemed conclusive as to the question of Timothy’s alleged succession to the *Apostleship*. Was he, then, a Diocesan Bishop? As the High-Church theory is admitted by themselves to depend very much upon this question, we require, for reasons already stated, that the proof of Timothy’s Diocesan character shall be clear and decisive. It is incumbent on them to show (1.) that the language addressed to Timothy, admits of no rational solution on any other hypothesis than that of his being the Bishop of Ephesus. (2.) They

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Miller’s *Letters*, 8vo. ed. p. 59.

must furnish the evidence that he actually made Ephesus his permanent residence. (3.) They must prove that he *alone* exercised the functions of ordination and government in the Ephesian churches. And (4.) they must prove that provision was made for a *succession* of Prelates in the "See" of Ephesus. If they fail in establishing any one of these points, the defect is fatal to their argument. We affirm that so far from substantiating all of them, they can substantiate none.

The view taken of the characters of Timothy and Titus, by the great body of the Protestant divines and critics, including some eminent Episcopalians, is, that they were **EVANGELISTS**. That there was a class of officers in the Primitive Church, bearing this title, is indisputable. We read, (Eph. iv. 11,) that when the Saviour ascended, "he gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, **EVANGELISTS**; and some, Pastors and Teachers." Philip, the Deacon, is mentioned as an Evangelist. Nay, *Timothy* is expressly called an Evangelist, in one of these very epistles relied upon to prove that he was a Prelate. II. Ep. iv. 5. "Do the work of an **EVANGELIST**." Does this mean, "Do the work of an *Apostle*?" Does it mean, "Do the work of a *Diocesan Bishop*?" If either of *these* titles had been used, it is easy to conceive with what a magisterial air the passage would have been propounded to non-Episcopalians, as an irrefragable proof of Timothy's Diocesan or Apostolic rank. On this account Prelatists should learn to treat with more lenity the *weakness* of those who allow themselves to believe that Timothy actually was, neither an Apostle nor a Diocesan Bishop, but what an Apostle says he was, an **EVANGELIST**.

The Evangelists were extraordinary officers, appointed to be the assistants of the Apostles, and clothed with powers superior to those of ordinary Pastors. Augustine describes them as "the substitutes of the Apostles, who were almost equal to them." Sometimes they preceded the Apostles, and founded Churches which the Apostles subsequently organized; and in other cases, (as those of Timothy and Titus) they followed them, and consummated the gathering and organization of Churches which the Apostles had commenced. This view of their office is confirmed by an authority of the highest repute among Prelatists, viz., the ecclesiastical historian, Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century. The passage in which he treats of the subject, has been a fruitful source of embarrassment to High-Churchmen. I quote a portion of it. Speaking of some who occupied "the principal place among the successors of the Apostles," he says, "These persons, being the venerable disciples of such men, *built up the Churches in every place of which the foundation had been laid by the Apostles*, promoting more and more the preaching of the Gospel, and scattering through the world the salutary seed of the kingdom of heaven. For many of the disciples of that period whose minds were inflamed by the word with the most ardent attachment to the true philosophy, fulfilling the commandment of their Saviour, divided their substance among the poor, and having been sent forth with authority, PERFORMED THE OFFICE OF EVANGELISTS to those who had never heard the word of faith, being most desirous to preach Christ unto them, and to deliver to them the writings of the divine

Gospels. These men, having laid the foundations of the faith in some remote places, having *ordained also others to be Pastors* over them, and *having committed to their care the cultivation of what they had thus begun, hastened to other countries and nations*, being accompanied by the grace and power of God.”<sup>1</sup>

This account of the office, accords with the intimations the New Testament gives us on the subject: and it affords an easy and adequate explanation of all the passages in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, cited to prove that they were Diocesan Bishops. Does the Apostle direct them to “set in order the things that are wanting and ordain Elders in every city”—to “lay hands suddenly on no man”—to “reject a man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition?” All this is explained by a reference to their commission and functions as *EVANGELISTS*. We do not, indeed, feel bound to admit that they ordained *alone* at Ephesus and Crete respectively. The language of the Apostle does not necessarily imply this; and the fact that there *is not an instance recorded in the New Testament, of an ordination performed by a single individual*, furnishes a strong presumption against it. Yet if this point were conceded, it would derogate nothing from the force of our argument: because we hold that as Evangelists they were invested with extraordinary powers—powers that were essential in the first planting and organization of churches, but which are not needed in a settled Church state.

Prelatists attempt to fortify their theory of the Prelatic character of Timothy, by appealing to the address of the Apostle to the Elders of Ephesus. (Acts

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, lib. iii. sect. 36.



xx.) In that address (we are told) the Elders are simply entrusted with the spiritual oversight of the *flock*, i. e. the *people*: while Timothy is charged with the control of the *Elders* or the *Clergy*, as well as the flock. To this we have two answers. (1.) We contend that all the powers requisite to a settled Church state, are recognized by the Apostle as belonging to the Elders of Ephesus. They are styled overseers *ἐπισκοποι*, *Bishops* of the flock, and instructed to take heed to themselves and to the flock, and to feed the Church. These terms have already been shown to denote a general power of *government* over the Churches committed to them, and, by necessary implication, a joint jurisdiction of the Eldership over one another. (2.) The language of Paul to Timothy, is precisely such language as, on our principles, he might be expected to use in addressing an *Evangelist*, but not such as he would employ in addressing a settled Pastor.—We find no difficulty, therefore, in harmonizing with our views, the strain of his two charges addressed respectively to the Ephesian Pastors and the extraordinary officer appointed to fulfil a temporary commission among their churches.

It must be evident from the foregoing considerations, that the Scriptures afford, to say the least, no conclusive evidence that Timothy and Titus were Diocesan Bishops. And “conclusive evidence” is what we demand. Mere probabilities will not answer in a case which involves the salvation or perdition of millions of human beings. But even “probabilities” are wanting. While every difficulty admits of a ready solution on the supposition that Timothy and Titus were Evangelists, there are very

weighty arguments to show that they could not have been Diocesan Bishops.

One of these is drawn from a verse which Prelatists have sometimes indiscreetly quoted in support of their theory, viz., 1 Tim. i. 3, "As I besought thee still to abide at Ephesus," &c. Here, they tell us, is evidence that Timothy was to *reside* at Ephesus. Unhappily, however, the word translated *abide* is of very vague import, and may denote indefinitely a long or a very short period. It is amusing, too, that such a passage should be brought forward to prove Timothy a Bishop—"For who, (observes Mons. Daillé, the celebrated French Protestant Divine,) without the aid of an extraordinary passion, could have divined a thing so fine, and so marvellous, and could have imagined that to entreat a man to abide in a city *was to appoint him the Bishop of it*. . . . Without exaggeration, the cause of these hierarchical gentlemen must be reduced to great straits when they are obliged to have recourse to such pitiful arguments. As to myself, considering matters coolly, I should have concluded, on the contrary, from the Apostle's beseeching Timothy to remain at Ephesus, that he could *not* have been Bishop of Ephesus. For to what purpose would it be to *entreat* a Bishop to remain in his diocese? Is not this to beseech a man to continue in a place to which he is tied down? I should not have thought it strange if he had been entreated to *leave* it, had there been need for his services elsewhere. But to beseech him to stop in a place *of which he had the charge*, and which he could not quit *without displeasing God and neglecting his duty*, to say the truth, is a request which is not a little extraordinary,

and which evidently supposes that he had not his duty much at heart, since he needed to be besought to do it. But, however that may be it is very certain, that to *beseech a man to remain in a place, does not signify that he is constituted the Bishop of it.*"

The language of Paul to Timothy and Titus, shows that they were left at Ephesus and Crete only for *specific and temporary purposes* — Timothy, to oppose unsound doctrines, and each of them to complete the organization of the Churches. In accordance with this view, the Apostle directs Titus to come to him at Nicopolis, (iii. 12.) on the arrival of Artemas, and it cannot be shown that he returned to Crete. It is certain, also, that Timothy left Ephesus; for a few years after the time at which Paul's first Epistle to him is generally supposed to have been written, we hear of him as sharing the Apostle's imprisonment at Rome. And there is ample reason to believe that he had departed from Ephesus before the writing of the second Epistle. And herein, by the way, we have an adequate answer to the objection urged with so much vehemence by certain Prelatists. "If Timothy was only an Evangelist," say they, "how happens it that we find him still at Ephesus when the second Epistle was written to him—in which alone he is styled an Evangelist? For by this time he must have completed the organization of the Churches there, and provided a sufficient number of Presbyters to take charge of them." I answer (1.) that there might have been difficulties in the Ephesian Churches, (see Acts xx. 29, 30.) or a continual increase of converts, such as to demand the presence and labours of an Evangelist for *several years*. But (2.) let the objectors prove that Timothy *did* remain at Ephesus until the

writing of the second Epistle. There is not a word in that Epistle to intimate that he was there; but several things which import that he was not. For example, in Ch. iv. 12, the Apostle says, "Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus." Had Timothy been there, he would probably have said, "Tychicus have I sent *to you* at Ephesus." And in the next verse, he requests him to bring to him at Rome, his cloak, books and parchments, which he had left at *Troas*. This imports that Timothy was either at Troas or at some place in coming from which to Rome, he would pass through Troas. But any one who looks at the map will see that it would take him entirely out of his way to visit Troas in going from *Ephesus* to Rome. Dr. Whitby, one of the ablest of the Episcopal Commentators, gives it explicitly as his opinion from these passages, that Timothy was not at Ephesus but at Troas at this period. The objection, therefore, falls to the ground.—Both the nature of their duties, and their itinerant course of life, then, are adverse to the notion that Timothy and Titus were Diocesan Bishops.

It is another argument against the Prelatic doctrine, that while the Apostles specify, in these Epistles, the qualifications essential to Bishops or Presbyters, and Deacons,<sup>1</sup> *he says nothing of the qualifications requisite to the Apostleship or Prelacy*. On High-Church principles, this omission is inexplicable. Is it credible that the Apostle would give minute directions as to the sort of men to be selected for the two "*inferior grades*" of the ministry, and not write a syllable about the kind of men to whose jurisdiction these ministers and all the Churches of the Diocese were to be committed? Was it ne-

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Tim. iii. 1—13. Titus i. 5—11.

cessary to instruct Timothy so distinctly in relation to *Deacons*, and could the selection and ordination of his own *successors in the Apostleship*, be safely left to his own discretion? The credulity that can believe this, must be the fruit of a very determined zeal for Prelacy. Non-Episcopalians find in this remarkable omission, a significant proof that there were no higher officers than "Presbyter-Bishops" to be appointed in the Churches of Crete and Ephesus.

Again, the address of Paul to the Ephesian Elders or Bishops at Miletus, (see Acts xx.) furnishes a conclusive argument against the supposed Diocesan character of Timothy.

It is very convenient for Prelatists to assume that Paul's first Epistle to Timothy was written several years later than the date assigned to it by the best authorities. It is agreed by the great body of learned critics, ancient and modern, that this Epistle was written about A.D. 58, when Paul had lately quitted Ephesus on account of the tumult raised there by Demetrius, and was gone into Macedonia. (Acts xx. 1.) Among others, this is the opinion of Athanasius, Theodoret, Baronius, Ludovic, Capellus, Blondel, Hammond, Grotius, Salmasius, Lightfoot, Benson, Doddridge, and Michaelis.<sup>1</sup> To these eminent authorities may be added the name of one of the most recent Episcopal writers in this department of sacred literature, the Rev. George Townsend, of the Church of England, whose "Harmony" of the Old and New Testaments has been widely circulated in this country. In speaking of the date of the first Epistle to

<sup>1</sup> See the question argued in Doddridge's introduction to first Timothy, and in Hug's Introduction to the New Testament, pp. 534, 753.



Timothy, he uses this explicit language:—"I have preferred the early date for this reason, that the allusion to the youth of Timothy—the fact that Timothy was directed to ordain elders whom St. Paul afterwards met—and the solemn declaration that he should see their face no more, appear to be so *plainly decisive*, that I can admit no theoretical arguments to overthrow what seems to me the unforced deduction from Scripture, that the Epistle was written after St. Paul went from Ephesus, and left Timothy there, when he went into Macedonia."

But if Timothy was Bishop of Ephesus at all, *it must have been when this first Epistle was written*; for it is this Epistle which furnishes our Prelatical brethren with very nearly *all* the evidence they have that he was a Bishop. Of course then, he was Bishop of Ephesus when the Apostle had his interview with the Elders at Miletus. Timothy was *present* on that occasion.<sup>1</sup> Yet Paul, in so far as the narrative informs us, did not take the least notice of him. Instead of addressing himself to the "Bishop," he delivers his whole charge to his Presbyters. With their Bishop standing by, he *commits the entire government and control of the Church into their hands*. He does not so much as tell them how they are to deport themselves towards their Diocesan, nor even allude to the fact of their having one.—He who can believe all this, must admit that the Apostle had very different ideas of the rights and immunities of Diocesan Bishops, from those entertained by some modern advocates of Prelacy.

If, on the other hand, the ground is taken that Timothy was not appointed Bishop of Ephesus until

<sup>1</sup> See Acts xx. 4, 15, 17.



after the interview just mentioned, then it will follow, that whatever powers are conceded to him in Paul's first Epistle, he possessed these powers *without being a Diocesan Bishop*; for that Epistle was written, as we have seen, prior to the interview in question. Again, If he was not made Bishop of Ephesus until after the interview at Miletus, it is very surprising that the Apostle should have made no allusion to this serious defect in their organization. It would be quite out of character for a High-Church Prelate of our day, to deliver a formal charge to the assembled clergy of a vacant Diocese, without so much as alluding to the fact of their having no Diocesan. Yet this was done—if we are to receive the Prelatic theory—by so courteous and sound a *Churchman* as the Apostle Paul, in his charge to the clergy of Ephesus. This consideration will have due weight with every impartial mind: but what I chiefly insist upon as regards this transaction at Miletus, is the dilemma previously stated. Either Timothy was Bishop of Ephesus at the time Paul delivered his charge to the Ephesian Elders, or he was not. If he *was*, how happens it that the Apostle makes no allusion to him, and commits the government of the Churches into the hands of the Elders, and *that* in the *presence* of their Diocesan? If he was *not*, then he was not Bishop of Ephesus when Paul's first Epistle to him was written, and *all the supposed evidences of his Prelatic character drawn from that Epistle, are annulled.*

There is only one possible way by which this dilemma can be eluded, viz., by proving that the first Epistle was written *after* the interview at Miletus. But this is a point which never has been, and which it

is hazarding little to say, never can be, proved. For—other arguments apart—Paul's address to the Elders contains a solemn prophecy that he should never meet them again in this world. "I *know*," he says, "that ye . . . shall *see my face no more*." But his first Epistle was written soon after his departure from Ephesus, on some occasion, to go into Macedonia, (see ch. i. 3, "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia,") and it contains ample evidence that he *expected to return* there. Thus he says, ch. iii. 14, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to *come unto thee shortly*." And again, iv. 13, "*Till I come*, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." This expectation of returning to Ephesus, *must* have been prior to that interview in the course of which he so impressively assures them that they "*are to see his face no more*." The Epistle, therefore, was written before the transaction at Miletus: and hence the dilemma to which Prelatists are reduced by this comparison of dates, remains. Whichever horn of that dilemma is taken, the argument against Timothy's prelatical character is conclusive.

Such are some of the arguments which have satisfied non-Episcopalians in the various Reformed Churches, that Timothy and Titus were not Diocesan Bishops. There is one other consideration which ought not to be omitted in discussing the subject of the *Apostolical Succession*. The advocates of this doctrine profess to be able to trace up their descent to the Apostles. They allege—with how much reason, we have seen—that Timothy and Titus were successors of the Apostles in the Apostolic office. We now require them to show that *Timothy and Titus ap-*

*pointed persons to succeed themselves in the Apostleship.* If they were, as we contend, extraordinary officers clothed with a special and temporary mission, we should not look for any instructions in the Epistles addressed to them, in relation to successors. But if they were the Bishops—the *first* Bishops—of Ephesus and Crete, we might reasonably expect to find a great deal in these Epistles about the succession. Which of these views is sustained by the tone of the Epistles, will be manifest when it is stated, that the diligence and zeal of Prelacy have not been able to discover a syllable in the Epistle to Titus, so much as hinting at the succession in the See of Crete; and that there is but one solitary passage in the Epistles to Timothy, which is claimed as bearing upon the succession in the See of Ephesus. This passage, it will surprise plain readers of the Bible to learn, is the following: first Epistle, vi. 13, 14, “I give thee charge in the sight of God . . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot unrebukable, *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” By the appearing of the Saviour here, is meant, it is said, his appearing to judge the world; and hence it was designed that Timothy’s office should be perpetuated.

It seems a waste of time to stop to refute such specimens of exegesis as this: but as it is the best warrant that can be produced for the succession at Ephesus, it may be well to notice it. Their own Stillingfleet shall furnish the answer. “*First,*” he observes, “it is no ways certain what this command was which St. Paul speaks of: some understand it of fighting the good fight of faith, [see context] others of the precept of love, others most probably the sum of all contained in this Epistle which I confess implies in it, (as being

one great part of the Epistle,) Paul's direction of Timothy for the right discharging of his office. But granting that the command respects Timothy's office, yet I answer, *secondly*, it manifestly appears to be something *personal*, and not *successive*; or at least nothing can be inferred for the necessity of such a succession from this place which it was brought for; nothing being more evident than that this command related to *Timothy's* personal observance of it. And, therefore, *Christ's appearing* here is not meant of his second coming to judgment, but it only imports the *time of Timothy's decease*. So Chrysostom, "Until the end, until the departure." So Estius, "Until the termination of life." . . . And the reason why the time of his death is set out by the coming of Christ, is, as Chrysostom, and from him Theophylact observes, "that it might incite him the more" both to diligence in his work and patience under sufferings from the consideration of Christ's appearance. The plain meaning of the words, then, is the same with that, Rev. ii. 10, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Nothing, then, can be hence inferred as to the necessary succession of some in Timothy's office, whatever it is supposed to be."<sup>1</sup>

Such, in the judgment of this able and candid Episcopalian, is the scriptural warrant for the notion that the succession of Apostles or Prelates, was to be perpetuated in the Church of Ephesus,—a conclusion strongly corroborated by the fact mentioned by the learned Dr. Campbell, in his Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, that "neither Timothy nor Titus is styled "Bishop" by any writer in the first three cen-

<sup>1</sup> Irenicum, Chap. iv.

turies." (Lect. V. p. 79.) Yet this "Diocese" is the very citadel of High-Churchism. And it is from its ramparts that they are for ever proclaiming the idle and arrogant assumption, that to be disunited with a Church which has had an unbroken succession of Apostles from the days of the twelve, is to be abandoned to "uncovenanted mercy."

I have dwelt the longer upon the cases of Timothy and Titus, because, as was just intimated, Prelatists usually rely more upon these two witnesses in vindicating their system, than upon any other scriptural argument. All that is necessary, as to these cases, let it be remembered, in order to invalidate the theory of the Apostolical Succession as held by High Churchmen, is, to show that it is *doubtful* whether Timothy and Titus were appointed to the Apostleship. If Prelatists cannot establish the affirmative of this proposition beyond a reasonable doubt, by *clear scriptural proofs*, their pretensions can only excite the ridicule or the pity of intelligent men. For with what decency can it be pretended that the alternative offered to the world, is, *Prelacy or perdition*, if there is the *slightest* defect in the scriptural evidence on which the theory of Prelacy rests? Instead of showing, however, that the alleged Apostleship of Timothy and Titus is barely *doubtful*, it has, if I mistake not, been proved that Timothy was *ordained* by a *Presbytery*, and *could* not, therefore, on High-Church principles, have been an Apostle or Prelate—that there are insuperable objections to the hypothesis that Titus and himself were either Apostles in the appropriate import of that title, or Diocesan Bishops—that they could only have been EVANGELISTS—and that whatever their office was, the Bible does



not furnish the least evidence that they were to have successors.—From all which I conclude that Timothy and Titus, instead of testifying that “the *Apostolic office was designed to be permanent,*” are good witnesses to prove the very reverse.<sup>1</sup>

As this volume is not designed as a formal treatise on Prelacy, I pass by, for want of room only, the arguments drawn from the constitution of the Levitical Priesthood and from the alleged Diocesan character of the Apostle James, to notice, briefly, the argument derived from the short epistles addressed to the Seven Churches of Asia. (See Rev. ii. and iii.) Prelatists find Apostles or Diocesan Bishops in the “*Angels*” of these Churches. The epistles, they say, are inscribed to them individually; they are addressed as having the exclusive control of the Churches; they are held responsible for all the evils which prevailed among them; and the whole tone of the Saviour’s language to them is such as can be reconciled with no other theory than that of their being Diocesan Bishops.

This argument depends on the two-fold assumption that the titles “angel” and “star” (the “seven stars,” ch. i. 20, being the emblems of the “seven angels,”) can be employed only to denote single individuals, and that these individuals can

<sup>1</sup> A single word on the *postscripts* to these epistles, before leaving them. In the Postscripts to second Timothy and Titus, these Evangelists are styled the “*Bishops*” of the Churches respectively “of the Ephesians” and “of the Cretians.” It may be proper, therefore, to state that *all* respectable writers admit that these postscripts are interpolations. It is agreed that their origin is not earlier than the fifth century. Of course they are not to be relied upon as authority; and they are never quoted in this controversy by Prelatists or their opposers.



only be Diocesan Bishops. To notice the latter of these assumptions, first:—Let the origin of the expression, the “Angel of the Church,” be considered, as stated by that great Rabbinical scholar, Dr. Lightfoot. “Besides these,” he says, (the three rulers of the synagogue,) “there was the public minister of the synagogue, who prayed publicly, and took care about the reading of the law, and sometimes preached, if there were not others to discharge that office. This person was called Sheliach Zibbor, the *Angel of the Church*, and the Chazan or *Bishop* of the congregation. . . The service and worship of the Temple being abolished, as being ceremonial, God transplanted the worship and public adoration of God used in the synagogues, which was moral, into the Christian Church; to wit, the public ministry, public prayers, reading God’s word, and preaching, &c. Hence the names of the ministers of the Gospel were the very same, the *Angel of the Church*, and the *Bishop*, which belonged to the ministers in the synagogues.” “As the Sheliach Zibbor, then, (adds Dr. Brown,<sup>1</sup>) or Bishop of the synagogue, *had no authority beyond the single congregation in which he ministered*, and as he exercised that authority along with the rulers of the synagogue, (though he was not the chief ruler,) it is plain that the application of the name ‘Angel’ to the minister of each of these Asiatic Churches, even supposing him to be only a single person acting on his own individual capacity, furnishes no proof that he had authority over the *ministers of other congregations* or Christian synagogues, and much less would it justify any Bishop in the present day for being invested with authority over a

hundred or a thousand ministers and as many congregations.”

Some writers of great respectability have supposed the *presidents* or *moderators* of the several Presbyteries, to be intended by the “Angels of the Churches,”—the epistles being inscribed to them personally, though intended for the body over which, though of the same order, they presided.

Others, again, have held, as did Mr. Dodwell in the latter part of his life, that the angels were probably *itinerary legates*, or special missionaries sent from Jerusalem to visit these Churches.

A more popular opinion has been that these Epistles, though addressed to the angels or ministers, were designed for the ministers and people in common—an opinion which is favoured by several expressions in the epistles.

The view, however, usually adopted by non-prelatic writers, is, that the titles, “star” and “angel,” denote the *collective body of ministers* in each of the seven churches.—This brings me to the second assumption of the Prelatists, viz. that these titles can be used only to denote single individuals. In opposition to this view it may be observed, that the “seven candlesticks (i. 20) are the seven churches.” Each candlestick represents one church. Now if these seven churches embraced each but a single congregation, their pastors or “angels” could not have been Diocesan Bishops. If they embraced more than one congregation each, still they are represented by *one candlestick*. And if a plurality of congregations may be represented by one candlestick, why may not a plurality of *ministers* be represented by *one star*?

As regards the other term, "angels," we have the opinion of such men as Dr. Henry More, Joseph Mede, Dr. Fulk, and Stillingfleet, that it is used in the Apocalypse as a noun of multitude. "If many things in the Epistles be direct to the angels, (says Stillingfleet) but yet so as to concern the whole body, then of necessity the 'angel' must be taken as a *representative* of the whole body, and then, why may not the word 'angel' be taken by way of representation of the body itself; either of the whole Church, or, which is far more probable, of the *Consensus* or order of Presbyters in that Church? We see what miserable, unaccountable arguments those are which are brought for any kind of government, from metaphorical or ambiguous expressions or names promiscuously used."

A noted example of the use of the term here contended for, occurs in the sixth verse of the fourteenth chapter of this book. "I saw another *angel* fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to *every nation and kindred and tongue and people.*" "Heaven" (observes Dr. Mason on this verse,) "in this book, is the ascertained symbol of the Christian Church, from which issue forth the 'ministers of grace' to the nations. As the Gospel is preached only by *men*, this *angel* who has it to preach to 'every nation and kindred and tongue and people,' must be the symbol of a human ministry. And as it is perfectly evident that no single man can thus preach it, but that there must be a *great company* of preachers to carry it to 'every nation and kindred and tongue and people,' the angel mentioned in the

text is, and of necessity must be, the symbol of that *great company*.”—It is for Prelatists to show that the term may not in like manner be used in these seven epistles as a collective noun, to signify the *whole body* of ministers in each Church. That this view of the import of the name harmonizes much better with the various parts of these epistles than that which makes the angels Diocesan Bishops, will be evident from two or three considerations.

(1.) If the term “angels” denotes only the *Bishops* of these churches, the Epistles contain no allusion whatever to the *other ministers*. As these ministers must have outnumbered the Prelates, and their influence for good or evil upon the churches have been very potent, such an omission is not easily to be accounted for.

(2.) If the Angel of the Church of Ephesus be addressed as a single person, and not as the representative of the whole of the ministers, is it not further inexplicable that because he *alone* had “*left his first love*,” the Redeemer should threaten, if he did not repent, to *extinguish that Church*, or remove its candlestick out of its place?

(3.) Some of the Epistles use the *singular and plural pronouns interchangeably*—which shows that the angels are not single individuals. Thus, the Saviour says to the angel of the Church of Smyrna, “I know *thy* works, &c. Behold the devil shall cast *some of you* into prison that *ye* may be tried: and *ye* shall have tribulation ten days: be *thou* faithful unto death, and I will give *thee* a crown of life.” And to the angel of the Church of Thyatira, he says, “I know *thy* works, &c. . . . But unto *you* (*ὑμεῖς*) I say, and

unto the *rest* in Thyatira, as *many* as have not this doctrine &c. . . . But that which *ye* have already, hold fast till I come.”

Prelatists try to evade this difficulty by saying that where these plural forms of expression occur, the Saviour addresses the *people*. But (1.) this is incompatible with their prime principle that the *angels* must be single individuals; for whoever may be intended by these plural pronouns, they must be included under the term “angels.” (2.) It is a fatal objection to this interpretation, that while the *people* of Smyrna are told that they are to be “cast into prison,” the *promise*, “Be *thou* faithful unto death and I will give *thee* a crown of life,” is *given exclusively to the Bishop*. “If the ‘angel’ is the *collective body* of the *ministry* upon whom the persecution was to fall, then the exhortations, “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer”—“Be thou faithful unto death;” and the promise, “I will give thee a crown of life,” are in harmony with the premonition, that “the devil should cast some of them into prison.” The anticipation of evil is softened by the assurance of support. But according to the Episcopal construction, the sorrow goes one way, and the consolation the other. The Bishop is exhorted not to fear: to be faithful unto death: but it seems that the people only are to bear the calamity.”<sup>1</sup> It may be safely left to candid minds to judge whether an interpretation can be correct which involves such absurdities as this.

On the whole, when the general tenor of the Book of Revelation and the highly figurative language in which most of it is written, are considered, it is a

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mason.



great weakness, and argues a bad cause, to appeal to these Epistles, as furnishing any decisive testimony on the subject of Church-government. Prelatists may assume, but it is certain they can never prove, that the angels of these Churches, were either Apostles or Diocesan Bishops.—Until they have proved this, and with this have distinctly and conclusively shown that these officers were instructed to appoint *Successors* of apostolic rank, we must decline acknowledging the seven angels as competent witnesses to establish the *perpetuity of the apostolic office*.

Such is the scriptural argument for the second proposition embraced in the Prelatic theory, viz. that “THE APOSTOLIC OFFICE, CONSIDERED IN REFERENCE TO ITS EXCLUSIVE FUNCTIONS OF JURISDICTION AND ORDINATION, WAS DESIGNED TO BE PERMANENT.” The proposition that “THESE FUNCTIONS BELONGED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE APOSTLESHIP,” was previously examined. Without taking up every argument attempted to be drawn from the word of God in support of these views, (a thing which is precluded by the limits prescribed to myself in this discussion) I have selected those on which the most reliance is usually placed, and endeavoured to weigh them with candour. It is sufficient to invalidate the High-Church doctrine, if these propositions have been shown to be even *doubtful*. But may it not be claimed that something more than this has been done,—that they have been fairly and effectually *disproved*? It has been shown, if I mistake not, that the powers of jurisdiction and ordination, were exercised as well by Presbyters as by the Apostles; and that the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and those addressed to the seven Asiatic



churches, so far from countenancing the idea that the Apostles were to have successors in the Apostleship, contain passages that are irreconcilable with that hypothesis. These conclusions might be fortified by a great body of Scripture testimonies which have not been brought forward: for all the passages that go *directly* to prove the *parity of the ministry*, confirm the results to which we have been conducted.

It will no doubt excite the surprise of individuals who have not investigated the subject before, to find that there is so very little in the word of God to favour the High-Church system. The confidence and even arrogance with which the supporters of that system, pronounce all who reject it to be out of the pale of the Church, have produced the impression upon many minds that the Bible must at least furnish a specious warrant for it. But the pretensions of theorists, as well in religion as in science, are apt to be in an inverse proportion to the strength of the evidence on which their theories rest.—“For myself, [I adopt here with some slight variations, the language of the learned and venerable Dr. Miller,] I most conscientiously declare that the arguments attempted to be drawn from Scripture, in favour of Prelacy, do not appear to me to possess the smallest degree of real force. I can truly say, that when I first approached the investigation of the subject, I expected to find much more in the sacred volume appearing to favour the Episcopal cause, than I have since been able to discover. It did not occur to me as possible, that such confident appeals to Scripture could be continually made, on grounds so entirely unsolid. I might have recollected, indeed, the deci-

sive tone with which many ingenious and learned men have resorted to the sacred oracles to establish the supremacy of the Pope, and the damning sin of separation from the Church of Rome. Nor ought we to be surprised that pious and learned men, of other denominations, should fall into similar mistakes, and express equal confidence of finding support where none is in reality to be found. The late Mr. *Burke* has somewhere said, 'Let us only suffer any person to tell us his story morning and evening but for one twelve month, and he will become our master.' Many zealous advocates of Prelacy have been so long in the habit of saying, and of hearing it said, that the Scriptures 'clearly,' 'strongly,' and 'unquestionably' declare in favour of their system; and some of them are so little in the habit of reading the refutations of this error, that they unfeignedly believe it, and scruple not to stigmatize all who do not see it, as given up to blindness and prejudice. But, happily, we have the sacred volume in our hands, as well as they; and after the most dispassionate examination, are compelled to pronounce their arguments from Scripture nugatory; their confidence totally unwarranted; and the system which they profess to found on the word of God, a fabric resting alone on human contrivance."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the Christian Ministry, Let. III. 8vo. ed.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT.

I BEGIN this chapter with a brief extract from the Westminster Confession of Faith.

Chapter I. Sect. 6. "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which, nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men."

Section 10. "The Supreme Judge, by whom all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

Applying these principles to the case in hand, the author cordially concurs with the ecclesiastical head of the Diocese of Pennsylvania, in these observations:—"The claim of Episcopacy to be of divine institution, and therefore obligatory on the Church, rests fundamentally on the one question—has it the authority of *Scripture*? If it has not, it is not necessarily binding." . . . "This one point should be kept in view in every discussion of the subject; *no argument is worth taking into account* that has not a palpable bearing on the clear and naked topic—the *scriptural* evidence of Episcopacy."<sup>1</sup> The con-

<sup>1</sup> "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," p. 3.

clusions to which the *scriptural* argument has conducted us, in this inquiry, are not to be invalidated by any array of mere *patristic* and *traditionary* authorities. The Christian fathers are entitled to the same respect as men of equal piety and intelligence in other ages of the Church; but the exorbitant veneration entertained for them by Romanists and High-Churchmen, has been a source of incalculable mischief to the Church. The writer has no sympathy with that class of persons mentioned by Milton, who, "as if the divine Scripture wanted a supplement, and were to be eked out, cannot think any doubt resolved and any doctrine confirmed, unless they run to that undigested heap and fry of authors which they call antiquity." For, with him, he believes that "whatsoever time, or the heedless hand of blind chance, hath drawn from of old to this present, in her huge drag-net, whether fish or sea-weed, shells or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, those are the Fathers."<sup>1</sup> The assurance, however, with which Prelatists are in the habit of asserting that the testimony of the primitive Church is entirely in their favour, makes it proper to dwell on this point for a little before proceeding with the argument. I shall show in another connexion, that it was the common judgment of the Reformers and the Reformed Churches, that Bishops and Presbyters are by divine institution of *one order*, and that the existing arrangement in Prelatical Churches by which the powers of jurisdiction and ordination have been taken from Presbyters and given exclusively to the Bishops, is a matter of mere human arrangement. For the present, I content myself with citing the testimony of a single witness from antiquity

<sup>1</sup> Treatise "of Prelatical Episcopacy."

in proof of these points. This witness is the celebrated Jerome, who flourished about the year four hundred, and of whom Erasmus declared, that "he was, without controversy, the most learned of all Christians, the prince of divines, and for eloquence that he excelled Cicero." The extracts that follow, will furnish an adequate answer to the questions so often asked about the time and manner of the rise of Prelacy. I give them from Dr. Mason's translation. The first passage is taken from Jerome's commentary on Titus i. 5.

"That thou shouldest ordain Presbyters in every city, as I had appointed thee."—"What sort of *Presbyters* ought to be ordained he shows afterwards: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c., and then adds, for a *bishop* must be blameless, as the steward of God, &c. A *Presbyter*, therefore, is the same as a *Bishop*, and before there were, *by the instigation of the devil*, parties in religion, and it was said among different people, 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,' the churches were governed by *the joint counsel of the Presbyters*. But *afterwards*, when every one accounted those whom he baptized as belonging to himself and not to Christ, it was *decreed throughout the whole world* that one chosen from among the Presbyters, should be put over the rest, and that the whole care of the Church should be committed to him, and the seeds of schisms taken away.

"Should any one think that this is any private opinion, and not the doctrine of the Scriptures, let him read the words of the Apostle in his epistle to the Philippians: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which

are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons," &c. Philippi is a *single* city of Macedonia; and certainly in one city there could not be several Bishops as they are now styled; but as they, at that time, called the very same persons Bishops whom they called Presbyters, the Apostle has spoken without distinction of Bishops as Presbyters.

"Should this matter yet appear doubtful to any one, unless it be proved by an additional testimony; it is written in the Acts of the Apostles, that when Paul had come to Miletum, he sent to Ephesus and called the Presbyters of that Church, and among other things said to them, 'take heed to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit hath made you Bishops.' Take particular notice, that calling the PRESBYTERS of the single city of Ephesus, he afterwards names the same persons BISHOPS." After further quotations from the Epistle to the Hebrews and from Peter, he proceeds: "Our intention in these remarks is to show, that, among the ancients, *Presbyters and Bishops were THE VERY SAME.* But that BY LITTLE AND LITTLE, that the plants of dissensions might be plucked up, the whole concern was devolved upon an individual. As the Presbyters, therefore, KNOW that they are subjected, BY THE CUSTOM OF THE CHURCH, to him who is set over them, so let the Bishops know, that they are greater than Presbyters MORE BY CUSTOM, than by any REAL APPOINTMENT OF CHRIST."

He pursues the same argument, with great point, in his famous Epistle to Evagrius, asserting and proving from the Scriptures, that in the beginning and during the Apostles' days, a Bishop and a Presbyter were the same thing. He then goes on: "As to the



fact that *afterwards*, one was ELECTED to preside over the rest, this was done as a remedy against schism; lest every one drawing his proselytes to himself, should rend the Church of Christ. For even at Alexandria, from the Evangelist Mark to the Bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, the Presbyters always chose one of their number, placed him in a superior station and gave him the title of Bishop: in the same manner as if an army should MAKE an Emperor; or the Deacons should choose from among themselves, one whom they knew to be particularly active, and should call him *Arch-deacon*. For excepting ordination, what is done by a Bishop that may not be done by a Presbyter?"

"Here," observes Dr. Mason, "is an account of the origin and progress of Episcopacy, by a Father whom the Episcopalians themselves admit to have been the most able and learned man of his age; and how contradictory it is to their account, the reader will be at no loss to perceive, when he shall have followed us through an analysis of its several parts.

1. Jerome expressly denies the superiority of Bishops to Presbyters by *divine right*. To prove his assertion on this head he goes directly to the Scriptures; and argues, as the advocates of parity do, from the *interchangeable titles* of Bishop and Presbyter; from the *directions* given to them without the least intimation of difference in their authority; and from the *powers* of Presbyters, undisputed in his day. It is very true that the reasoning from *names* is said by those whom it troubles, to be "miserable sophistry" and "good for nothing." But as Jerome advances it with the utmost confidence, they might have forborne such a compliment to "the prince of divines" in the

fourth century; especially as none of his contemporaries, so far as we recollect, even attempted to answer it. It is a *little* strange that laymen and clergymen, deacons, priests, and bishops, should *all* be silenced by a page of "miserable sophistry."

2. Jerome states it as a *historical fact*, that in the original constitution of the Church, before the devil had as much influence as he acquired afterwards, the *Churches were governed by the joint counsel of the Presbyters.*

3. Jerome states it as a *historical fact*, that this government of the Churches *by Presbyters alone*, continued until, for the avoiding of scandalous quarrels and schisms, it was thought expedient to *alter* it. "*Afterwards,*" says he, "when every one accounted those whom he baptized as belonging to himself and not to Christ, it was *decreed throughout the whole world*, that one chosen from among the Presbyters should be put over the rest, and that the whole care of the Church should be committed to him."

4. Jerome states it as a *historical fact*, that this change in the government of the Church—this creation of a superior order of ministers, took place, not at once, but *by degrees*—"Paulatim," says he, "by little and little." The precise date on which this innovation upon primitive order *commenced*, he does not mention; but he says positively that it did not take place till the factious spirit of the Corinthians had spread itself in different countries to an alarming extent. "*In populis,*" is his expression. Assuredly this was not the work of a day. . . The progress of the mischief was gradual, and so, according to Jerome, was the progress of the *remedy* which the wisdom of the times devised. We agree with them who think

that the experiment introduced more evil than it banished.

5. Jerome states as *historical facts*, that the elevation of one Presbyter over the others, was a *human contrivance*;—was not *imposed* by authority, but *crept in* by custom;—and that the Presbyters of his day *knew* this very well. *As, therefore*, says he, *the Presbyters know that they are subjected to their superior by custom*; so let the Bishops know that they are above the Presbyters, *rather by the custom of the Church, than by the Lord's appointment.*

6. Jerome states it as a *historical fact*, that the first Bishops were made by the *Presbyters themselves*; and consequently they could neither have nor communicate any authority above that of Presbyters. "*Afterwards*," says he, "to prevent schism, one was *elected* to preside over the rest." Elected and commissioned by whom? By the *Presbyters*: for he immediately gives you a broad fact which it is impossible to explain away. "At Alexandria," he tells you, "from the Evangelist Mark to the Bishops Heraclas and Dionysius," *i. e.* till about the middle of the third century, "the Presbyters *always chose* one of their number, *placed him in a superior station* and gave him the title of *Bishop.*"

Finally, Jerome states that *even in his time, i. e.* toward the end of the fourth century, there was no power excepting ordination, exercised by a Bishop which might not be exercised by a Presbyter. "What does a Bishop," he asks, "excepting ordination, which a Presbyter may not do?" Notwithstanding the innovations he describes, had already been made, and Episcopacy introduced, (as a remedy for schism!) yet even in his time the new order of things was

not wholly established. *Ordination* had been given up to the Bishops, but the Presbyters had not surrendered entirely the right of *jurisdiction*, nor indeed any other right. They afterwards lost even this measure of independence. They were obliged to succumb to the Bishops, as the Bishops, in turn, were to the Metropolitans and Patriarchs, and these, at last, to the Pope.

Having quoted this lucid and instructive account of the origin of Diocesan Episcopacy, I resume the line of my argument on the Apostolical Succession. The first two propositions which were laid down (see p. 45,) as comprising the High-Church theory, have been examined, and, I think I may add, disproved. If they fall, the remaining proposition, to wit: that "THE EPISCOPAL BISHOPS ARE THE TRUE AND ONLY SUCCESSORS OF THE APOSTLES," falls with them. It may be satisfactory, however, to show that this scheme derives as little support from HISTORY as it does from the word of God.

The doctrine is, it will be remembered, not simply that the Christian ministry as a standing order of men, has been preserved in the Church from the Apostolic age to the present time, but that there has been during this whole period a personal succession of *Apostles or Prelates* in an unbroken line; that each Apostle or Bishop has received, in his consecration a mysterious "gift," and also transmits to every priest in his ordination a mysterious "gift," indicated in the respective offices by the awful words, "Receive the Holy Ghost;" that Bishops once consecrated are invested with the remarkable property of transmitting the "gift" to others; that this has been the case from the primitive age till now, so that the Bishops of our

day have received the gift in question, by transmission through an unbroken series of Prelates, from the Apostles. On this succession, let it be distinctly noted, High-Churchmen suspend the validity of the orders of their clergy at the present day and the very *existence of the Church*.

“There is no other way left,” says Bishop Seabury, (whose own orders, by the way, will hereafter be shown to have been invalid,) to obtain a valid commission to act as Christ’s ministers in his Church but by an uninterrupted succession of ordinations from the Apostles. Where this is wanting, all spiritual power in Christ’s Church is wanting also.”<sup>1</sup> “Such then,” observes another American clergyman of the Episcopal Church, “is the uninterrupted succession,—a fact to which every Bishop, Priest, and Deacon in the wide world, looks as the ground of validity in his orders. Without this, all distinction between a clergyman and a layman, is utterly vain, for no security exists that heaven will ratify the acts of an illegally constituted minister on earth. Without it, ordination confers none but humanly derived powers; and what these are worth, the reader may estimate when we tell him, that on proof of a real fracture in the line of transmission between the first Bishops of the American Church and the inspired Apostles, the present Bishops will freely acknowledge themselves to be mere laymen, and humbly retire from their posts.”<sup>2</sup>

If, then, it can be proved that there has been no such unbroken personal succession of Apostles or Prelates, from the Apostolic age—if it can be shown

<sup>1</sup> Cited by Dr. Smyth.

<sup>2</sup> Staunton’s Dict. of the Church. (Id.)



either that the chain is not *fustened* at its alleged commencement, or that *one solitary link* is wanting—it will follow, *on their principles*, that *the whole Episcopal clergy of the present day are without orders*, that their Church is *no Church*, that their ordinances are invalid, that they and their children have never been baptized, that they have never really partaken of the Lord's Supper, that they have no interest in the promises, and that, as to their salvation, they are left to God's "uncovenanted mercies!" These consequences, I say, must, *on High-Church principles*, (not on ours) inevitably follow, if a *single flaw* can be detected in the chain of succession between the Apostles and the Bishops of our day. Intelligent Episcopalians must judge for themselves of a theory which rests the being of their Church and the salvation of their souls upon a basis like this.

The first thing essential to make out this scheme, is, to prove that the Apostles appointed successors in the Apostolic office. We do not ask for proof that they appointed *successors*; for it is as much our belief as it is that of Prelatists, that a *permanent ministry* was instituted by our Saviour. But the point to be established, is, that the line of APOSTLES was to be perpetuated—that their successors were to be, not Presbyters of co-equal rank and authority, but officers clothed with the powers of the Apostleship. It is undeniable that many of the most learned Episcopal divines have acknowledged that there is no adequate proof of a succession of this kind. The least uncertainty, however, is fatal to the doctrine. A bare *doubt* discredits the entire theory. 'In the matter of my salvation, I cannot trust to mere probabilities and conjectures. I am told (I put the case as an



Episcopalian,) that my salvation is suspended upon my receiving the ordinances at the hands of a Minister who can trace up his official descent through an unbroken line of Prelates to the Apostles. I ask for the evidence that the Apostles appointed successors, and you lay before me proofs which have been rejected as unsatisfactory even by many of the ablest divines of my own Church. I demand clear and decisive scriptural authority, and you put me off with what, on the most favourable construction, amounts to nothing more than a faint probability—and *that*, in reference to the very first links of the pretended succession. Surely, you cannot expect me to peril my salvation on a scheme like this.' If High-Churchmen would remove this difficulty, they must *prove* by convincing arguments from Scripture and history, that the Apostles were succeeded by Apostles. This alone can allay the fears of Episcopalians who are alarmed lest the chain they are clinging to may not be fastened to the Rock. If they are unable to do this, they can do nothing to the purpose. It will be of no avail simply to show that the Apostles appointed ministers to succeed them. Claiming, as the Prelates do, to be the "heirs and representatives of the Apostles," they must prove that the line of succession was one along which the powers and prerogatives of the Apostleship would run, that is, a line of Apostles. If they fail in this, the defect is irremediable.

This, however, is but a very small part of the task imposed upon the advocates of this theory. After proving that the Apostles appointed successors, to whom they imparted the "gift of the Holy Ghost," and whom they clothed with the entire oversight and control of the Church, they must be able to show that

the *subsequent links* in this chain are all sound—that no break has occurred either from ineligibility on the part of a candidate, uncanonical ordination, or any other cause. This requisition is usually met by the complacent exhibition of a *catalogue of names*, purporting to be a list of Prelates extending from the Apostles down to the Bishops who now preside over the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in this country. These catalogues are published in book and pamphlet form for general circulation. They have no doubt been quite conclusive, with people of a certain grade of intellect and intelligence, as to the supposed Apostolic lineage of the present race of Prelates,—with all, indeed, who agree with the tract writers that it is “better to believe than to reason” on such subjects. But those who are so unreasonable as not to be willing to believe without evidence, will be disposed to go behind the catalogues and examine the materials of which they are composed.

The first observation to be made in reference to these lists, and the theory they are designed to establish, is, that no argument in support of the High-Church doctrine of the Apostolical Succession, can be drawn from the mere fact that certain individuals, or series of individuals, are styled “*Bishops*” by the early ecclesiastical writers. That doctrine assumes that Bishops are of a superior order to Presbyters—that, in fact, they are *Apostles*, and, as such, clothed with the functions and prerogatives of the original Apostles. But even High-Church writers concede, as has been shown, that the titles, Bishop and Presbyter, are used in the New Testament interchangeably, and that all that the New Testament contains on the subject of Bishops, pertains to what is now

made the second order, viz., Presbyters. It is no less certain that these titles were used interchangeably by the early fathers.<sup>1</sup> That Prelacy soon began to disclose itself after the death of the Apostles, and was, with various other human inventions in the Church, pretty fully developed when the empire embraced Christianity under Constantine the Great, in the fourth century, is not denied. But this does not enervate the presumption that the "Bishops" whom we meet with in the second and third centuries were *parochial*, not diocesan, Bishops. The testimony of Jerome, given a few pages back, is conclusive on this point. If further confirmation of it were needed, it might be found in a fact which is incompatible with any theory that assumes the Apostolic origin of Episcopacy; I mean, the *great number* of Bishops in the early Church. Bingham states, that in "Asia Minor, a tract of land not much larger than the isle of Great Britain, there were about four hundred Bishops." Bishop Burnet mentions that at a conference between Augustine and the Donatists, in Africa, about the year 410, there were present between five and six hundred Bishops from, as it would seem, a single province. And, according to Victor Uticensis, a writer of the fifth century, "from that part of Africa in which the Vandalic persecution raged, six hundred and sixty Bishops fled, besides a great number that were murdered and imprisoned, and many more who were tolerated."—One must be a pretty resolute Prelatist not to be willing to admit that these bishops could only have been *parish ministers*. Indeed, if there is any one fact that can be *demonstrated* from

<sup>1</sup> See the passages collated by Dr. Miller, Dr. Smyth, and other Presbyterian writers.

the records of Christian antiquity, it is, that the Bishop of those days was the bishop of *only one church*. This is conclusively established by Sir Peter King in his work on the Primitive Church. In that work he shows (ch. ii.) that "there was *but one Church to a bishop*." In proof of this he states, that

1. "The ancient dioceses are never said to contain *churches*, but only a *church*." "As for the word dioceses," he says, "by which the bishop's flock is now expressed, I do not remember that ever I found it used in this sense by any of the ancients."

2. "All the people of a diocese did every Sunday meet all together in one place to celebrate divine service.

3. "The bishop had but one altar or communion-table in his whole diocese. So writes Cyprian: 'We celebrate the sacrament, the whole brotherhood being present.'

4. "The other sacrament of baptism was generally administered by the bishops alone within their respective dioceses.

5. "The church's charity was deposited with the bishop, who, as Justin Martyr reports, was 'the common curator and overseer of all the orphans, widows, diseased, strangers, imprisoned, and, in a word, of all those that were needy and indigent.'

6. "All the people of a diocese were present at church-censures.

7. "No offenders were restored again to the church's peace, without the knowledge and consent of the whole diocese.

8. "When the bishop of a church was dead, all the people of that church met together in one place to choose a new bishop.

9. "At the ordination of the clergy, the whole body of the people were present."

From these and many other facts he mentions, the learned chancellor, with good reason, concludes that a primitive diocess corresponded to a modern parish, and that *a primitive bishop was the bishop of only a single church.*

When, therefore, we are told that the ecclesiastical historian, Eusebius, who lived in the fourth century, and to whom, almost *exclusively*, Prelatists are indebted for the catalogues of Bishops, from the days of the Apostles to his own, (between two and three hundred years,) when we are told that Eusebius speaks of Bishops as being superior to Presbyters in his time, and that he has preserved lists of the Bishops in the order of succession after the Apostles, we are tempted to ask, with the venerable Dr. Miller, "Does Eusebius say that the Bishops of his day were a different *order* from the Presbyters? Does he declare that there was a superiority of order vested in Bishops *by divine appointment*? Does he assert that Bishops in the days of the Apostles and for a century afterwards, were the *same kind of officers* with those who were called by the same title in the fourth century? Does he tell us that this superior order of clergy were the only ecclesiastical officers who were allowed, in his day, to *ordain* and *confirm*? I have never met with a syllable of all this in Eusebius. All that can be gathered from him, is, that there were persons called Bishops in the days of the Apostles; that there had been a succession of Bishops in the Church from the Apostles to the fourth century when he lived; and that, *in his day*, there was a distinction between Bishops and other Pres-

byters." All which may be admitted without the least detriment to our argument, or the slightest benefit to the High-Church theory. To make Eusebius an available witness for them, they are obliged to *assume* the very point on which we are at issue, viz., that the individuals styled Bishops, in the early ages, were *Diocesan* Bishops—an assumption as legitimate as would be that of an Oriental Prelatist, who, on looking over an itinerant copy of the Minutes of our last General Assembly, and finding the word "Bishops" at the top of the column containing the names of the clerical members, should infer from this circumstance, that there were *one hundred diocesan Bishops* in that Assembly, and that our Church was governed by Prelates. Even admitting, then, the correctness of the catalogues furnished by this historian, it still remains to be proved that all his Bishops were *Prelates* and not Presbyter-bishops.

But let us, in the next place, see what account Eusebius gives us of these pretended catalogues, and ascertain whether *he* placed that implicit confidence in them which *we* must do before we can suspend our salvation upon their genuineness. So far is this early historian from speaking on this subject in the positive manner so characteristic of modern High-Churchmen, that in the beginning of his work he craves the indulgence of his readers, as one who is "attempting *a kind of trackless and unbeaten path.*" "We are totally unable to find *even the bare vestiges* of those who may have travelled the way before us; unless, perhaps, what is only presented in the *slight intimations*, which some in different ways have transmitted to us in certain partial narratives of the times in which they lived; who, raising their



voices before us, like torches at a distance, and as looking down from some commanding height, call out and exhort us where we should walk and whither direct our course with certainty and safety.”<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, his account of the labours of the Apostles themselves is so defective, that he is able to mention the parts of the world where most of them preached the Gospel, only by *tradition* and *hearsay*.<sup>2</sup> In relation to their immediate *successors* also, he frankly acknowledges that he can name them only *by rumour*. Thus of the important Church of Jerusalem, he says<sup>3</sup> “*the report is*” that Simeon was elected Bishop after the martyrdom of James. And as to the subsequent successions in that Church, he afterwards says, “*We have not ascertained, in any way, that the times of the Bishops in Jerusalem have been regularly preserved on record*, for TRADITION says that they all lived but a very short time.”<sup>4</sup> No less candid is he, and, I may add, no less conclusive in his testimony against the Prelatic pretensions of our times, in reference to the successors of Peter and Paul. I give the passage with Stillingfleet’s comments. “Who dare with confidence believe the conjectures of Eusebius at three hundred years distance from apostolical times, when he hath no other testimony to vouch, but the hypotheses of an uncertain Clement, (certainly not he of Alexandria, if Joseph Scaliger may be credited,) and the commentaries of Hegesippus, whose relations and authority are as questionable as many of the reports of Eusebius himself are in reference to those elder times: for which I need no other testimony but Eu-

<sup>1</sup> Book I. Ch. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Ch. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. III. Ch. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. IV. Ch. 5.

sebius in a place enough of itself to blast the whole credit of antiquity, as to the matter now in debate. For speaking of Paul and Peter, and the churches by them planted, and coming to inquire after their successors, he makes this very ingenuous confession: 'There being so many of them, and some naturally rivals, it is not easy to say which of them were accounted eligible to govern the churches established, unless it be those that we may select out of the writings of Paul.' (Book III. ch. 4.) Say you so? Is it so hard a matter to find out who succeeded the Apostles in the churches planted by them, unless it be those mentioned in the writings of Paul? What becomes, then, of our unquestionable line of succession of the Bishops of several churches, and the large diagrams made of the apostolical churches with every one's name set down in his order, as if the writer had been *Clarenceaux* to the Apostles themselves? Is it come to this, at last, that we have nothing certain but what we have in *Scriptures*? And must then the tradition of the Church be our rule to interpret *Scriptures* by? An excellent way to find out the truth doubtless, to bend the rule to the crooked stick, to make the judge stand to the opinion of his lacquey, what sentence he shall pass upon the cause in question; to make *Scripture* stand cap in hand to tradition, to know whether it may have liberty to speak or not! Are all the great outcries of apostolical tradition, of personal succession, of unquestionable records, resolved at last into the *Scripture* itself by him from whom all these long pedigrees are fetched? Then let succession know its place, and learn to vaile bonnet to the *Scriptures*. And, withal, let men take heed of over-reaching themselves where they would

bring down so large a catalogue of single Bishops from the first and purest times of the Church; for it will be hard for others to believe them, when *Eusebius* professeth it is so hard to *find* them.”<sup>1</sup>

This view of the inextricable confusion in which the whole subject of the early successions is involved, will be confirmed, if we advert more particularly to the cases of two or three of the leading Churches. Take, for example, the Church of Ephesus. The second link in the succession here, according to Prelatists, is Timothy. His claim to the diocese has been so fully investigated, that we need not spend any more time upon it. But, allowing that Timothy was Apostle or Bishop of Ephesus, who were his successors? This question is answered by the exhibition of a catalogue of twenty-seven reputed Bishops of this Church, which catalogue rests entirely on the authority of one Leontius, Bishop of Magnesia, who lived about four hundred years after the time of the Apostles. This Leontius, in the Council of Chalcedon, made this statement: “From Timothy to this day there hath been a succession of seven and twenty Bishops, all of them ordained in Ephesus.” The latter part of this statement, however, was promptly denied in the Council by Philip a Presbyter of Constantinople, and was also disproved by Actius, arch-deacon of Constantinople. And Stillingfleet has aptly observed, that “if the certainty of succession relies on the credit of Leontius, they may thank the Council of Chalcedon, who have sufficiently blasted it, by determining the cause against him in the main evidence produced by him.”

Take, as another example, the Church of Antioch.

<sup>1</sup> Irenicum, Ch. VI.

Eusebius, Chrysostom, Jerome, Pope Leo, Innocent, Gelasius, and Gregory the Great, all tell us that this Church was founded by Peter. Let us see how this agrees with Scripture. We are told, Acts xi. 19, that "they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution which arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phœnice, and Cyprus, and *Antioch*, preaching the word to the Jews," &c. It was upon this occasion, then, that Christianity was first planted in Antioch. Subsequently Barnabas, and after him, Paul went thither; and these two remained there for a whole year. So that Paul was rather the founder of this Church, than Peter, who, notwithstanding the positive assertion of Chrysostom and others, that he was the founder and for a long time the *Bishop* of the Church, did not according to the New Testament, even visit Antioch until after the council at Jerusalem. Then, as to the succession, Baronius assures us that the Apostles left two Bishops behind them in this place, one for the Jews, the other for the Gentiles. But what, then, becomes of the *unity* of the Episcopate? Not to press this embarrassing question, however, who were these two Bishops? Baronius answers, they were Ignatius and Euodias. Eusebius says expressly, that Euodias was the first Bishop of Antioch, and that Ignatius succeeded him. On the other hand, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and the author of the Constitutions declare, with equal confidence, that Peter and Paul both laid their hands on Ignatius; but, unfortunately, it appears that Peter was dead before Ignatius was Bishop in this place.<sup>1</sup> Is the chain of succession from *Antioch*, strong enough to sustain all that Prelatists would hang upon it?

<sup>1</sup> Vide Calamy's *Defence of Moderate Non-Conformity*, vol. i. pp. 165-9.

Let us turn next to *Rome*. Here, if any where, we may expect to find the succession clear and indisputable. If *this* chain gives way, the Romish and Anglican Churches, and the Episcopal Church in this country, must all relinquish their claim to be regarded as Churches; for to this they are suspended. The theory is that Peter was the first Bishop of Rome. Now there is no satisfactory evidence that Peter was ever at Rome: and this point is debated among the learned, to the present day. In the next place, allowing him to have been at Rome, and to have resided there for a time, there is no evidence that he was *Bishop* of Rome. Many of the most eminent Episcopal writers have held with Dr. Barrow, that it would have been derogatory to the Apostles, whose commission embraced the world, to become diocesan Bishops. Speaking of the very question under consideration, Barrow says, it would have been as great a disparagement to the Apostolical majesty, for Peter to have taken upon himself the bishopric of Rome, as it would be for the King to become Mayor of London, or the Bishop of London to become the vicar of Pancras.<sup>1</sup>

But allowing for the sake of argument, that Peter was Bishop of Rome, who were his successors? One would suppose from the confidence with which High-Churchmen profess to be able to trace up their genealogy to the Apostles, that this was a point about which there was no difference of opinion. So remote is this from the truth, however, that the succession at Rome is, to use Stillingfleet's expressive phrase, "*as muddy as the Tiber itself.*" Let a plain man who is told that his salvation depends upon his receiving

<sup>1</sup> On the Pope's Supremacy, p. 203.

the sacraments at the hands of a minister who can trace up his ecclesiastical lineage to the Apostles through an unbroken line of Prelates or Apostles, ponder this summary of opinions about the Roman Succession. "Some will have Cletus expunged out of the table, as the same with Anacletus; and so Linus is fixed at the head of the succession, and followed by Anacletus and Clemens. Thus Irenaeus represents it. At the same time in some ancient catalogues, Anacletus is excluded; and he is not at this day to be found in the canon of the mass: and yet the Roman Martyrology speaks distinctly of Cletus and Anacletus and gives a very different account of their birth, pontificate and martyrdom. Epiphanius mentions Cletus but omits Anacletus. He puts the first Bishops of Rome, in this order: Peter and Paul, Linus, Clétus, Clemens, and Euaristus. In Bucher's catalogue they stand thus: Linus, Cletus, Clemens, and Anacletus; and many ancient catalogues agree; and three are left out, viz. Anicetus, Eleutherius, and Zephyrinus. And what shall we do with the famous Clement? Does he style himself Bishop of Rome? Or how came he to forget his title? 'Tis said by some that after he had been St. Paul's companion, and chosen by St. Peter to be Bishop there, he gave place to Linus. While others assert, that Linus and Cletus were Bishops at the same time; and others, Linus and Clemens. Tertullian and Ruffinus and some others place Clement next Peter. Irenaeus and Eusebius set Anacletus before him; Optatus, both Anacletus and Cletus: and Austin and Damascus make Anacletus, Cletus, and Linus, all to precede him."<sup>1</sup> This is, in truth, "*as muddy as the*

<sup>1</sup> Calamy, Vol I. p. 172.



*Tiber.*” And who can clarify it? The learning and wisdom both of the ancients and the moderns have been employed upon it, and with no other result than to increase the turbidness of the stream. Whatever theory of the succession any one adopts, he will find arrayed against him writers of profound erudition and high authority. The question is one on which the Fathers differ widely among themselves, and the best historians are hopelessly at variance with one another. Nor is the appropriate order of the names, the only point involved in the controversy. The very grave question is raised as to one of these names, *whether such an individual ever existed.* The authorities that have been cited, seem about equally divided as to whether Cletus and Anacletus were two individuals or one. One class retain them both; while of the other, some discard Cletus from the succession as a mere imaginary personage, and others repudiate Anacletus. On High-Church principles, let it be remembered, if a single link is wanting, the chain is destroyed and the Church annihilated. And yet here is a point in the chain at which men of equal learning and ability are in doubt whether there is one link or two or none at all.—We have only begun, however, to point out the difficulties with which this scheme is encumbered.

Even if we could be certain—which we cannot be—that all the individuals named in the pretended catalogues of Bishops from the days of the Apostles to our own, actually existed, there would still remain a variety of questions to be settled, which, as to a large number of these persons, no human being can answer. Before I can rest my hope of eternal life upon the integrity of the alleged succession, I must

have explicit information respecting *every individual* named in the list, upon these points: 1. Was he eligible to the Prelacy or Apostleship? 2. Was he properly elected or appointed? 3. Was he canonically ordained and consecrated? 4. Were these several conditions fulfilled in the case of his *ordainers*—that is, were they, at the period of their several appointments, eligible; were they legally chosen, and canonically ordained? Let no Prelatist reply, that “this is asking too much.” In the matter of my salvation, I am not to be put off with mere conjectures and probabilities. I must have *certainty*. Since this doctrine of the succession is placed on an equality with the doctrines of the atonement, justification through the righteousness of Christ, and regeneration, or rather enthroned above them, I require the same certainty as to the integrity of *every link* in the succession, that I have concerning those doctrines as constituting a part of God’s revealed word. If nothing could vitiate the succession but the absence of a link—the omission to consecrate a Bishop at any given point in the series—a mere unbroken list of names duly authenticated might suffice. But, on High-Church principles, there are many circumstances which are to be regarded as disqualifying for the Episcopal office. The following, among others, are enumerated by canonists:—Being unbaptized (or having only lay-baptism;) being unordained, or not having passed through the subordinate offices; being unconsecrated; being consecrated by only one Bishop; being under age; having obtained the see by Simony; being ordained by the Bishop of another province; entertaining heretical opinions; being addicted to gambling and intoxication; having been elected by force;

and others such like.<sup>1</sup> What I demand, is, satisfactory historical evidence that none of these disqualifications attach to *a single individual* in the list of Bishops, or Apostles, on the validity of which I am asked to stake my salvation. If a single link be faulty, the sacramental virtue which, it is alleged is transmitted along the line of the Apostolical Succession, must be utterly nullified ever after, in respect of all the links that hang on that one. "For if a Bishop has not been duly consecrated, or, had not been previously rightly ordained, his ordinations are null; and so are the ministrations of those ordained by him; and their ordinations of others; (supposing any of the persons ordained by him to attain to the Episcopal office) and so on, without end. The poisonous taint of informality, if it once creep in undetected, will spread the infection of nullity to an indefinite and irremediable extent.

"And who can undertake" (the argument is none the worse for being that of a learned and very able *Archbishop*,<sup>2</sup> now living,) "to pronounce that during that long period usually designated as the Dark Ages, no such taint ever was introduced? Irregularities could not have been wholly excluded without a perpetual miracle; and that no such miraculous interference existed, we have even historical proof. Amidst the numerous corruptions of doctrine and of practice, and gross superstitions, that crept in during those

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Andreæ Synops. Juris Canonici, Lovanii, 1734. Caranzæ Summa Conciliarum, Duaci, 1679. Beveregii Pandectæ Canonum S. S. Apostoll. et Concill., 2 vols. fol. Oxon. 1672. Justelli Bibliotheca Juris Canon., &c., 2 vols. fol. Lutetiæ, 1661. (Cited by Mr. Lindsay Alexander, in his "Anglo-Catholicism not Apostolical.")

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Whateley, Archbishop of Dublin.

ages, we find recorded descriptions not only of the profound ignorance and profligacy of life, of many of the clergy, but also of the grossest irregularities in respect of discipline and form. We read of Bishops consecrated when mere children;—of men officiating who barely knew their letters;—of Prelates expelled, and others put into their places by violence;—of illiterate and profligate laymen, and habitual drunkards admitted to holy orders;—and, in short, of the prevalence of every kind of disorder, and reckless disregard of the decency which the Apostle enjoins. It is inconceivable that any one even moderately acquainted with history, can feel a certainty, or any approach to certainty, that, amidst all this confusion and corruption, every requisite form was, in every instance, strictly adhered to, by men, many of them openly profane and secular, unrestrained by public opinion, through the gross ignorance of the population among which they lived; and that no one not duly consecrated or ordained, was admitted to sacred offices.

“Even in later and more civilized times, the probability of an irregularity, though very greatly diminished, is yet diminished only, and not absolutely destroyed. Even in the memory of persons living, there existed a Bishop concerning whom there was so much mystery and uncertainty prevailing as to when, where, and by whom, he had been ordained, that doubts existed in the minds of many persons whether he had ever been ordained at all. I do not say that there was good ground for the suspicion; but I speak of the fact that it did prevail; and that the circumstances of the case were such as to make mani-

fest the *possibility* of such an irregularity occurring under such circumstances.

“Now, let any one proceed on the hypothesis that there are, suppose, but a hundred links connecting any particular minister with the Apostles; and let him even suppose that not above half of this number pass through such periods as admit of any possible irregularity; and then, placing at the lowest estimate the probability of defectiveness in respect of each of the remaining fifty, taken separately, let him consider what amount of probability will result from the *multiplying* of the whole together.<sup>1</sup> The ultimate consequence must be, that any one who sincerely believes that his claim to the benefits of the Gospel Covenant depends on his own minister’s claim to the supposed sacramental virtue of true ordination, and this again, on perfect Apostolical Succession as above described, must be involved, in proportion as he reads, and inquires, and reflects, and reasons, on the subject, in the most distressing doubt and perplexity.

“It is no wonder, therefore, that the advocates of this theory studiously disparage reasoning, deprecate

<sup>1</sup> Supposing it to be one hundred to one, in each separate case, in favour of the legitimacy and regularity of the transmission, and the links to amount to fifty, (or any other number) the probability of the unbroken continuity of the whole chain must be computed as  $\frac{99}{100}$  of  $\frac{99}{100}$  of  $\frac{99}{100}$ , &c. to the end of the whole fifty. Of course, if different data are assumed, or a different system is adopted of computing the rate at which the uncertainty increases at each step, the ultimate result will be different as to the *degree* of uncertainty; but when once it is made apparent that a considerable and continually increasing uncertainty does exist, and that the result must be, in respect of any individual case, a matter of *chance*, it can be of no great consequence to ascertain precisely what the chances are on either side.

all exercise of the mind in reflection, decry appeals to evidence, and lament that even the power of reading should be imparted to the people. It is not without cause that they dread and lament 'an age of too much light,' and wish to involve religion in 'a solemn and awful gloom.' It is not without cause that, having removed the Christian's confidence from a rock, to base it on sand, they forbid all prying curiosity to examine their foundation."<sup>1</sup>

The learned Archbishop is not alone in these views. Chillingworth, in his great work entitled "The Religion of Protestants a safe way to Salvation," has occasion to controvert this dogma of an unbroken apostolical succession, and thus sums up his argument. "In fine, to know this one thing, (viz. that such or such a man is a priest,) you must first know ten thousand others, whereof not any one is a thing that can be known, there being no necessity that it should be true, which only can qualify any thing for an object of science; but only, at the best, a high degree of probability that it is so. But then, that of ten thousand probables no one should be false; that of ten thousand requisites whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting, this to me is extremely improbable, nay, even cousin-german to impossible. So that the assurance hereof is like a machine composed of an innumerable multitude of pieces, of which it is strangely unlike but some will be out of order; and yet, if any one be so, the whole fabric of necessity falls to the ground. And he that shall put them together, and maturely consider all the possible ways of lapsing and nullifying a priesthood in the Church of Rome, I believe, will be very

<sup>1</sup> *Essays on the Kingdom of Christ*, pp. 183—5.



inclined to think, that it is an hundred to one, that amongst an hundred seeming priests, there is not one true one."<sup>1</sup>

It is common for Romanists and High-Churchmen to say, that Chillingworth presents, in this passage, a very exaggerated view of the difficulties of their case. But allowing that the "chances" are *less* than a "hundred to one" against the validity of the claim of any particular minister to the true succession, still there must be in *every* case some measure of uncertainty, and this being settled, "it can be," as Dr. Whateley has observed, "of no great consequence to ascertain precisely what the chances are on either side." Chillingworth's conclusion, however, is not to be invalidated by any appeal to the caution and regularity which *now* usually mark the induction of men into holy orders. It is to be remembered that eighteen centuries have elapsed since the days of the Apostles; that the Church has passed through protracted seasons of disorder, of persecution and of declension; and that the countries in which Christianity has chiefly prevailed, have been repeatedly and for long periods together, filled with all the confusion and turmoil inseparable from wars and revolutions. Is there the slightest probability that, under these circumstances, all the canonical requisitions have been duly attended to in every instance of prelatical consecration? Take, for example, these general statistics in reference to the Church of Rome. (It will be shown, hereafter, that the Episcopal Church in Great Britain and America, derives its succession from the Church of Rome.) From A. D. 604 to 806, there were thirty-

<sup>1</sup> Part I. Ch. 2. Sec. 67.

five Popes, whose average life did not, of course, exceed six years. In the next one hundred and fifty-three years, there were no less than fifty-eight Popes, whose official life averaged from two to three years! In the next period, down to 1512, there are seventy-one Popes—averaging a reign of six years each.—Then, amidst the uncertainty and confusion which such figures indicate, we find, on turning to ecclesiastical history, that among the Popes, there were frequent depositions, restorations, rivalries and schisms—that sometimes there were several Popes reigning at one time, one excommunicating another—and sometimes there was no Pope at all, but vacancies in the Roman See. There was a schism carried on by four anti-Popes in the twelfth century, which lasted for twenty-one years; and another in the fourteenth century, which lasted for thirty-one years; in which periods, probably every Episcopal See in Europe was filled by several Bishops, who received their nomination or ordination from some one or other of the rival Popes;—and yet the Council of Constance deposed two of them, and received the resignation of a third, before appointing Martin to the Pontificate. What becomes of the succession, and of the validity of ordinances, in cases like these?<sup>1</sup>

“In our own Island (says Mr. Macauley, in his elaborate article on Church and State in the *Edinburgh Review*) it was the complaint of Alfred, that not a single priest south of the Thames and very few on the north, could read either Latin or English. And this illiterate clergy exercised their ministry amidst a rude and half-heathen population, in which

<sup>1</sup> Vide Mitchell's *Presbyterian Letters*.

Danish pirates, unchristened, or christened by the hundred on the field of battle, were mingled with a Saxon peasantry scarcely better instructed in religion. The state of Ireland was still worse. “*Tota illa per universam Hiberniam dissolutio ecclesiasticae disciplinae,—illa ubique pro consuetudine Christiana saeva subintroducata barbaries*”—are the expressions of St. Bernard. We are, therefore, at a loss to conceive how any clergyman can feel confident that his orders have come down correctly. Whether he be really a successor of the Apostles, depends on an immense number of such contingencies as these,—whether under King Ethelwolf, a stupid priest might not, while baptizing several scores of Danish soldiers who had just made their option between the font and the gallows, inadvertently omit to perform the rite on one of these graceless proselytes?—whether, in the seventh century, an impostor who had never received consecration, might not have passed himself off as a Bishop on a rude tribe of Scots?—whether a lad of twelve did really, by a ceremony huddled over when he was too drunk to know what he was about, convey the Episcopal character to a lad of ten?”

Again, he says, “Let us suppose—and we are sure that no person will think the supposition by any means improbable—that in the third century, a man of no principle and some parts, who has, in the course of a roving and discreditable life, been a catechumen at Antioch, and has there become familiar with Christian usages and doctrines, afterwards rambles to Marseilles where he finds a Christian society, rich, liberal, and simple-hearted. He pretends to be a Christian, attracts notice by his abilities and affected zeal, and is raised to the Episcopal dignity without ever hav-

ing been baptized. That such an event might happen, nay, was very likely to happen, cannot well be disputed by any one who has read the *Life of Peregrinus*. . . . Now, this unbaptized impostor is evidently no successor of the Apostles. He is not even a Christian; and all orders derived through such a pretended bishop, are altogether invalid. Do we know enough of the state of the world, and of the Church in the third century, to be able to say with confidence that there were not at that time twenty such pretended bishops? Every such case makes a break in the Apostolical Succession.”<sup>1</sup>

The intimation here thrown out, that the case of Peregrinus was by no means peculiar even in the early church, is confirmed by numerous well-attested facts. Eusebius states that the famous Novatian obtained consecration as a bishop by inveigling three bishops, “ignorant and simple men,” into bad company, where, after they had become “heated with wine and surfeiting,” he induced them to lay hands upon him.<sup>2</sup> In the history of the proceedings of the Council of Nice mention is made of one Melitius who, after being deposed by his superior, went about conferring ordination, and whose ordinations the council agreed to admit, on condition that those by whom they had been received, should occupy a sort of second place to those who had been catholically ordained.<sup>3</sup> In the fourth century we find Jerome lamenting the profligacy, the avarice, and general corruption of the clergy of all ranks. Gregory of Nan-

<sup>1</sup> Miscellanies, vol. iii. pp. 299–301.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Eccl. Lib. vi. 43.

<sup>3</sup> Socratis H. E. Lib. i. 9. Sozomeni H. E. Lib. i. 24.—Cited, with most of the following examples by Mr. Alexander.

zianzum complains bitterly and frequently of the same thing; telling us in one place, that "bishoprics were obtained not by virtue, but by craft, and were the perquisite not of the worthiest but of the strongest;" in another place denouncing some who could be "Simon Magus to-morrow, though to-day Simon Peter;" and in another, informing us of one who, though unbaptized and unconverted, was *forced by the populace* to assume the office of bishop.<sup>1</sup> This happened also in the case of Ambrose, bishop of Milan, who describes himself as not nursed in the bosom of the Church, but snatched from the courts of law and compelled to be a Bishop. The case of Synesius, Bishop of Cyrene was analogous: he tells us that he would *rather have died a thousand deaths* than become a bishop, laments the loss of his hunting establishment and pursuits, acknowledges himself a *skeptic* on some points of the Christian religion, and claims the privilege of *deceiving* the people, on the ground that as darkness is good for those afflicted with ophthalmia, so a falsehood is advantageous to the mob, whilst truth may be noxious.<sup>2</sup> These testimonies relate, it will be observed, to the first four centuries, that golden age in the Puseyite calendar, whose Christianity is the model to which they are labouring so assiduously to bring back the Church.

There is ample evidence that these gross irregularities, so disastrous to the theory of an unbroken prelatial succession, increased in number and enormity through the dark ages. But before citing further examples it may be proper to show from what source

<sup>1</sup> Orat. 43, in laudem Basil. Carm. de se ipso ver. 430. Orat. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 63, 11, 105.

the *British* and *American Prelates* of the present day derive their succession.

The favourite theory of High-Churchmen, is, that the British Church was planted by Apostolic hands—that it was duly organized under Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, long before the Church of Rome attempted to extend her jurisdiction to Britain—that Romanism was subsequently superinduced upon the ancient Church, and uncanonically controlled it for several centuries; and that the Reformation was nothing more than the old British Church throwing off the Papal yoke, and resuming the plenary possession and exercise of those powers and functions which had by compulsion been held for a time in abeyance. It is one thing to frame a theory, and quite another to prove it. This theory fails in a point of as much moment to a theory as an edifice, viz. the foundation. The best historians of the Church of England speak of the Apostles having introduced Christianity into Britain as a mere *supposition* or *possibility*. Such is the view of *all*, it is believed, of the late historians—certainly of Bishop Short, Churton, Blunt, and Burton. “We need not,” says the last of these writers, “believe the traditions concerning its first conversion; and it is right to add that the earliest writer who speaks of Britain as having been visited by any of the Apostles is Eusebius who wrote at the beginning of the *fourth* century; and the earliest writer who names St. Paul, is Theodoret, who lived a *century later*.” This surely is enough to abate the confidence of those over-zealous Prelatists who allow themselves to assert so positively that Paul was the founder of the British Church. And, then, as to the *Prelacy* of this Church, that is a point to be



proved, not assumed. Certainly, the circumstance that there were *Bishops* from Britain at the Councils of Arles and Sardica, in the fourth century, can be allowed no weight as an argument on this point, unless it can be proved that these were Diocesan, not scriptural or Presbyter-bishops. But if this point were conceded, it would avail nothing to the advocates of an unbroken succession. For Stillingfleet, in his work on British Antiquities, candidly says, "By the *loss of records* of the British Churches, *we cannot draw down the succession of Bishops from the Apostles' times*. We cannot deduce a lineal succession of Bishops, as they could in other Churches whose writings were preserved." Here, then, is a chasm which no ingenuity or sagacity can bridge over. In just so far as the orders of English or American clergymen depend upon a succession derived through the early British Church, they are, on the showing of their own ablest historians, worthless. If they have the succession at all, it must be from Rome. The Roman succession was introduced into England under circumstances which require a passing notice.

The first Papal missionary to Britain, was the monk Augustine,<sup>1</sup> who passed over A. D. 596. He was clothed by Gregory, the Bishop of Rome, with "full jurisdiction over the British Bishops." But this was a power which Gregory had no authority to confer. Allowing, what High-Churchmen claim, that there were Diocesan Bishops in England at this time, (although most of them had been driven by the commotions of the times, temporarily from their sees,) they owed no allegiance to the Bishop of Rome.

<sup>1</sup> Not the celebrated Father of that name.

Gregory had no canonical authority whatever within the realm of England. It is clearly settled by the canons that a Bishop has no power beyond his own diocese, and specially that he can exercise no function that pertains to the diocese of another Bishop.<sup>1</sup> His attempt to make Augustine Primate of England, was, therefore, *uncanonical and schismatical*; and, as such, it was resisted by the British Bishops and monks.<sup>2</sup> On the principles of those who suspend the being of the church on an unbroken, regular succession, Augustine had and could have no legitimate ecclesiastical authority in Britain, and all the orders he pretended to confer, with those, of course, of the present British and American Prelates, in so far as they are derived from him, must be invalid. On this point I may be allowed to quote an authority that is quite apposite. "What business," says Bishop Doane of New Jersey, in his review of Bishop Kenrick's<sup>3</sup> Letter to the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, "what business has the 'Bishop of Arath' in the city of Philadelphia? Is it not against all Catholic rule that two Bishops should exercise their functions in one city, unless one be assistant to the other? Was there not a Bishop having jurisdiction in Philadelphia, in 1808, when the "Diocese of Philadelphia," so called, was created? Was not the second Bishop, called by whatever name, *in partibus infidelium*, an intruder there? Does not the Bishop of Arath, claiming jurisdiction, or exercising functions in the diocese of Pennsylvania, convict himself before the world, and in the sight of God, of schism, and worse?"

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Canon. Apost. 27, 28. Nicene 16. Sardican 15.

<sup>2</sup> So says Fuller, as cited by Bishop McCoskry.

<sup>3</sup> The Romish Bishop.

He fortifies this doctrine by various decrees of councils, among which he quotes a canon of the Council of Chalcedon in these words:—"Let not a Bishop go into another city or district not pertaining to him, to ordain any one, or to appoint any Presbyters or Deacons to places subject to another Bishop, unless with the consent of the proper Bishop of the district. *If any one DARE (the capitals and italics are Bishop Doane's) to do otherwise, let the ordination be invalid, and himself be punished by the Synod.*"<sup>1</sup>

This, however is not the only taint which attaches to the proceedings of Augustine. We have no certain record of *his own consecration* as a Bishop. Bede says he was consecrated by Etherius of Arles. Richardson affirms, on the authority of registers still extant, that he was consecrated by Eucherius of Arles. But Du Pin shows that there was no such Bishop as Etherius or Eucherius then at Arles. There was an Etherius at that time at Lyons, but the contemporary prelate at Arles was Virgilius. Du Pin

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Doane's Brief Exam. pp. 190-2. This writer seems to have felt that the weapon he was flourishing at the Romanists, might be turned against himself. He knew that in some of the States, Romanism was older than Episcopacy; and that the question might be asked, "Was there not a Bishop in *Maryland* when the first Protestant Episcopal Bishop was appointed to that diocese; and if so, was not this second Bishop '*an intruder*' there?" To ward off this question apparently, he observes in a note that the Romish Church is in a schismatical position in this country, because "the United States" were formerly [*i. e.* at the period when the first Papal Bishop was sent here] "in communion with the *Church of England*, as British Provinces." How this could be when there were neither Episcopal dioceses nor Bishops here before the Revolution, we are not told. But how is the case of *Louisiana* to be got over? That was not a "British Province" "in communion with the Church of England." If the Episcopal Church ventures to send a Bishop to that State, who will be guilty of "*schismatical intrusion*" then?

inclines to the opinion that he was consecrated by the former; but Pope Gregory, in a letter still extant, says he was consecrated in Germany. The point is so dark and the authorities so conflicting, that while Du Pin proves that Bede was mistaken, Baronius would show that Gregory also was at fault.<sup>1</sup> Here, then, are four historians vouching each a different statement from the rest in relation to this man's consecration. That three out of the four are in error, is certain; that the four are in error is not improbable. Which of them are wrong? Who of them is right? Are they all wrong? These are questions that cannot be answered with any degree of confidence, except by that sort of persons who are equally confident with and without evidence. And yet the validity of the orders of the English and American Episcopal clergy of the present day, may in a considerable degree depend upon the canonical consecration of this monk, who lived among a semi-barbarous people twelve hundred years ago, and concerning the time, place, and instruments of whose consecration, the ablest historians are irreconcilably at variance with each other! Such is this beautiful theory of the Apostolical Succession on which, we are told, is hung the world's salvation.

We have not yet done with Augustine. Supposing the difficulties connected with his own mission and consecration to be surmounted, there is a fatal defect in the orders conferred by him. It is a well established principle that a Bishop cannot under any circumstances be consecrated by a single Prelate. The canons require at least three Bishops as essential to a regular consecration. "The council of Nice," says

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Presbyterian Review, Vol. xiv. p. 4.

Bishop Doane in reply to Bishop Kenrick, (p. 228) “decrees (Canon IV.), ‘It is most fitting that a Bishop be appointed by all the Bishops in the province. But if this be difficult by reason of any urgent necessity, or through the length of the way, *three must by all means meet together.*’ It was decreed by the Synods of Arles, Nice, Antioch, Laodicea, Carthage, Orange, that at least three Bishops should consecrate. Now Dr. John Carroll, the first titular Bishop of Baltimore, was consecrated by Dr. Walmsley *alone*; and it is believed, with good reason, that Dr. Walmsley himself was consecrated by but one Bishop. ‘Now an ordination,’ says one of their chief writers, ‘which is merely *probable*, or only probably sufficient and valid, only makes a *probable Bishop*, or one who is merely probably a Bishop. \* \* \* But he who is only probably a Bishop is not validly and sufficiently appointed to the Episcopal degree and power; nor has he Episcopal vocation; for true and valid Episcopal vocation is not merely probable, but certain and undoubted. \* \* \* But otherwise, whatever the Pastors and Bishops of the Church should perform, as Bishops, would be so uncertain as to be probably null and invalid.’”<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Palmer, to whom Bishop Doane is evidently indebted for these facts and authorities, concludes his examination of the subject with this remark:—“Connecting these circumstances with the universal prevalence of the rule afterwards, which required Bishops always to be ordained by more than one Bishop, it does seem probable, that *Episcopal ordinations, which are only performed by one Bishop, are not valid.*”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Doane’s Brief Ex. p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Palmer on the Church, Vol. II. 402.

Now it is a fact established on the testimony of "venerable Bede,"<sup>1</sup> himself a warm partizan of Rome, and not disputed by any competent authority whatever, that when Augustine came to England, as he was disowned by the native Bishops, and was himself the only Romish Prelate in the Island, he quietly laid the canons on the shelf, and not only ordained Presbyters, but actually consecrated Prelates, or pretended to do so, singly and alone. Gregory himself permitted this course of procedure, on condition that he should in due season return to canonical order,—“just as if a return to canonical obedience could possibly homologate previous uncanonical proceedings.”<sup>2</sup> On this ground, then, as well as those already mentioned, the consecrations performed by Augustine were invalid, or, according to the authority quoted by Bishop Doane, “*probably* null and invalid.” The Bishops he ordained by himself were at best only “*probable* Bishops:” and by necessary consequence, all the orders derived from them—including, it may be, those of the Protestant Episcopal Bishop in New Jersey and many of his brethren—labour under the same defect:—so that there may perchance be more “*probable* Bishops” in the United States than those in the *Romish* Church.

It has been already shown that the succession is cut off from the “early British Church.” Prelatists have attempted to connect themselves with the Apostles by another line, through the ancient Culdees of Scotland and Ireland. A few words on this point may not be amiss at this stage of our inquiry.

There is some ground to believe that Christianity

<sup>1</sup> Vide Bede's *Ecel. Hist.* B. I. 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Presbyterian Review*, *ut sup.*



was introduced into Scotland as early as the second century; and it is known to have been generally professed there in A. D. 431. The Culdees appeared in Ireland at a very early period, and are found there in an organized society in 546. Columba, their supposed founder, with twelve associates, passed over to the island of I. or Iona, in 563, and established the Culdean monastery, which afterwards became so celebrated in the ecclesiastical history of Britain. The labours of Augustine, the Romish missionary and bishop, were, it should be noted, restricted to a comparatively small part of Britain. When he arrived there in 596, the country was overrun by the heathen Saxon invaders, who had obliterated most of the public insignia and rites of Christianity, and destroyed or driven away the ministers of the gospel, and such of the Britons as adhered to them. Several of their bishops had fled to Wales, and thither Augustine followed them. Archdeacon Mason has shown that he was "the apostle not of the Britons, nor of the Scots, nor of all the Jutes, (that is, the Saxons who came from Scotland,) but of the county of Kent alone." Usher has proved that nearly the whole of Saxon England was converted by the Scottish missionaries, Aidan, Finan, Colman, and their associates, who were sent out from the Culdee monastery or college, at Iona, and other similar colleges subsequently founded. Dr. Jamieson, in his elaborate "Historical Account of the Ancient Culdees," observes, that "how little soever some now think of Scottish orders, it is evident from the testimony of the most ancient and most respectable historian of South Britain, that by means of Scottish missionaries, or those whom they had instructed or ordained, not only the Northumbrians, but

the Midde Angles, the Mercians and East Saxons, all the way to the river Thames, that is, the inhabitants of by far the greatest part of the country now called England, were converted to Christianity. It is equally evident, that for some time they acknowledged subjection to the ecclesiastical government of the Scots; and that the only reason why they lost their influence, was, that their missionaries chose rather to give up their charges, than to submit to the prevailing influence of the Church of Rome, to which the Saxons of the west and of Kent had subjected themselves." In the end, all the Culdee missionaries retired from England, and the churches established by them in that country became tributary to the see of Rome.

That the Culdees were *Presbyterians* and not Prelatists, Dr. Jamieson and others have proved by what may be regarded as a redundance of facts and testimonies—a summary of which may be seen in Dr. Smyth's able work on "Presbytery and Prelacy," and in Dr. Brown's "Letters on Puseyite Episcopacy." That there were "Bishops" among them, and that some of their principal missionaries to England were Bishops, is admitted on all hands. But when the rank of these Bishops comes to be investigated, they are found to be of the same order as Presbyters, and to have received only presbyterial ordination. Bede testifies that the head of the whole body was "a monk and a *Presbyter*, but *no Bishop*." The assembly of Presbyters, with this presbyter-president or moderator, "*made the Bishops*." Thus, speaking of Aidan, Bede says, "Thus *making him Bishop*, they sent him forth to preach." Fordoun states also, that Columba, the head of the monastery, though only a Presbyter, as we have seen, "confirmed and conse-

crated all the Irish Bishops of his time." Of course, as the ordainers in all these cases were only Presbyters, though styled Bishops, they could confer no higher order than they possessed, and all who were ordained by them must have been, as to order, Presbyters simply.

If, then, Prelatists insist upon an apostolical descent through the Culdees, it is certain they have only presbyterial orders, and their succession amounts to nothing more than is possessed by the rest of Protestant Christendom. This line, however, was, as already stated, after a while merged in the Roman succession. So that even if it could be proved that Diocesan Episcopacy prevailed among the Culdees, it would avail nothing to the cause of Prelacy, which is shut up to the Roman succession alone. But if Prelatists can derive no aid from the Culdees, *we* can employ them to good purpose in contesting the dogma of an unbroken prelatical succession. The Culdees were, as we have seen, Presbyterians; that is, their ministers, and those ordained by them, though called Bishops, were only of the order of Presbyters. Now, during their long-continued and prosperous missions in England, they founded churches and ordained ministers for "the greater part of that country." These ministers, or their lineal descendants, were afterwards compelled or induced to conform to the Church of Rome. *There is no evidence whatever that in doing this they were re-ordained.* Indeed it does not appear that their orders had, at this period, ever been called in question; and they would have been received and incorporated into the Roman Church many years sooner, if they would have owned the supremacy of Rome, and acknowledged the Archbishop of Canterbury as their metro-

politan.—Here we have an instance of a large infusion of *Presbyterian orders* into the only channel of succession through which the mysterious “Episcopal grace” has come down to the Bishops of our day. “The Bishops,” says Dr. Calamy, “who were so instrumental in converting the northern parts of this island to Christianity, were ordained by the Abbot of Hye (Iona) without the concurrence of any one proper ecclesiastical Bishop.” These orders were soon merged in the Romish Church, and must have diffused the strong Presbyterian taint that attached to them through the English succession. If, then, a stream cannot rise higher than its fountain, what becomes of the uninterrupted *Prelatical* succession of the Church of England?

Our inquiry into the early Christianity of the British Isles, has brought us to these conclusions, to wit: That Christianity was introduced into England, Scotland, and Ireland, as early as the second century, but by whom is unknown: that the succession of Bishops in the “early British Church,” cannot be traced: that the mission of Augustine from Rome to Britain was uncanonical and schismatical—that there is no authentic account of his own consecration as a Bishop—that many of the consecrations performed by him were “probably” null and void, and, consequently, that the same defect attaches to all the orders derived from the Bishops thus illegally consecrated—that the Culdees of Scotland and Ireland were Presbyterians, and that there is a very large infusion of orders derived from them, in the Roman succession—and, finally, that as the English and American Prelates derive their orders from Rome, and partly, at least, through the specific channels that have been mention-

ed, they neither have nor can have any adequate evidence that they are in the true line of succession from the Apostles, or, indeed, that there is any such succession as they contend for.

It was shown, before entering upon this inquiry into the origin of English and American orders, that the succession could not be traced from the Apostles to the fourth century; and various statements were given, on the authority of eminent writers, respecting the gross irregularities that frequently prevailed in the consecration of Bishops from that period down to the Reformation, and even to a still later date. Both classes of these testimonies bear directly upon the question of succession in the Church of England, and its daughter in this country. The latter of them I shall now augment by citing a few additional facts in relation to the Roman succession.

I begin by showing that a large number of the Archbishops of Canterbury, have been consecrated directly by the Popes or their Legates. The following table has been compiled by Mr. Powell, from Bishop Godwin's "Lives of the English Bishops."

<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Names.</i>	<i>Where and by whom ordained.</i>	<i>Years of Episc.</i>
668.	Theodore,	Rome, Pope Vitalian,	22
735.	Northelm,	Rome, Pope Gregory III.	5
763.	Lambert,	Rome, Pope Paul I.	27
891.	Plegmund,	Rome, Pope Formosus,	26
1020.	Agelnoth,	Rome,	17
1138.	Theobald,	Lond. Card. Albert, Pope's Legate,	22
1174.	Richard,	Anagni, Pope Alexander III.	9
1207.	Stephen Langton,	Viterbo, Pope Innocent III.	22
1245.	Boniface,	Lyons, Pope Innocent IV.	26
1278.	John Peckham,	Pope Nicholas III.	13
1294.	Robert Winchelsey,	Rome, Cardinal Sabinus,	19
1313.	Walter Raynold,	Robert Winchelsey,	13

<i>A. D.</i>	<i>Names.</i>	<i>Where and by whom ordained.</i>	<i>Years of Episc.</i>
1327.	Simon Mcpham,	Avignon, by order of Pope John XXII.	5
1333.	John Stratford,	Avignon, Cardinal Vitalis,	15
1349.	Thomas Bradwardine.	Avignon, Cardinal Bertrand.	
1349.	Simon Islip,	R. Stratford, Bishop, Lond., who was consecrated by Jno. Strat- ford, (see above,)	16
1366.	Simon Langham,	Simon Islip, <i>as above.</i>	
1414.	Henry Chichley,	Sienna, Pope Gregory XII.	29

The same historian gives a list of twelve Archbishops of York, nine Bishops of Durham, eight Bishops of Winchester, &c., who received ordination from Rome. It is clear to demonstration, then, that the English and American succession flows through all the pollution of Popery. I would gladly spare myself the revolting task of laying open the channel of this pretended succession; but the arrogant pretensions of High-Churchmen make this duty indispensable. They are "*the Church*" because they have this succession; we are no Church and are given over to "uncovenanted mercy," because we lack it.—In looking at the characters who make up the chain of "Apostles," let it be distinctly remembered that it is an *essential* part of the theory under examination, that *the gift of the Holy Ghost* is transmitted along this line from one Prelate to another, and that in this way it has come down from the Saviour and his Apostles to the ministers and churches of our day.

According to the canonical law just adverted to, that ordination performed by a single Bishop can make at best only "probable Bishops," a flaw very soon occurred after Augustine's time in the succession of Canterbury. Bede states (Book III. ch. 20.)



that Deusdedit and after him Damian, the sixth and seventh Archbishops of Canterbury, were each consecrated by Ithamar, Bishop of Rochester. Of course these two dignitaries and all the Bishops consecrated by them, and all who have derived orders from them down to the present day, have been mere "probable Bishops;" and the people who have received the ordinances directly or indirectly from them, have received only "probable" ordinances, and have been at most only probably baptized, probably regenerated, and probably saved.

Among the *canonical disqualifications* for holy orders, (see page 122,) one is "BEING UNDER AGE." According to Bower, Pope John the Tenth confirmed the election of Hugh, son of Count Hubert, in 925, to the Archbishopric of Rheims, though he was scarcely *five years old*; and he was consecrated in a council of Bishops at Soissons when he was only *eighteen* years of age. John the Twelfth was made Pope in 956, when he was only *eighteen*, and retained the Popedom for seven years, when he was deposed. Among other charges brought against him before the council, and which were not contradicted, "John, Bishop of Narin, and John Cardinal Deacon, attested, that they had seen him ordain a deacon in a stable; and Benedict, deacon, with other deacons and priests, said that they knew for certain that he had ordained Bishops for money, and had, among the rest, ordained a child but *ten years old* bishop of Todi."<sup>1</sup>—It is susceptible of proof that there were many similar ordinations during successive centuries.

<sup>1</sup> Bower Vol. V. 108.

Calvin, in his *Institutes*, says:—"Even boys, scarcely ten years of age, have by the permission of the Pope, been made Bishops." Again, he exclaims indignantly, "Is it tolerable even to hear the name of *pastors* given to men who have forced them into the possession of a Church as into an enemy's farm; who have obtained it by a legal process; who have purchased it with money; who have gained it by dishonourable services; who, *while infants just beginning to lisp*, succeeded to it as an inheritance transmitted by their uncles and cousins, and sometimes even by fathers to their illegitimate children?"<sup>1</sup> Nay, Rome has even had a boy-Pope. According to Dr. Inett; Benedict IX., "when a boy of about ten or twelve years of age," was chosen Pope, and though a most profligate lad, he continued for nearly eleven years to discharge "all the functions incumbent on a Bishop of Rome."<sup>2</sup>

Another canonical disqualification for orders is **SIMONY**.<sup>3</sup> "If any bishop, priest, or deacon, obtain his dignity by *money*, let him, and let him who ordained him be deposed and wholly cut off from communion, as Simon Magus was by Peter."<sup>4</sup> "Whosoever

<sup>1</sup> Book IV. Ch. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Orig. Anglic. I. 384.

<sup>3</sup> It is common to hear Prelatists say, that notwithstanding many of the Bishops and Popes have been *bad men*, they were regularly *ordained*, and therefore the succession is not broken. But we show, not simply that they were "bad men," but that according to the *highest ecclesiastical authorities* recognized in the Romish and English Churches, they were *utterly disqualified for holy orders*. Let them show, if they can, for example, how the succession could be perpetuated by the *crowds of simoniacs* who pretended to receive and give orders during the middle ages, when canons enough to fill a volume have been adopted by different councils, certifying that "ALL ORDERS CONFERRED FOR MONEY ARE NULL AND VOID."

<sup>4</sup> Apost. Canons, No. 22.

either sell or buy holy orders cannot be priests. . . . There is no power in ordination, where buying and selling prevail.”<sup>1</sup> “Whatever holy orders are obtained by money, either given or promised to be given, we declare that they were *null* from the beginning, and never had any validity.”<sup>2</sup> There are authorities and *examples* enough that belong to this head, to fill a volume. If Simony will destroy the succession, *there is not an Episcopal minister in Britain or America who can show that he has, on High-Church principles, the least right whatever to preach the gospel.* Take these instances which have been collected chiefly by Dr. Brown, and are given in his valuable work on “Puseyite Episcopacy.” Bower states that “on the death of Boniface II., in 531, *Simony reigned without mask or disguise.* Votes were publicly bought and sold, and money was offered to the senators themselves.” Baronius says of Vigilius, when he was Anti-Pope, that “he was not only a second Lucifer, striving to ascend into heaven, and exalt his throne above the stars, but, by the weight of his enormous sacrileges and heinous crimes, brought down to hell, a schismatic, a *simoniac*, a murderer, not the successor of Simon Peter, but of Simon Magus, not the vicar of Christ, but an Anti-Christ, an idol set up in the temple of God, a wolf, a thief, and a robber;” though when he was elevated to the Popedom, he makes him a good Catholic. “In the time of this Pope,” says Francowitz, speaking of the monster Sergius, who lived in the ninth century, “and of his brother (Benedict), *bishoprics were disposed of by public sale;*” and in the tenth century, “*no one was provided for or created*

<sup>1</sup> Canon Law, by Gratian.

<sup>2</sup> Council of Placentia, Can. 2.

a Bishop, unless he paid for it, or bound himself to do so under the most tremendous penalties." He further states, in reference to the eleventh century, that "*most of the bishops and abbots in Germany had fallen from their dignities through Simony, and that three of the Popes, Benedict IX., Silvester III., and Gregory VI., had procured the Popedom by money.*" Matthew Paris affirms that in the thirteenth century, simony was committed in the *Church of England* without shame. Clemangis in his book on Simoniacal Prelates, says of the Bishops, that "*they set a price upon all orders, which if it be not paid, they will admit no person into orders, though he be never so well qualified by his life, manners, or learning. The Church is now become a shop of merchandize, or rather of robbery and rapine, in which all the sacraments are exposed to sale.*" Calvin makes this deliberate declaration as to the state of things in the Papal Church in his day:—"I maintain that scarcely *one benefice in a hundred*, in all the Papacy, is at present conferred without Simony, according to the definition which the ancients gave of that crime."<sup>1</sup> To add but one more instance out of a multitude,—Platina says that Pope Nicholas III. robbed others, to enrich his own relations. "He took away by violence the castles of certain Roman nobles, and gave them to his own relatives." This pontifical "robber" ordained John Peckham, *one of the Archbishops of Canterbury*. Bishop Godwin says, "that Peckham had hardly arrived in England, when the Pope, his 'creator,' (for so he was pleased to call him,) required a large sum of money from him, viz. four thousand marks." Peckham's answer was as follows: "Be-

<sup>1</sup> Inst. B. IV. ch. 5.

hold! thou hast CREATED me, and forasmuch as it is natural for a *creature* to desire to be perfected by his *creator*, so, in my distresses, I desire to be refreshed by your Holiness. Truly a writ of execution, horrible to be seen and terrible to be heard, has lately reached me, declaring that except I answer to it within a month after the feast of St. Michael, by paying into the hands of the merchants of Lucca, the sum of four thousand marks, *according to my bargain* with the Court of Rome, I am then to be *excommunicated*, and am to be cursed in my own and other principal churches, with bell, book and candles.”

Such are the men through whom the High-Church Ministers and Prelates of our day, with so much complacency, pretend to trace their lineage to the Apostles! The degraded creature last mentioned, as an archbishop of Canterbury, who addressed the Pope as his “Creator,” and confessed that he obtained his see by Simony, is one of the bishops mentioned on a catalogue circulated in this country, which professes to give the names of an unbroken series of Prelates extending from the Apostle John, down to the late venerable Bishop White.<sup>1</sup> The question may well be asked, in reference not only to this case, but to the *general prevalence* of Simony *for ages* in the Church

<sup>1</sup> This list, like all others, traces the English and American succession through the Arch-bishops of Canterbury. Yet Dr. Inett, the Episcopal historian, in his *Origines Anglicanae*, says that “the difficulties in the Succession in the See of Canterbury, betwixt the years 768 and 800, are INVINCIBLE.” Episcopalians are obliged, in the face of this candid and pregnant confession, to *assume*—and that in a matter involving, on High-Church principles, their *salvation*—that during the thirty-two years embraced in this chaotic period, the succession was canonically preserved.



of Rome, if Simony invalidates orders, what authority had the first Bishops in the United States, and by unavoidable consequence all whom they have ordained or consecrated, to minister in holy things? For the simoniacal Prelates of the Roman Church could not transmit orders they did not possess; and as their own orders were "null and void from the beginning," so must have been all those of their successors.

Again: HERESY is a disqualification for sacred orders. But Pope Liberius was (as the Roman Catholics acknowledge) an *Arian*. Pope Marcellinus *sacrificed to idols*. Pope Leo was an *Arian*. Picus of Mirandula says, he remembers a Pope who *believed no God*; and had heard of another who owned that "he did not believe *the immortality of the soul*." "Pope Sylvester II., was made Pope by *necromancy*, and in recompense thereof, promised both body and soul to the devil."

Another disqualification, laid down by the canons, is IMMORALITY. It is superfluous to add after the testimonies already presented, that the whole history of the Papal See, down at least to the middle of the sixteenth century, is replete with scenes of appalling corruption and wickedness. Baronius, in speaking of the tenth century, says, that the men who then occupied the See of St. Peter, were "not Pontiffs, but *monsters*." Platina states that Clement II., A. D. 1048, "was poisoned with poison prepared, as was supposed, by his successor, Pope Damasus II." John IX., John XIII., Sixtus IV., and Alexander VI., were defiled with all manner of vices. "Boniface VII.," says Baronius, "was rather a *thief*, a *murderer*, and a *traitor* to his country, than a Pope." And of



Gregory VII., he says, "He had *poisoned some six or seven Popes*, by Brazutus, before he could get the Popedom himself."

I will not enlarge this catalogue. The records of the Papal See are too polluted to be unrolled. I am obliged to omit even the statements of eminent Roman historians and dignitaries, on this subject, because their language will not bear to be repeated. I will only add the brief portraiture Calvin has given of the Romish clergy of his time. "There is no class of men in the present day, more infamous for profusion, delicacy, luxury, and profligacy of every kind; no class of men contains more apt or expert masters of every species of imposture, fraud, treachery, and perfidy; no where can be found equal cunning or audacity in the commission of crime. I say nothing of their pride, haughtiness, rapacity and cruelty; I say nothing of the abandoned licentiousness of every part of their lives;—enormities which the world is so wearied with bearing, that there is no room for the least apprehension lest I should be charged with excessive exaggeration. One thing I assert, which it is not in their power to deny—that there is scarcely one of the Bishops, and not one in a hundred of the parochial clergy, who, if sentence were to be passed upon his conduct according to the ancient canons, would not be excommunicated, or, at the very least, deposed from his office. . . . Now let all who fight under the standards and auspices of the Roman See, go and boast of their sacerdotal order. It is evident that the order which they have, is not derived from Christ, from his Apostles, from the fathers, or from the ancient Church."<sup>1</sup> Most men would be likely to

<sup>1</sup> Inst. ut. sup.

concur with Calvin in this last remark; and yet, according to the doctrine now so assiduously thrust upon the public attention, *these men*—these SIMONIAKS, and DRUNKARDS, and DEBAUCHEES, and THIEVES, and MURDERERS—these are the SUCCESSORS OF THE APOSTLES; and through them THE HOLY GHOST HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED to the Bishops of our day! The Episcopal Church *is* a Church because its Prelates are in a line which connects them with the Apostles through all these monsters in wickedness! And if the Holy Ghost has *not* been transmitted through these men—if their own orders were invalid, so that not having received this precious “gift” they failed to communicate it to those whom they ordained—the succession of course has been, in every such instance, destroyed. And what Episcopal minister or Prelate can possibly prove that his own orders have not inherited the taint of a fatal informality from one of these Judas-like Apostles?

There is still another topic to be briefly noticed in this connexion, viz. the SCHISMS in the Popedom. It is well known that these have been frequent and protracted, continuing sometimes for forty years. There have been, at different periods, two, three, and four pretended Popes at a time, mutually excommunicating and anathematizing each other. What becomes of the orders conferred by them in this state of things? Are they all valid? And if not, how is any modern Bishop to ascertain whether his orders are derived from a Pope or an anti-Pope? To take an example. Plegmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, A. D. 891, was ordained by Pope Formosus. Stephen VI., the successor of Formosus, at the head of his council, having declared the ordinations which he had

administered, void, caused those whom he had ordained to be re-ordained. Sergius III. renewed all that Stephen had done against Formosus, and *deposed all such as he had consecrated*.—Now *Plegmund was never re-ordained*. And yet he ordained *most of the Bishops in England for twenty-six years*.

Again, Henry Chichley was ordained Archbishop of Canterbury, A. D. 1414, by Gregory XII. Gregory was one of the three *pretenders* to the Popedom, and in the end was deposed by the Council of Constance. “Yet Chichley received his Episcopal succession from this Gregory who was pronounced by a council to be no Pope of Rome, *no Bishop at all*; and he, Chichley, continued to communicate these *false orders* to the English Bishops and Archbishops, even in the fifteenth century, *for twenty-nine years*.<sup>1</sup> What becomes of the succession in these cases?

It is no sufficient answer to this question to say, that a man may be a true Bishop, although he is not a true Pope; and that the rival Bishops who at different times contended for the Popedom, each possessed the right of ordination, so that the ordinations performed by them are valid. For, in the first place, the rights of ordination and deposition are correlative; and if, as in the instances just cited, their ordinations were valid, so were their depositions. But, secondly, the false Popes in every contest of the kind mentioned, (and there were *thirteen* such contests within a thousand years) were evidently guilty of *schism* of the most flagrant character; and this, on High-Church principles, nullified the orders they conferred.

Equally futile is the plea employed to elude the argument drawn from the *immoral characters* of

<sup>1</sup>Powell, p. 235.

many of the Popes and Bishops.—“Ordination,” it is argued, “does not depend on the *character* of the ordainer, but on the validity of his own orders. The ordinations, therefore, performed by these men were valid, although they were bad men.”—I answer, that the principle here laid down must be allowed, to a certain extent. As we cannot read the hearts of men, no individual could be certain that he was properly ordained, if the validity of the act depended upon its being done by a truly holy man. But to admit this principle without limitation, is equally at variance with Scripture and abhorrent to reason. That some are prepared to do this, is evident from the fact that a late writer on the Apostolical Succession, refers to the case of *Judas* in terms which import a belief that he retained the plenary powers of the apostleship *after his betrayal of the Saviour*.<sup>1</sup> Whereas the New Testament states that by that act he “*fell*” from his “apostleship.”<sup>2</sup> Such writers, however, and all who

<sup>1</sup> See “Percival on the Apostolic Succession.” Speaking of Judas, he says, “Not only did our Lord so call him, (i. e. as an Apostle) and so employ him, but *his bishopric was not filled up till after his death*.” (p. 51.) Yet in enumerating the Bishops at the period of Elizabeth’s accession who had been “canonically consecrated,” he says, “Bonner, Bishop of London, and Thirlby, of Ely, were *incapacitated*” for assisting in a consecration: and the first reason he assigns for it, is, that “they had been instrumental in *the murder of their Metropolitan*.” It might be invidious to ask whether in the judgment of Mr. Percival, this crime was of a deeper dye than that of Judas. But we may ask, if murder “incapacitates” a Bishop and nullifies his orders, what becomes of all the orders (and his own are quite likely to be of this class) derived from the Popes of the Borgia family and others who are *proved* to have been murderers, and one of whom poisoned *six or seven* competitors?

<sup>2</sup> Acts i. 25. “That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell.”

hold with them, are at issue with the ecclesiastical canons and innumerable decisions of councils—the sort of authorities they usually reverence most—which, as I have shown, specify the very crimes these pretended Popes and Bishops were guilty of, as NULLIFYING ORDERS. The question, it will be observed, does not respect the official acts of one or two, or a few Prelates and Popes, scattered along the line of the Church at remote intervals; but whole TRIBES of BOY-BISHOPS, SCHISMATICS, INFIDELS, DRUNKARDS, SENSUALISTS, SIMONIACS, USURPERS, and APOSTATES. It has respect to a CHURCH pronounced APOSTATE by the Church of England herself, and by the predecessors of those prelates who are now so strenuous in vindicating the integrity of that “apostleship” which Rome has transmitted to them. Is there any thing in the Word of God, or even in the decrees of councils, to show that such men as these can be true ministers of Christ, or to legitimate the orders conferred by them?

The historical facts which have been adduced, show that the pretended Prelatical Succession is a chain of sand. This conclusion may be still further fortified by a brief reference to the separation that took place between the Romish and Anglican Churches at the Reformation. I have proved that the Church of England derives the Succession (in so far as she has it) from the Church of Rome. But the English Reformers with one accord, pronounce the Church of Rome an antichristian and apostate Church. I omit quotations from their writings in evidence of this, as it will not be questioned. It is proper, however, to show that Rome is declared to be apostate not merely by the English Reformers as individuals, but by the Church of England herself. The Books of Homilies



are said in the 35th Article of that Church, to contain "a godly and wholesome doctrine," and are "judged (suitable) to be read in churches by the ministers diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people." These Homilies say<sup>1</sup> of the Church of Rome, that she is "not only an *Harlot*, as the Scripture calleth her, but also a *foul, filthy, old, withered Harlot*; THE FOULEST AND FILTHIEST THAT EVER WAS SEEN:—"and that, "as it at present is, and *hath been for nine hundred years*, it is so far from the nature of the *true Church*, that NOTHING CAN BE MORE." It is from a Church which their own standards brand with apostacy in these strong terms, and which the word of God describes as the "MOTHER OF HARLOTS," that English and American Prelatists derive their orders. If they allege that the Romish Church had not become apostate at the period of the Reformation, this will be to contradict their own standards. But even conceding the point for the sake of argument, *how is their separation from Rome to be vindicated?* To pretend that they "did not separate from her," is to presume very largely upon the public ignorance or credulity. The fact of their leaving the Romish Church, is as well established as the fact of the Reformation itself—a fact which their Reformers, the very men engaged in effecting the separation, never thought of denying.—In the judgment of High-Churchmen, there is no greater sin than SCHISM. A single passage out of many that could be cited from a late Episcopal writer of acknowledged authority, will show this. "Voluntary separation from the Church of Christ is a sin against our brethren, against ourselves, against God;

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 162: 295.



a sin which, unless repented of, is eternally destructive to the soul. The heinous nature of this offence is incapable of exaggeration, because no human imagination, and no human tongue can adequately describe its enormity.”<sup>1</sup> But if the Roman Church was not apostate, the Church of England is, on High-Church principles, involved in all the guilt of this sin, for separating from her; and, of course, *her orders are null and void*.—It is worthy of special notice in this connexion that the English Reformers admitted that their church had not an unbroken succession. The want of such a succession was charged upon them by the Romanists at the time, as a proof that their church was not a true church. In no one instance, in so far as my researches have gone, did they deny the fact. Taught in a different school from many who are now enjoying the fruits of their toils and sufferings, and with widely different views of the plan of salvation, they admitted the fact, and maintained, from reason, from the Fathers, and from the Word of God, that no *such* succession was essential to constitute a true church and ministry.<sup>2</sup> Every reader must decide for himself whether the High-Churchmen of the present day or the Reformers themselves, are the best witnesses in settling the questions of *fact*, whether the English church separated from Rome, and whether, in doing this, she kept the Prelatical Succession unbroken.

Without waiting to see how our Prelatical friends are to get their Apostolical chain across the gulf between Rome and themselves, created by the Reforma-

<sup>1</sup> Palmer on the Church, vol. i. 70.

<sup>2</sup> See Chap. VI.

tion, I shall now glance at some of the links which lie on this side of that abyss.

The first fact worthy of notice here, is, that the Church of England only exchanged one Pope for another. Henry VIII. vested in himself that spiritual supremacy of the Church, of which he despoiled the Roman Pontiff. He even went so far as to suspend all the Prelates in England from the exercise of their functions. He afterwards issued new commissions to them, in which it was distinctly specified that they were to regard themselves as the mere *vicars of the crown*. The following is a summary of one of these instruments:—"Since all authority, civil and ecclesiastical, flows from the crown, and since Cromwell," (a *layman*, but made vicar general *in spiritualibus* over all the clergy,) "to whom the ecclesiastical part has been committed," (*vices nostras*, as the vicar of the crown,) "is so occupied that he cannot fully exercise it, we commit to you (each individual Prelate) the license of *ordaining, granting institution, and collation*, and in short, of performing all other ecclesiastical acts: and we allow you to hold this authority during our pleasure, as you must answer to God and to us."—Similar commissions were granted by Edward VI. to his Prelates. The act vesting the spiritual supremacy of the Church in the crown, was revived under Elizabeth, and has never been repealed.—Whether a succession which comes through a series of Bishops, who were virtually made and unmade at the pleasure of a capricious and sensual monarch like Henry VIII, is quite untainted, is a question worthy the attention of our High-Church canonists. Leaving that, however, it may be observed that able canonists are to this day at issue in relation to the

validity of an ordination on which all the orders of the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in this country are suspended,—I refer to the case of Archbishop Parker, consecrated to the See of Canterbury in the reign of Elizabeth. This consecration was performed by four persons, to-wit: Barlow and Scory, Bishops elect of Chichester and Hereford, Miles Coverdale, formerly Bishop of Exeter, and Hodgkins, Suffragan of Bedford. The validity of the act has been denied on two grounds. The first is the alleged incompetency of the ordainers. Three of these, Barlow, Scory, and Coverdale, who were ordained in the time of Edward VI., had been *deprived* by his successor, “Bloody Mary.” They were at this time (without Sees, and, therefore, incompetent, according to the canons, to exercise Episcopal functions. The fourth was a mere Suffragan, or assistant, who had also been deprived.—The second ground of objection to Parker’s consecration, is, that it was performed according to *an insufficient and invalid form*. This form was one contained in the Ordinal of King Edward: and was in these words:—

“Take the Holy Ghost, and remember that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of hands; for God hast not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and soberness.”

There is nothing here, it will be perceived, to specify the order that was conferred—nothing to express the office or character of the Episcopacy. The formula might as well be used, as one of the Romish theologians has observed, in laying hands on children, as in consecrating a Bishop. This defect the Romanists urged *at the time* as fatal to the validity of Parker’s orders. It constitutes the chief reason

why the Romish Church refuses to this day to recognize the English ordinations, all which have been derived from Parker. The objection was *felt*. The Convocation of the Church of England which sat in 1662, endeavoured to remove the difficulty, by changing the form to that which is now found in the prayer-book. This they did by inserting in King Edward's form, the words marked below in italics:

“Receive the Holy Ghost, *for the office and work of a Bishop in the Church of God, committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost;* and remember that thou stir up,” &c.

This was a virtual confession of the insufficiency of the old form. But unhappily for the Anglican orders, it did not come until that form had been used for a *century*—long enough to vitiate, twice over, *all* the orders of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

There was another weighty objection to this form, of a different kind. King Edward's Ordinal had been *abolished* by Mary, and Parliament, at the time of Parker's consecration, had not restored it. It was, therefore, a dead letter.

All these objections were urged then, as they are now—and, it may be added, as they *ought* to be in arguing with men who suspend the salvation of the world upon matters of form. That they were not regarded as groundless in that day by those most deeply concerned, is evident from the fact that seven years afterwards it was deemed expedient to procure an act of parliament ratifying and confirming the ordinations of Parker and those whom he had ordained.

<sup>1</sup> See Bishop Kenrick's work on the Validity of the Anglican Ordinations.

Whether a *retrospective parliamentary statute* could make a defective ordination valid, is a point upon which there will probably be but little difference of opinion, except among those who have resolved *at all hazards* to make out an unbroken Prelatical Succession between themselves and the Apostles. Plain people who have not been able to see that such a succession is essential to their salvation, will be very apt to think that if Parker is to be a link in this chain, there is at least one link with a very ominous flaw.

It might reasonably be supposed that when the English succession was once started, all further uncertainty about the integrity of the chain would be at an end. One would hardly suspect that a taint, however trivial, could creep into the line between Parker and our day. This is far from being the case, however. Within that period, many individuals have been admitted to orders, and some to the highest offices in the English Church, who had received what is regarded in that church as merely *lay-baptism*. It will be sufficient to specify the celebrated Dr. Butler, Bishop of Durham, and Archbishop Secker. There is, it is well known, a difference of opinion among Prelatists, respecting the validity of lay-baptism,—under which head they include all baptisms not administered by ministers prelatically ordained. If such baptisms are valid, the fact adverted to does not invalidate the succession. But lay-baptism can be proved valid on no principles which will not equally legitimate *lay-ordination*. The passage of Scripture is yet to be produced—whatever may be found in the writings of the Fathers—which divorces the authority to baptize from the authority to preach the Gospel, ordain, and exercise all the other functions of the Chris-



tian ministry. These several powers are conveyed in one and the same commission: "Go *preach* the Gospel to every creature, *baptizing* them." What hint have we here, or elsewhere in the word of God, that an individual may baptize who has no right to preach? And with what reason or propriety can Prelatists recognize Presbyterian baptism, who refuse to recognize Presbyterian ordination? We, of course, maintain that they have no right to disallow either; as we do, that they have no warrant for recognizing them *on the ground* that they may be performed by *laymen*. If they are admitted, let it be on the only ground which is respectful to the non-prelatical churches, or sanctioned by the Scriptures, viz., that they are administered by men clothed with the requisite authority to perform them. The class who reject baptism performed in other churches, are at least consistent. Whether their consistency is not destructive to their exclusive and lordly assumptions in claiming for prelatical churches an unbroken Prelatical Succession and a monopoly of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, is another question. For if 'lay-baptism' be invalid, nothing can be more certain than that the pretended chain of Apostolical Succession has long ago been shivered into a thousand fragments.

But if lay-baptism be valid, it will hardly be contended that *no baptism at all* is valid: and this grave defect, with another no less serious, unhappily attaches to the ecclesiastical character of an *Archbishop of Canterbury*, who died no longer ago than 1694; I refer to the celebrated Dr. Tillotson. This eminent man was the son of a Baptist, and of course was not baptized in infancy. No evidence has ever been produced that he was baptized in after life. The



charge that he was unbaptized, was repeatedly brought against him by the non-jurors during his primacy, and never disproved. But there is no position on which High-Churchmen insist more strenuously than this, viz. that no unbaptized person is or can possibly be *a member of the Church*, and the canons are express that a person in this predicament is incapable of receiving orders. Tillotson, therefore, notwithstanding he attained to the chair of Canterbury, was *no member of the Church*. Unless, then, they are prepared to maintain that orders conferred by an individual *out of the Church* are valid, all the orders conferred by him and those transmitted from the individuals he ordained, are null and void. Nor is this the whole difficulty growing out of Tillotson's case. His own orders are invalid on other grounds. There is no proof that he was ever *in deacon's orders*, but good reason to believe he was not: and, consequently, by the 10th canon of the council of Sardica, one of the councils whose decrees are recognized as binding by Prelatical churches, he was not capable of being promoted to the higher grades of the priesthood. Again his ordination to the *priesthood* was invalid. He was ordained by Sysderf of Galloway, who had no canonical orders himself, and who of course could not communicate valid orders to others. He was ordained in England, where Sysderf could have no canonical authority, and in violation of those "Apostolical canons" which punish with deposition both the Prelate who presumes to "ordain in places not subject to him," and those who submit to be ordained by him. (See above p. 135.) And, finally, Sysderf's whole course of conduct while in England, during the confusion of the commonwealth and the

civil war, was schismatical and simoniacal. For we are told by Birch, Tillotson's biographer, that he "ordained all those of the English clergy who came to him, without demanding of them either oaths (of canonical obedience) or subscriptions (to the articles);" and that he "did this merely for a *subsistence* from the *fees* for the letters of orders granted by him—for he was poor!"<sup>1</sup> Tillotson's orders, then, were incurably defective. And if this was the case, what Episcopal clergyman in England or America can be certain that the taint thus introduced into the succession, has not, in the flow of a stream perpetually widening, fatally vitiated his own orders?

One other fact respecting the period now under examination. Mr. Perceval, a High-Church writer already mentioned, has compiled with great labour catalogues of the English Bishops since the Reformation. Of this list there are about *twenty* of whose consecration no record has been preserved! That these are enough, if they were not canonically consecrated, to poison the whole stream of succession, will not be disputed. Yet, in the entire absence of evidence, the Episcopalian is obliged to *presume* that all the proceedings pertaining to their respective ordinations, were canonical. Archbishop Whateley states, in a passage quoted in a former part of this chapter, that a case has occurred within "the memory of persons living," of a Prelate concerning whom "doubts existed in the minds of many persons, whether he had ever been ordained at all."—It is manifest that persons who have received orders from any of the Bishops in this unfortunate category, can have no conclusive evidence that they are in orders at all.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vide Presbyterian Review, Vol. XIV. 12. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Id. p. 31.

The Scottish Succession, from which the earliest *American* Bishop (Seabury) received consecration, is in a still more deplorable condition. There are no less than twenty-eight Bishops in a *continuous series* on Mr. Perceval's list, embracing a period of *twenty-six years* (from 1662 to 1688) of whose consecration after diligent search he has been able, as he tells us "with regret," to find no records whatever. The worthlessness of the Scottish Succession, has been demonstrated by recent writers with a redundancy of evidence, and is virtually conceded by the London Christian Observer.<sup>1</sup> In just so far, therefore, as the Episcopal orders in the Diocese of Connecticut, over which Bishop Seabury presided, and in other parts of the Church, have been derived from that Prelate, they partake of the worthlessness of the source from which they sprung. And if, in addition to this, the English succession has also failed—and all the facts adduced in this historical inquiry, bear directly upon this point—the orders of the Episcopal ministry in this country, are, on High-Church principles, null and void.

Such is the answer of HISTORY to the question, "*Are the Episcopal Bishops of our day the true and only Successors of the Apostles?*" The minuteness, perhaps I should say, the tedious minuteness, of the investigation, seemed to be rendered necessary by the surprising confidence and arrogant tone with which High-churchmen are accustomed to assert the reality of an uninterrupted Prelatical Succession. The assurance they display, will require some explanation to those who contrast it with the overwhelming mass of testimony which History furnishes against their

<sup>1</sup> For Nov. 1843.

favourite dogma. With one class, this assurance is clearly the offspring of ignorance. They have taken up the dogma on the credit of others, without examination; and have, by degrees, come to be as strenuous in asserting it, as those from whom they received it. The confidence of others is explained by a single expression in this sentence from the pen of the excellent Mr. Bickersteth:—"The idea of an Apostolical Succession only by Bishops ordaining in a regular series from the times of the Apostles to the present time—the idea that this is the only true ministry in the Church of Christ, and essential to the existence of a true Church of Christ, is no where laid down in the Scriptures, and no where inserted in our Church Formularies: to trust in such a succession is an idol of the Church of Rome." This idea is no less a fond conceit with the sort of Episcopalians I have in view. The Apostolical Succession is literally an "*idol*" with them—one of their divinities. To question its reality, is with them akin to sacrilege. That is not a point to be argued, but believed. Argument is lost upon them. Evidence produces no impression. They are no more in a condition to appreciate the one or the other, than a foolish, over-indulgent parent is to detect the foibles of a spoiled child. Both are blinded by a passion which subjugates reason and judgment. Persons of this description must be left, not, indeed, to "uncovenanted mercy," but to such providential or spiritual agencies as may be adequate to dissolve the spell that is upon them and restore the use of their suspended faculties.

There is, however, another large class of persons among the believers in this doctrine, who are accessible both to argument and evidence. To these, as

well as to the members of non-Prelatical churches, the historical view of the subject may be useful. To say to such persons that the theory vanishes the moment it is brought to the test of history, is only to express a conviction that must force itself upon the mind of any impartial individual who will go into the examination. If the views presented in this chapter are to be relied upon—if the facts we have been considering *are* facts—the pretended chain of succession is an “airy nothing.” No prudent man would trust even a dollar of his property to it, much less his soul. And the notion that the very being of the Church, and the salvation of the world are suspended upon it, deserves to be classed with the wildest vagaries of that fanaticism which High-Churchmen hold in such special abhorrence. That this theory should ever become current among men who will take the trouble to investigate it, is impossible. It was not designed for a Protestant but a Papal age. It is part of that system which denies the Bible to the people, discourages education, inculcates an ignorant devotion, and instead of teaching men to repent and believe for themselves, commits the whole business of their salvation into the hands of a priest. Brought out into the light of a pure Christianity, its deformity becomes apparent. Those who imagine that it can be grafted upon this stock, and who are labouring to effect the unnatural union, will find that they must either substitute for their favourite dogma, the Scriptural doctrine of the Apostolical Succession, viz. *the succession of the TRUTH*, or transubstantiate Christianity into Popery:—their coalescence by any other process is an impossibility. Whether this process is likely to be attempted, and, if so, in which direction the change is to be made, is



a question that may be incidentally noticed hereafter. Meanwhile, in confirmation of the sentiment, that the dogma of an unbroken Prelatical Succession must be spurned as destitute of the least warrant from history, just in proportion as it comes to be examined and understood, let me quote a sentence or two from an English Prelate,<sup>1</sup> who is himself one of the links in this pretended chain. "I am fully satisfied that till a *consummate stupidity* can be happily established and universally spread over the land, there is nothing that tends so much to destroy all respect to the clergy, as the demand of more than can be due to them; and nothing has so effectually thrown contempt upon a regular succession of the ministry, as the calling no succession regular but what was uninterrupted; and the making the eternal salvation of Christians to depend upon that uninterrupted succession of which the most learned must have the least assurance, and the unlearned can have no notion but through ignorance and credulity." Others among the English Bishops have held similar language. One of them, Dr. Whateley, has denounced the whole theory as unworthy of credit, in still stronger terms. And the present Bishop of Hereford uses this language in a late charge:—"You will exceed all just bounds, if you are continually insisting upon the necessity of a belief in, and the certainty of the Apostolic Succession in the Bishops and Presbyters of our church, as the only security for the efficacy of the sacraments; so that those who do not receive them from men so accredited and approved to minister, cannot partake of the promises and consolations of the Gospel, and are therefore in peril of their salva-

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Hoadly.



tion, and left to the uncovenanted mercies of God, which may be, in the end, no mercies at all to them." "This," he adds, "would be to overstep the limits of prudence and humility, and arrogantly to set up a claim which neither Scripture, nor the formularies and various offices of the church, nor the writings of her best divines, nor the common sense of mankind, will allow. To spread abroad this notion, would be to *make ourselves the derision of the world.*" It is surely an edifying spectacle to see a party in the Episcopal Church pronouncing multitudes of the best people in the world to be out of the way of salvation, for rejecting a dogma of which their own Bishops and Archbishops declare that the more a man studies, the more he must distrust it; that no one can assent to it except through ignorance or credulity; and that for a minister to insist upon it, is to make himself "the derision of the world." Let them put away this folly, and abide by that *genuine* "Apostolic canon" delivered by the Apostle Paul to their favourite *Bishop*, Timothy, "Neither give heed to fables and ENDLESS GENEALOGIES, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith."

## CHAPTER V.

## THE SUCCESSION TESTED BY FACTS.

HAVING tried the dogma of an unbroken Prelatical Succession by Scripture and History, it cannot be deemed invidious if we also test it by FACTS.

This succession, it will be borne in mind, is held to be the distinguishing characteristic of a true Church and a lawful ministry. All pretended ministers out of the line of the succession, are usurpers of the office. The ordinances of ministers prelatially ordained alone are valid. And it is only to the Church as governed by the Bishops, the successors of the Apostles, that the assurance is given, "Lo I am with you always."

Now if this theory be well founded, we have a right to look to the ministry and churches in the line of the succession, for the inflexible maintenance of sound doctrine and a uniform exhibition of the benign fruits of Christianity. These ministers and churches may fairly be expected to display the purity and power of the Gospel in a far higher degree than the non-episcopal societies. For they are "*the Church,*" and to them alone is the Holy Spirit given. The comparison we institute is, on their principles, (as Dr. Miller has remarked in one of his works,) "a comparison between the Church of Christ, and '*the world that lieth in wickedness.*'" We affirm that there ought to be more virtue and holiness, more concord, more zeal for the truth, more reverence for the word of God, and greater activity in disseminating

the blessings of Christianity, *in* the Church, than there are *out of* it. So they themselves teach: and they are perpetually boasting of their unity and primitive faith, and inviting men to seek repose in the bosom of "the Church" as the only sanctuary from the heresies and schisms with which the rest of Christendom is distracted.

We are constrained in self-defence to ask whether these pretensions are sustained by facts. *Is it true* that the Prelatical clergy, say in our own country, are, as a body, so superior to the non-prelatical ministers in spiritual endowments and in fidelity to their duties, as we have a right, from their principles, to expect? We not only concede to them whatever of personal excellence and pastoral faithfulness they may lawfully challenge, but we rejoice in all their success in winning souls to Christ and edifying his people in knowledge and holiness. But those among them who are most distinguished for their piety, and most laborious in the service of their Master, would be the first to disclaim for themselves and their brethren that personal pre-eminence over the ministry of other churches, which the High-Church system claims for them. A similar comparison may be instituted as regards the *people*. Regeneration and justification are, according to this system, tied to sacraments administered by a Prelatic ministry. Then, of course, we are to look for *real Christians*—for those who have been pardoned, renewed and sanctified—only in Prelatic churches. To suppose that the Spirit of God would render the ministrations of "*schismatical intruders*" into the sacred office, equally efficacious, or nearly so, with those of a ministry appointed by himself, is preposterous in itself, and would be scouted

as an impiety by every consistent High-Churchman; it would, indeed, be to say that the practical results are all one, whether the ordinances employed are valid or invalid. But is it true that all the enlightened, ardent piety among the laity in the United States, is confined to the Episcopal and Romish communions? Is it true that a larger measure of the life and power of religion is to be found in those communions, than in other Christian denominations? The laity of the Episcopal Church will not affirm this. Whatever may be asserted by the arrogant and indiscreet men among their spiritual guides, who have precipitated their Church into the troubled sea where she now is, *they* will not easily be made to believe that God has given to them and the Romanists a monopoly of the saving benefits of Christianity. Nor can any of their ministers assert it without maintaining the absurd and bigoted position that all the manifestations of faith and holiness and consecration to Christ, on the part of non-Episcopalians, are unreal and deceptive.

If, then, FACTS under our own observation prove that the blessing of God attends the labours of non-Prelatical, equally with Prelatical ministers, and that the evidences of genuine piety are found in at least as much profusion in other Churches as in the Episcopal communion, with what show of reason can it be pretended that the Church and the Spirit, the ministry and sacraments, the promises and the gifts of salvation, are exclusively linked "by covenant and oath" to an unbroken Prelatical Succession?

The view I have taken may be extended to other countries. Compare Presbyterian Scotland with Prelatical England or Ireland. Scotland has been for a

long while under the sway of Presbyterianism. England and Ireland (Presbyterian Ulster excepted) under that of Prelacy. We are willing that any enlightened and impartial mind shall decide, from the actual fruits of the two systems as developed in the relative intelligence, virtue, industry, thrift, and substantial comfort of the three nations, which system carries with it the strongest attestation of the Divine blessing. The question cannot be pursued into its details here, but there is a late Parliamentary testimony to the benign and powerful influence of the Church of Scotland upon that country, which deserves to be quoted. The Parliamentary Committee on Church Patronage, in 1834, on reporting the result of their labours to the legislature, remark: "No sentiment has been so deeply impressed on the mind of your committee, in the course of their long and laborious investigation, as that of veneration and respect for the established Church of Scotland. They believe that no institution has ever existed, which at so little cost has accomplished so much good. The eminent place which Scotland holds in the scale of nations, is mainly owing to the purity of the standards, and the zeal of the ministers of the Church, as well as the wisdom with which its internal institutions have been adapted to the habits and interests of the people."

Again, we may test the practical working of the Prelatical system by appealing to Switzerland. A part of the Swiss Cantons are Romish, and a part Protestant. The first enjoy, of course, the labours of an "Apostolic ministry," and the potent and salutary influence of a branch of the true Church; while the last are without a Church or a valid ministry. Then, certainly, the Papal Cantons must be in a far better

condition in all respects than those occupied by Protestant "sectaries." So, on High-Church principles, they *ought* to be; but so, unhappily for the theory, they are not. On the contrary, it is a common observation of well-informed travellers, that the transition from the Protestant to the Popish Cantons, though separated only by imaginary lines, is marked by a palpable deterioration in the aspect of the farms and the general state and character of the inhabitants.—Look, too, at Italy, Spain, Austria, Sardinia, Greece, Armenian Turkey, Syria, South America, and compare them with Scotland and the United States. All the former countries profess to have the Prelatical succession, and valid ordinances; the last two are, excepting as to a small fraction of their population, without a Church or authorized ministry. To ask which way the scale preponderates here, would be to trifle with men's reason. That the present condition of these countries has been brought about by a variety of agencies of which religion is only one, is readily admitted. Still it might be supposed that even under very-adverse circumstances, a true Church would in the course of several centuries be able to demonstrate its "Apostolical" origin and character by evidences quite as decisive as any that could be produced by mere "schismatical organizations." It will take impartial men who are committed to no ecclesiastical theory, some time to believe that Spain and Italy and the other states named with them, have an Apostolical ministry, and are sharers in God's covenanted blessings, while Scotland and New England are without a Church, and have no part nor lot in the Gospel-covenant.

Perhaps, however, this argument may be met with



the declaration, that both the Latin and Greek Churches have become so corrupt that it is unfair to appeal to them. This explanation will only prejudice the cause it is designed to aid. The inquiry is, whether the High-Church doctrine of the Prelatical Succession is sustained by its actual fruits. To say that the Romish and Oriental Churches, which are alleged to have this succession, "have become corrupt," in the first place, comes with an ill grace from those who still recognize them as sister-churches, while denying the church-character of the Protestant bodies; and, in the second place, involves a concession of the point at issue. We take the fact thus admitted and point to it as conclusive evidence of the inadequacy of the alleged succession to preserve a Church from the grossest defection both in doctrine and morals. Nor do we stop here. We point, in refutation of the notion that an unbroken Prelatical Succession is the unfailing mark of a true Church, to churches whose claim to this succession was far better than that of *any* Church now is, and which have become *heretical*. "The *Arian* Churches which once predominated in the kingdoms of the Ostrogoths, the Visigoths, the Burgundians, the Vandals, and the Lombards, were all Episcopal churches, and all had a fairer claim than that of England to the Apostolical Succession, as being much nearer to the Apostolical times. In the East, the Greek Church, which is at variance on points of faith with all the Western Churches, has an equal claim to this succession. The Nestorian, the Eutychian, the Jacobite Churches; all heretical, all condemned by councils of which even Protestant divines have generally spoken with respect, had an equal claim to the Apostolical Succession.

Now, if, of teachers having Apostolical orders a vast majority have taught much error,—if a large proportion have taught deadly heresy,—if, on the other hand, churches not having Apostolical orders—that of Scotland, for example—have been nearer to the standard of orthodoxy than the majority of teachers who have had Apostolical orders—how can we possibly be called upon to submit our private judgment to the authority of a Church, on the ground that she has these orders?"<sup>1</sup> How can the alleged possession of these orders establish the claim of a Church to be a true Church of Christ?

Take another class of facts. The Bishops in the line of the succession, are, we are told, the only successors of the Apostles. They are the authorized governors of the Church. To them alone is entrusted "the gift of the Holy Ghost." They are the guardians of the truth and the only channel through which God bestows grace upon mankind. Or, to state the doctrine in the language of a High-Church Bishop, "The Episcopacy is her [the Church's] living bond of union with Christ; the channel in which the grace has been transmitted through the hands of the Apostles, which lends her virtue to her sacraments, and gives to penitent and faithful hearts assurance of acceptance and salvation through the purchase of the blessed cross: apart from which, it could have no connection with the Apostles, and could claim no promise made to them."<sup>2</sup>—Such is the theory. Now lay along side of it the historical fact, that individuals among these very Bishops have been the CHIEF AUTHORS AND ABETTORS OF THE HERESIES, SCHISMS,

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's Review of Gladstone, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop Doane's Elizabethtown Sermon, p. 22.

AND IMMORALITIES which have defiled and distracted the Church from the days of the Apostles to the present time. Not only so, but whenever sound doctrine and Evangelical religion have been revived, it has usually been done not by these Bishops, but in the face of their systematic and bitter opposition. The Waldenses in the vallies of the Alps, the Lollards in England, Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Zuingle, and Knox; the Puritans in their day; and the Wesleys and Whitfield in still later times, are all witnesses to this fact. Even in England, although the Reformation derived most effective aid from Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Jewell, and others—Bishops worthy of the name, “who counted not their lives dear unto them for the sake of the Lord Jesus”—yet, before the quarrel between Henry VIII. and the Pope, the Bishops generally were the determined enemies of all reformation, and persecuted and put to death those who attempted it, as they did the Non-conformists and Covenanters many years afterwards. “The Gospel,” says Mr. Powell emphatically, in adverting to these facts, “would have *perished* if left to this succession.”

The corrupt state of the Church of England during the greater part of the last century, is familiar to every reader of history. The London “Christian Observer” says of its own Church, “If we advert to the days of Whitfield and Wesley, we shall find that the great charge against those “enthusiasts,” as they were called, was that they preached justification by faith instead of works; the *majority of the clergy denouncing the doctrine of justification by faith* as hostile to the interests of morality. In this shape, the dispute came down to the present century. Our clergy

had nearly lost sight of the true Protestant scriptural doctrine. . . The practice was not then common of using the language of Scripture and our own Articles, but of appropriating the justification predicated in them to baptism. The clergy very generally *disclaimed altogether* the doctrine of justification by faith, and earnestly exhorted men to justify themselves by good living. They in fact adopted the Papists' second justification, losing sight of the first."<sup>1</sup> Toplady, an eminent divine of that church gives this picture of its condition in his day—just before the American Revolution.<sup>2</sup> "Where shall we stop? We have already forsook the good old paths trod by Christ and the Apostles; paths in which our Reformers also trod, our martyrs, our Bishops, our universities, and the whole of this Protestant, *i. e.* of this once Calvinistic, nation. Our Liturgy, our Articles and our Homilies, it is true, still keep possession of our Church walls: but we pray, we subscribe, we assent one way: we believe, we preach, we write another. In the desk, we are verbal Calvinists; but no sooner do we ascend a few steps above the desk, [into the pulpit] than we forget the grave character in which we appeared below, and tag the performance with a few minutes' entertainment compiled from the fragments bequeathed to us by Pelagius and Arminius; not to say *Arius, Socinus, and others still worse than they.* Observe, I speak not of all indiscriminately. We have many great and good men, some of whom are, and some of whom are not, Calvinists. But that the glory is, in a very considerable degree, departed from our established Sion, is a truth which

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xxxviii. p. 496.—Cited in "Oxford Divinity."

<sup>2</sup> Works, 8vo. ed. p. 275. Ibid.

cannot be contravened, a fact which must be lamented, and an alarming symptom which ought to be publicly noticed." He then quotes an observation of Dr. Young's, that "almost every cottage can show us one that has corrupted, and every palace one that has renounced the faith;" and asks this emphatic question, "*Is there a single heresy, that ever annoyed the Christian world, which has not its present partisans among those who profess conformity to the Church of England?*"<sup>1</sup> This general corruption of doctrine in the Establishment, was, as might be expected, accompanied by a corresponding defection of life and manners among the clergy and laity. These evils were propagated from the mother country to the colonies. The great body of the Episcopal ministers in Virginia, for example, were men of notoriously bad character—a disgrace to the Church and to religion. At length, there were cheering indi-

<sup>1</sup> During this period there were frequent debates in Parliament on the subject of repealing some of the oppressive laws against Dissenters. On one of these occasions, in the year 1773, the illustrious Earl of Chatham, in vindicating the Dissenters from the violent attacks of several of the Bishops, and especially of the Archbishop of York, who had charged them with being "men of close ambition," made use of this memorable language. "The dissenting ministers are represented as 'men of close ambition.' They are so, my lords: and their ambition is to keep close to the college of fishermen, not of cardinals; and to the doctrine of inspired Apostles, not to the decrees of interested and aspiring Bishops. They contend for a spiritual creed and spiritual worship; we have a *Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy*. The Reformation has laid open the Scriptures to all; let not the Bishops shut them again. Laws in support of ecclesiastical power are pleaded which it would shock humanity to execute. It is said that religious sects have done great mischief when they were not kept under restraint; but history affords no proof that sects have ever been mischievous when they were not oppressed and persecuted by the ruling church."



cations of a revival of true piety in the Establishment, which ultimately resulted in its partial renovation. Here, again, however, the "Successors of the Apostles" who have the special oversight of Christ's flock, instead of reforming the Church, waited to be reformed by it. While they were sleeping at their posts, or spending their time in luxurious indolence, Grimshaw, Romaine, Samuel Walker, Hervey, Venn, Newton, Scott, Milner, Wilberforce, Hannah More, and others of a like spirit, came forward in the pulpit, or through the press, to roll back the torrent of error and secularity which had deluged the Church, and to unfurl the banner of evangelical religion. Not a solitary Prelate appears among the original leaders in this movement; nor did any of them give it their decided countenance until after it had made very considerable progress.

Facts like these—and ecclesiastical history abounds with them—require some solution from those who maintain the doctrine of an unbroken Prelatical Succession as essential to a true Church. How comes it to pass, if this doctrine be scriptural, that in nearly all cases, Bishops in the line of this pretended succession have been the principal corrupters of the Church; and that when the reformation of a Church was to be effected, the inferior clergy or the *laity* have been obliged to do it without their sanction, and, in most cases, in defiance of their opposition? If the High-Church theory be true, there is certainly an apparent repugnance between the *charter* God has given his Church and his *providential* dealings with her, which it will require more than ordinary sagacity to explain.

Again, how is this theory to be harmonized with innumerable facts in the origin and progress of non-



Prelatical Churches? Our own country, for example, had but a very limited number of Prelatical Churches and ministers prior to the Revolution, and the proportion is to this day very small as compared with the aggregate of the non-Episcopal denominations: yet it is generally thought that the influence of true religion has been widely and effectively diffused among our population, especially in the older States. Is nine-tenths of this religion mere fanaticism or is it genuine piety? And if the latter, how comes it to pass that such fruit and in such profusion should be found in a country so nearly destitute for a long time and as to a large portion of its population, of a Church and ministry?

Or, look at the hundreds, not to say thousands, of non-Prelatical congregations throughout the Union now; and explain, if it be possible, on High-Church principles, the phenomena connected with their "schismatical" ordinances. How happens it, if these principles are sound, that "unauthorized" ministers have in so many instances been instrumental in renovating not merely congregations but communities—that God has made their labours effectual in the conversion and sanctification of multitudes who from having been gay, careless, and perhaps profligate persons, have been transformed into meek and faithful followers of the Lord Jesus Christ? And, again, how is it that the same kind of ministrations has produced the same results, even in *Pagan* lands,—that preachers sent out with "no commissions," or only "forged commissions" from these no-church organizations, have in repeated instances been owned of God as the chief agents in subverting colossal systems of idolatry and bringing heathen tribes to the faith and obedience of

the Gospel? High-Churchmen talk much about the "validity" and "invalidity" of ordinances. Let them show, if they can, that "valid" ordinances have ever, since the days of miracles, wrought greater wonders than these; or if they cannot do this, let them candidly confess that ordinances which lead to such results, have a *divine* attestation to their "validity" which no man may lawfully gainsay.

On the whole, the further this collation of FACTS is carried, the more evident will it be that the High-Church theory of an unbroken Prelatical Succession as essential to the Church, can no more bear the application of this test, than it can to be tried by Scripture or History.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE TRUE SUCCESSION.

THE High-Church theory of the Apostolical Succession has now been tested by Scripture, by history, and by facts. The confidence with which its claims are urged, seems to demand that the difference between this theory and the TRUE DOCTRINE OF SUCCESSION, should be more distinctly pointed out before we leave this branch of the subject.

The theory I am examining proceeds upon the two-fold assumption, that the Church is to be perpetuated only through an uninterrupted personal succession of ministers, and that these ministers must be of Prelatical rank. This succession of persons is made not merely an essential, but the leading mark of a true

Church. Not only does it take precedence of truth of doctrine, in the writings of this school, but by many of them, truth of doctrine is not admitted to be an indispensable note of a true Church.<sup>1</sup> The Church, the ministry, the sacraments, the gifts of salvation, are all tied to this *personal succession*.

It has been shown that this scheme derives very little countenance from the New Testament—a point candidly conceded by the leading Puseyites. Those who attempt to deduce it from the Apostolic commission, are obliged to *assume*, (1.) That the terms of that commission imply the perpetuity of the Apostolic office. (2.) That the office was to be handed down from one generation of Apostles to another, through an unbroken series of ordinations. (3.) That no ordinations would be valid, excepting those performed by Apostles or Prelates. (4.) That the promise annexed to the commission was designed only for the ministers who might be in the line of this succession. And, (5.) That all who were in this line would be entitled to the promise, whether they fulfilled the condition on which it is suspended, that is, whether they “preached the Gospel,” or not. Every one of these positions is denied. They have been rejected by the great mass of the Protestant world, as they were by the Reformers both in England and on the Continent. They are not, then, to be taken for granted; they must be *proved*. And there is one short method of testing the interpretation on which they rest. The Saviour’s promises are sure. If the promise, “Lo, I am with you always,” was designed only for Prelates, and ministers ordained by Prelates, *facts* will show it. Is it, then, a *fact* that he has given his presence and

<sup>1</sup> See Palmer on the Church, I. 46.

blessing only to the ministers in this pretended succession?<sup>1</sup> Will any man venture to say that Christ's blessing was bestowed upon the sensual and simoniacal Bishops and Popes of the middle ages, who are claimed to belong to this Succession, and withheld from such men as the Erskines, and Owen, and Baxter, and Edwards, and Davies? If not, what becomes of the interpretation that would restrict this promise to the Prelatical Succession?

The perpetuity of the ministry is taught both in this commission and in numerous other passages in the New Testament. But it is not said that the ministry should be divided into different ranks, or that the right of ordination should be vested in one rank to the exclusion of another, or that there should be an indefectible personal succession of ministers to the end of time, or that the Holy Ghost should be transmitted along this pretended chain. If such a succession were essential to personal union with Christ or to a true Church, that is, if it occupied the place in real Christianity which it does in the High-Church scheme, the New Testament would not have taught it in a way which has compelled the warmest advocates of the dogma to say that if it is in the Bible at all, it can be derived from it "only by the aid of very attenuated and nicely managed inferential arguments." Under the Levitical economy, personal succession was an indispensable condition of the priesthood. This is not merely hinted at, but laid down with the utmost explicitness and solemnity. The principle is interlaced with the whole complicated Jewish ritual. Numerous laws were enacted for the purpose of insuring and protecting the succession.

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. V.

And instead of leaving it to be authenticated by such miscellaneous writers as might happen to take an interest in the subject, *genealogical tables* were required to be kept with sacred fidelity, as the official and conclusive evidence of the genuineness of the succession. The moment the Christian dispensation opens, all this apparatus vanishes. We hear of a ministry, it is true—a permanent ministry—but nothing of registers of Bishops—nothing of the divine mercy being restricted to a single channel of communication with our world—nothing of the Church and salvation being suspended upon an unbroken series of ordinations. The fact that ordinations were performed only by those who had themselves been clothed with office—whether Apostles or Presbyters—is of great importance and authority, as showing that the right of ordination is vested in the ministry, and that individuals are not to exercise the functions of this office without being duly set apart to it. But it is going quite beyond the legitimate import of this fact, to infer from it that an uninterrupted succession from the Apostles is the *sine qua non* of a valid ministry. This would be to place the Christian ministry on the same footing with the Levitical priesthood. And if this had been the design of the Saviour—if he had intended to incorporate in the constitution of the New Testament Church the principle of a personal succession as *indispensable* to the Church and to the communication of spiritual blessings—it is inconceivable that all the arrangements of the old dispensation for preserving and verifying the succession would have been omitted in the new. The absence of any such provisions in the New Testament, and, as a consequence of it, the want of any genealogical records of the succession



which can bear the scrutiny of history, leave it utterly uncertain, on the theory under consideration, whether there is now a true Church upon earth. The continued existence of the ministry *as an order of men* from the Apostles' days to our own, is a historical fact which no sane man would question. But the fact is equally indisputable that no living minister can trace up his own descent with absolute certainty to the Apostles, through an unbroken series of regular ordinations.

Again, every attentive reader of the New Testament must have observed, that while it says very little about the *succession* of ministers, it says a great deal about their character and *doctrine*. It is impossible to harmonize the language it employs respecting *false teachers*, with a theory which makes personal succession of more importance in the ministry than sound doctrine. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." "If there come any unto you and bring not *this doctrine*, receive him not into your house." "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." "False prophets," says Grotius, "not as to their *mission* or calling, but as to their false, destructive *doctrine*." The Apostle Paul speaks of certain teachers in the Corinthian Churches, as "false Apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ." These he pronounces "ministers of Satan," and that, not because they were not in the true "succession," but because they "corrupted the word of God," and "handled" it "deceitfully." And he bids Timothy,



and, in similar terms, the Thessalonian Christians, to withdraw from those whose teachings were contrary to "the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the *doctrine* which is according to godliness." The New Testament abounds with warnings of this kind. In no one instance are Christians directed to prove a religious teacher by his *ecclesiastical pedigree*, but uniformly by his doctrine. These instructions, too, are addressed to *the people*. In the exercise of that right of *private judgment* of which Romanists and High-Churchmen stand so much in dread, they are to bring every minister's doctrines, as the Bereans did Paul's, "to the law and the testimony;" and those whose doctrines cannot pass this ordeal, are to be rejected, although their credentials certify that they are lineally descended from the first Apostles. It was with reason that the Apostles insisted so much upon sound doctrine, and so little upon mere succession. One of their fellow-apostles had proved a traitor. Among their followers were a Demas, a Diotrophes, a Hymeneus, and a Philetus. Not only were false teachers entering the Church from without, but they foresaw and distinctly predicted a terrible *apostacy*<sup>1</sup> in the Church which was to be widely extended and to continue for a long time. They might be certain, therefore, from what had happened, and from what they saw was to happen, that the ministry, a large portion of it at least, would become corrupt, and would diffuse and perpetuate its corruptions by introducing errorists and profligates into the sacred office. It would have been surprising if, in these circumstances, they had not made *apostolicity of doctrine*, not

<sup>1</sup> See 2 Thessalonians ii.

apostolicity as to mere succession, the main test of a lawful ministry.

It is, indeed, a fatal objection to the High-Church theory, that it makes a mere matter of order paramount in importance to truth and holiness. The primary question it asks respecting a Christian minister is not, "What is his doctrine?" or "What are his morals?" but, "What is his genealogy?" It seems to be taken for granted, because the ministry is to be a permanent institution, and the injunction has been left on record, "The same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also," with the promise, "Lo, I am with you always," that this duty is complied with and the fulfilment of this promise secured, whenever an individual is regularly *ordained*. But this is to overlook the obvious import of these passages. Ordination is not the only, nor even the chief point they involve. "Lo, I am with *you*." With *whom*? The first words of the commission furnish the answer: "Go, PREACH MY GOSPEL." He is with those who PREACH HIS GOSPEL.—"The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also." What are "the things" here intended? Unquestionably, the great truths of the Gospel. And to whom are they to be "committed?" To "FAITHFUL MEN."—Now are passages like these to be brought forward as "proof-texts" in support of the dogma that any and every man upon whom the hands of a Bishop have been laid, is in the genuine line of succession from the Apostles? If a man preaches that we are not justified solely by faith in Christ—that our own works constitute in part the meritorious ground of our acceptance with God—that

Christ is offered up afresh as a *sacrifice*, every time the Lord's Supper is celebrated—that baptism is the chief instrument of regeneration—that prayer is to be offered to the angels and departed saints,—is that man to be regarded as “*preaching the Gospel?*” Can *he* claim the promise, “Lo, I am with you?” Or if a Bishop gives himself up to a life of debauchery—trafficks in “livings”—confers orders for gain—and scatters and devours the flock he was appointed to feed,—is *he* to be owned as a “*faithful*” man, and revered as a successor of the Apostles? Paul himself did not think so, whatever some among his “successors” may think. “Though we, *or an angel from heaven,*” he says, “*preach any other gospel* unto you than that which we have preached unto you, *let him be accursed.*” The anathema which *he* invoked, was upon those who “preach another gospel.” The malediction of our modern “Apostles” lights upon those who preach the same gospel that Paul preached, but who, like Timothy, have been ordained only “by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.” According to Paul's canon, no form of ordination, no Apostolic lineage, not even *angelic* rank and powers, could legitimate his commission who preached a false Gospel. According to theirs, no orderly investiture with the sacred office by “faithful” ministers, no truth of doctrine, no holiness of life, no fidelity in winning souls to Christ, can make him other than a “follower of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram,” over whom a Bishop has not pronounced the awful words, “Receive the Holy Ghost.” They, with their predilection for a ritual religion, can see nothing in the Apostolic commission but the pledge of an unbroken series of robed and mitred

Prelates extending from the Apostles down to the end of all things. He, though never the patron or apologist of disorder in the government or worship of the Church, contemplates the possibility of a divorce between truth and order, and directs that in every such case order shall yield to truth. They would sacrifice the gem to save the casket; he, the casket to save the gem.—And this leads me to mention as another objection to the High-Church theory, that it *reverses the true position of the Church and the ministry*. The argument runs thus: the ministry has been preserved until the present time, therefore there is a true Church in the world. Whereas it should run thus: the true Church has been preserved, therefore there is a valid ministry in existence. On the former view, the Church is an appendage of the ministry; on the latter, the ministry belongs to the Church. Some of the Oxford writers have boldly taken the Romanist ground that the clergy *are* the Church: and this notion really pervades the whole High-Church system, although it is not common to hear it distinctly avowed.

For the clearing of this point, let it be noted that the materials of which the first churches were composed, were in being before the ordinary ministry. The Apostles were sent forth as *extraordinary* officers to bring men to the knowledge of Christ, and then they were organized into societies under permanent officers. There were *Christians* first; then *Ministers* to watch over and instruct them. The titles of Ministers imply the same thing. As a Minister “has the oversight of the flock of Christ, he is termed *Bishop*. As he feeds them with spiritual food, he is termed *Pastor*. As he serves Christ in his Church,

he is termed *Minister*. As it is his duty to be grave and prudent, and an example of the flock, and to govern well in the house and kingdom of Christ, he is termed *Presbyter* or *Elder*.”<sup>1</sup> All these titles presuppose a society of Christians over whom he is placed in the Lord, and *for whose benefit* he is invested with his office. What is here implied, is expressly taught in the Scriptures. “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” (Eph. iv. 11–13.) The great design and business of the ministry are here stated. They are set “for *the perfecting of the saints*, for the work of the ministry, *for the edifying of the body of Christ*.” The means by which they are to promote these ends are elsewhere prescribed, viz. the preaching of the word, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of godly discipline. But it is the design of their institution with which we are concerned now. This, it will be seen, has respect entirely to the welfare and prosperity of Christ’s flock. They are the *rulers* of the flock, it is true, but all the power they have is ministerial, and they are to exercise it for the good of the flock, whose “servants” they are. They are to feed them with knowledge and understanding—to break to them the bread of life—to warn and defend them against their adversaries—and to bring them back when they wander from the path of life. In a word, every thing pertaining to their office

<sup>1</sup> Form of Government of Presbyterian Church, Chap. IV.



shows that *they are created for the Church, not the Church for them*. Or, as the Westminster Confession of Faith expresses it, the ministry is "*given to the Church.*"

This being the case, it is reversing the true order of things to suspend the being of the Church upon a personal succession of ministers. The perpetuity of the Church is secured by the covenant-promise of her Lord; and the ministry belongs to her. It is her inalienable right: and wherever the Church is, this right is.

"But," it may be said, "how is the Church to be known, otherwise than by an unbroken succession in the ministry?" I answer, if this were the only mark of a true Church, it could not be known at all: for no Church can prove that her ministry has such a succession. But this is so far from being regarded as the chief note of a true Church, that it is not named at all in the definitions of the Church given by the Reformers and the Reformed Churches. Luther assigned as notes of the true Church, the true and uncorrupted preaching of the Gospel, administration of baptism, of the eucharist, and of the keys; a legitimate ministry, public service in a known language, and tribulations internally and externally. Calvin recognizes the usual distinction between the invisible and visible Church: the former as comprehending all true believers living at any one time upon earth, and those who have gone to their reward. Of the latter, the only marks he reckons, are "the pure preaching and hearing of the word, and the administration of the sacraments according to the institution of Christ."<sup>1</sup> Turretin, after defining the invisible Church in the usual way, makes

<sup>1</sup> Inst. B. IV. ch. i.



the visible Church a "society of men called by the preaching of the Gospel to the profession of one faith, communion in the same sacraments, and union under one form of government."<sup>1</sup> The word, he justly observes, is chiefly used in the New Testament in the former sense, to denote Christ's true sheep; the other is its secondary and less proper signification. Pictet's definitions<sup>2</sup> are very similar to Turretin's. Claude restricts the application of the term Church to true believers.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Jackson, a high authority at Oxford, says that "the one, holy, Catholic Church, *which we believe in the Creed,*" is the aggregate of those who are united to Christ by a living faith. So far is he from confounding this Church with the visible Church, that he says the true Church has at some periods, "been remarkably visible in such as that visible (Roman) Church did condemn for heretics."<sup>4</sup> The French Protestant Church, whose Articles Calvin assisted in framing, also makes the Church "an assembly of believers," with whom there are "some hypocrites and ill-livers" mingled. Another Article of this Confession, as bearing upon the question under discussion, it may be well to quote in full. Art. XXXI. "We believe that it is not lawful for any man of his own authority to take upon himself the government of the Church, but that every one ought to be admitted thereunto by a lawful election, if it may possibly be done, and that the Lord do so permit it. Which exception we have expressly added, because that sometime (as it hath fallen out in our

<sup>1</sup> De Ecclesia, Quaest. II. 10.

<sup>2</sup> De Eccl. Cap. I. 3.

<sup>3</sup> See his "Defence of the Reformation," *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> Jackson on the Church, Philad. ed. 67-9.

days) the state of the Church being interrupted, God hath raised up some persons in an extraordinary manner to repair the ruins of the decayed Church. But, let it be what it will, we believe that this rule is always to be followed, that all pastors, elders, and deacons, should have a testimony of their being called unto their respective offices.”<sup>1</sup>

The Westminster Confession makes the true, invisible Church to consist of all the elect; the visible, of “all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children.” The doctrine of the Church of England is thus stated in her Articles:—Art. XIX. “The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.”—Art. XXIII. “It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching or ministering the sacraments in the congregation before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the congregation, to call and send ministers into the Lord’s vineyard.”

Respecting *all* these definitions it may be observed, (1.) That they recognize the true, spiritual Church of Christ as being made up of *real believers*. (2.) In every instance *truth of doctrine* is made an essential mark of a true Church. (3.) While a “ministry” is made an essential attribute of a Church, nothing is said or hinted of the necessity of its being descended

<sup>1</sup> Lorimer’s Hist. Prot. Ch. of France, pp. 32, 33.

by an uninterrupted series of ordinations from the Apostles. The language of the XXXIX Articles was, as we learn from Burnet, designedly made indefinite on this whole subject. "I come," he says, "in the next place to consider the second part of this Article, (Article XXIII.) which is, the definition here given of those that are lawfully called and sent: this is put in very general words, *far from that magisterial stiffness in which some have taken upon them to dictate in this matter.* The article does not resolve this into any particular constitution, but leaves the matter open and at large for such accidents as had happened and such as might still happen. They who drew it had the state of the several churches before their eyes, that had been differently reformed; and although their own had been less forced to go out of the beaten path than any other, yet they knew that all things among themselves, had not gone according to those rules that ought to be sacred in regular times: necessity has no law, and is a law to itself." Accordingly, the Article, it will be perceived, is so framed as not to make either Prelatical Succession or *Prelatical ordination* essential to a true church and a valid ministry. The condition prescribed in this and every other instance, where the ministry is named, is, that it be characterized by *sound doctrine.* It must be a ministry that preaches "*the pure word,*" and administers the sacraments according to Christ's institution. It is not to be inferred from this that the eminent Divines and Churches that have been named, favoured lax views on the subject of a call and ordination to the ministry. So far from it, it is remarkable with what unanimity and cogency the Reformers and the theologians of the

Reformed Churches maintain the necessity of a *divine call* as indispensable to a lawful entrance upon the ministry; and the importance of a formal investiture with the office by those already clothed with it. Still they held that the ministry belonged to the Church, not the Church to the ministry—that a sound and faithful ministry whose preaching and labours would edify and comfort his people, was one of Christ's ascension-gifts to his Church, the right to which is inalienable—and that seeing such a ministry as this in any given line might fail, the succession of the Church could not depend upon an unbroken succession in the ministry, nor could she by that defection any more lose her right to such a ministry as Christ had given her, than a people whose magistrates should all die or turn traitors, would thereby lose their right to appoint other magistrates in their stead. While they taught, therefore, that the function of ordination was devolved upon the Ministry, and that no one could lawfully assume that office, in a settled Church state, without being set apart to it by men already ordained, they also taught that the right of call and ordination belonged *essentially* to the Church, and that if the ministry failed, or became apostate, or refused to ordain successors, the Church might, in these extraordinary circumstances, (and IN THESE ONLY) resume the exercise of her right and set apart those whom *God* had manifestly *called* to serve him in the Ministry. Thus Melancthon says, "If Bishops and Ordinaries are enemies of the Church, or will not give orders, yet the Churches retain their right; for wheresoever there is a Church, there is a right of administering the Gospel: wherefore there is a necessity that the Church should retain the right of calling,

electing, and ordaining ministers. And this right is a gift given to the Church, which no human authority can take from the Church, as Paul witnesseth in the fourth of the Ephesians: [see the passage above:] where, therefore, there is a true Church, there must needs be a right of electing and ordaining ministers.”<sup>1</sup> Turretin, a theologian whom it would be superfluous to praise, after discussing this question in his theology, devotes several pages of one of his most elaborate Tracts<sup>2</sup> to the subject. Without presenting even an abstract of his argument, it will be sufficient to state that the succession he contends for as essential to the Church and the ministry is the succession of the *truth*. He observes, that as God is a God of order, not of confusion, the order established in a Church is not to be violated except in a case of necessity; but that if a case should arise in which truth and order are so decidedly in conflict that one or the other must be sacrificed, order must yield to truth. Applying this principle to the question of ordination, he argues that in an unsettled state of the Church, where an adherence to the established forms has become utterly impracticable, the people, sooner than be deprived of an institution so essential to their spiritual welfare, are authorized to provide themselves with ministers in an unusual way—in no case, however, are they to receive an individual as a minister, who is not clearly designated to the work by the Providence and Spirit of God. In corroboration of his views, he shows that even *laymen* have sometimes, when placed in extraordinary circumstances, engaged successfully in the work of propagating the Gospel. He instances those

<sup>1</sup> De Potest. Episc. Arg. 2.

<sup>2</sup> “De Necessaria Secessione nostra ab Ecclesia Romana.”



mentioned in Acts viii. 4, and xi. 19–21, who being “scattered abroad” by the persecution, “went every where preaching the gospel;” whereby “a great number believed and turned unto the Lord:” also the case of Apollos, who being instructed in the way of the Lord by Aquila and Priscilla, applied himself, apparently with no other ordination, to the preaching of the Gospel. To these he adds the interesting case mentioned by Theodoret, of the two Christian youths, Edesius and Frumentius, in the reign of Constantine the Great, who being made captives in India, after suffering shipwreck, converted the barbarous king of the country and many of his subjects to Christianity, and established churches among them. From these and other considerations, he argues that the flock of Christ may lawfully seek out shepherds for themselves, when they can obtain shepherds in no other way. “And this,” he adds, “should the more readily be admitted, because it is certain and indubitable that the right of the call of Pastors, which was given by Christ to the Apostles, and through them to the Church, does not pertain to the Pastors alone, or the *Church representative*, but *primarily* and *radically* resides in the society of the faithful, or the *Church collective*. This right the Church has, for the better maintenance of order, transferred to the Pastors or Synod. She has not, however, so entirely relinquished it, but that it is always exercised in her name and by her authority; and if those to whom she has confided it, prostitute it to the propagation of error, she can resume the use of it.”

In opposition to the views expressed by these eminent men, and held by the great body of their associates, the High-Church theory *places the Church*



*entirely at the mercy of the Bishops.* They hold its very existence in their hands. If they cannot or will not perpetuate the ministry, the Church itself comes to an end. If they become heretical and corrupt, the Church has no redress. They may rule Christ's flock with a rod of iron; and they must submit to it. They may feed them with the poison of deadly error, instead of divine truth; and they must receive it. They may pervert and defile the sacraments, and add indefinitely to their number: still the people must acquiesce. They may take away Christ out of the Gospel, and give them "another Gospel;" but they are to make no resistance. Armed with the "succession," their Bishops stand before them as the vicegerents of heaven. They are to be "as sure that the Bishop is Christ's appointed representative as if they actually saw upon his head a cloven tongue like as of fire"<sup>1</sup>—to believe that he is "commissioned to bid, on heavenly authority, no man despise them, and to point to those who, as a class, as Bishops of the Church, do despise them, the solemn words, 'He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.'"<sup>2</sup> Where this doctrine obtains, the reformation of a Church, the government of which is in the hands of a corrupt and despotic Episcopate, is next to impossible. To oppose the Bishops is to "fight against God;" to withdraw from their jurisdiction, is to be guilty of "schism," the blackest of all sins in the High-Church calendar: to expect *them* to become Reformers, is to expect lawless ambition to cast away its sceptre, and sensuality to bridle its own lusts. It will not do

<sup>1</sup> Tract No. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Tract No. 5.

to say that such a defection as this on the part of the clergy in the line of the succession, cannot happen. It was the Jewish priesthood—the genuine “succession-Bishops” of that economy—who crucified the Redeemer and put his Apostles out of the synagogues, as “schismatical intruders” into the ministry. In the fourth century ARIANISM *became the authorized faith of the Church*. It was sanctioned by several councils both in the East and the West. And so general was the defection of the clergy from the true faith, that it became a proverb respecting Athanasius, who remained steadfast and was actually deposed for his orthodoxy, “The world against Athanasius, and Athanasius against the world.”—The general corruption of the Romish clergy both as to faith and morals for centuries before the Reformation, and for some time after that great event, is a fact as well authenticated as the Reformation itself. Calvin, in his treatise on the “Necessity of Reforming the Church,” presented to the imperial Diet at Spires in 1544, thus expresses himself on this subject. “They (the Bishops) maintain that Christ left as a heritage to the Apostles, the sole right of appointing over churches whomsoever they pleased, and they complain that we, in exercising the ministry without their authority, have, with sacrilegious temerity, invaded their province. How do they prove it? Because they have succeeded the Apostles in an unbroken series. But is this enough when all things else are different? It would be ridiculous to say so; they do say it, however. In their elections, no account is taken either of life or doctrine. The right of suffrage has been wrested from the people. Nay, even excluding the rest of the clergy, the dignitaries

have drawn the whole power to themselves. . . . .  
In short, while they seem to have entered into a conspiracy not to have any kind of resemblance either to the Apostles or the Holy Fathers of the Church, they merely clothe themselves with the pretence that they are descended from them in an unbroken succession, as if Christ had ever enacted it into a law, that whatever might be the conduct of those who presided over the Church, they should be recognized as holding the place of the Apostles, or as if the office were some hereditary possession which transmits alike to the worthy and the unworthy. And they, as is said of the Milesians, they have taken precautions not to admit a single worthy person into their society; or if, perchance, they have unawares admitted him, they do not permit him to remain. It is of the generality I speak. For I deny not that there are a few good men among them, who, however, are either silent from fear, or not listened to. From those, then, who persecute the doctrine of Christ with fire and sword, who permit no man with impunity to speak sincerely of Christ, who, in every possible way impede the course of truth, who strenuously resist our attempt to raise the Church from the distressed condition into which they have brought her, who suspect all those who take a deep and pious interest in the welfare of the Church, and either keep them out of the ministry, or, if they have been admitted, thrust them out—from such persons, forsooth, it were to be expected that they would with their own hands, instal into the office faithful ministers to instruct the people in pure religion.”<sup>1</sup>

This reasoning which Calvin employed against the Romish Bishops, is equally conclusive against

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 90—92, Lond. Ed.—See Appendix.

the same doctrine as urged by so-called Protestant Bishops and ministers in our day. To link the Church exclusively and indissolubly to an unbroken Prelatical Succession, is to put her, bound hand and foot, into the hands of the Bishops. And if the Bishops become corrupt—a contingency so far from being improbable, that their heresies, crimes, and schisms fill up a large portion of ecclesiastical history—the Church must patiently wear her chains until they become sick of playing the despot, or nauseated with sensuality, and set about recovering her from the miserable condition to which they have reduced her. That this is no forced conclusion from the principles advocated by the Puseyite party, is evident from the terms in which they speak of the REFORMATION. They tell us, for example, that “they cannot allow the necessity of what was done at the Reformation, without proof quite overwhelming.”<sup>1</sup> “Too many of us,” they say, “speak as if we had gained more by the Reformation in freedom, than we have lost by it in disunion.”<sup>2</sup> “I hate the Reformation,” says Mr. Froude, “and the Reformers more and more.”<sup>3</sup> “Protestantism,” says their late leading organ, “in its essence and in all its bearings, is characteristically the *religion of corrupt human nature*.”<sup>4</sup> Again—“The Protestant tone of doctrine and thought is essentially *anti-Christian*.”<sup>5</sup> This is going farther, it is probable, than the High-Church party generally are yet prepared to go. But their principles require them to condemn, and there is ample evidence that many of them at least do heartily con-

<sup>1</sup> Tract, No. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Br. Crit. for July, 1841, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Remains I. 389.

<sup>4</sup> Br. Crit. ut. sup. p. 27.

<sup>5</sup> Ib. p. 29.

demn, the Reformation on the continent and in Scotland, as a schismatical rebellion against the just authority of the Bishops, the authorized governors of the Church. The parties engaged in perpetuating this "schism," they refuse to recognize as any part of the Church, while their assiduous attentions to the Papal Hierarchy, which in turn refuses to recognize *them* as belonging to the Church, and reordains all their Ministers who go over to them, betray their intense solicitude to have the "schism" healed.

These are some of the grounds on which we reject the theory, that the Church and the ministry are linked to an unbroken personal succession of Prelates. This theory has no support from Scripture or history; and it is wrong in its *principles*. It proceeds upon the assumption that an uninterrupted chain of regularly ordained Prelates is requisite as a channel for the transmission of divine grace from the Head of the Church to his members. It confounds the *office* of the ministry, with the *officers* who fill it. It puts order above truth, and form above substance. It makes the Church a mere appendage of the ministry; and leaves it without redress if the ministry become heretical or corrupt. For these and other reasons the theory was discarded by the Reformers and Reformed Churches. This has been shown in part, and some further authorities will now be adduced. It will be seen from these that the succession they mainly insist upon, is, the SUCCESSION OF THE TRUTH. They felt the value of *order*. They acknowledged the ministry as a divine institution; and the symbols and creeds they drew up, show with how much care they guarded the entrance to it. But they could not believe



with the Romanists that a pretended *succession of persons* was more to be relied upon as a note of a true Church and ministry, than a *succession of sound doctrine*.

Let us first hear the *Fathers* on this subject. Mr. Goode has given us their views in his elaborate work on the "Divine Rule of Faith and Practice." "I know of no promise," observes Mr. Goode, (and his own views are worthy of attention in this connexion,) "that, whatever may be the character or conduct of the parties concerned, such a blessing (viz. as the gift of the Holy Spirit) shall be conferred in all cases where ordination is canonically performed. And the argument that because our Lord promised his Apostles to be with them even unto the end of the world, therefore he is present with all those canonically ordained by outward succession from the Apostles, is not worth answering. To assume that our Lord in these words spake to the Apostles only as the representatives of the pastors of the Church, and not as the representatives of his disciples generally, is, to say the least, unwarranted, and to me appears much more. And thus thought Bishop Pearson, for he has expounded the promise as one applying to the Church at large,<sup>1</sup> following moreover in this the interpretation given to the passage by Leo and Augustine. Equally untenable is the notion that the gift conferred upon Timothy by the imposition of St. Paul's hands must necessarily be equally conferred by any canonical ordination performed now.

In fact, as to scriptural arguments for such a doctrine, there can be no pretence made to them."<sup>2</sup>

As to the *Fathers*, Mr. Goode says—"I am not

<sup>1</sup> On the Creed, p. 512.

<sup>2</sup> Goode, Vol. II. p. 92.



aware that such a doctrine (viz. as that of the Tractators,) was ever thought of by the primitive fathers." He then cites numerous passages from some of the best of the Fathers, in support of the two following propositions, to wit:—

(1.) "That the Apostolical Succession does not secure to a Church soundness in the fundamentals of the faith, and that those who have not the latter, though they have the former, are to be avoided.

(2.) "That the only absolutely essential point is *doctrinal* succession, or holding the SAME FAITH the Apostles did; and that where that faith is held, there, though perhaps labouring under irregularities and imperfections in other respects, Christ's Church is to be found, and consequently the presence of the Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

I give one or two of the passages he quotes in proof of the latter of these propositions.

"The Church," says Jerome, "does not depend upon walls, but upon the truth of its doctrines. *The Church is there where the true faith is.* But about fifteen or twenty years ago, heretics possessed all the walls of the churches here. For twenty years ago, heretics possessed all these churches. But the true Church was there where the true faith was." "A good answer this, by the way, (Mr. Goode adds) to the common question of the Romanists to the Protestant Churches, where their Church was before Luther."

No less explicit is the testimony of Gregory Nazianzen. Speaking of Athanasius he says—"He was not less the successor of Mark in his piety, than in

<sup>1</sup> Goode, vol. ii. p. 93.

his presidential seat: in the latter, indeed, he was very far distant from him; but, in the former, he is found next after him; *which, in truth, is properly to be considered succession.* For to hold the *same doctrine* is to be of the same throne; but to hold an opposite doctrine, is to be of an opposite throne. And the one has the name, but the other the *reality* of succession.”

Let us come now to the Reformers and later divines. I am indebted for several of the following quotations to Mr. Powell.

*Calvin*:—“We have pretty opponents to deal with, who, when they are clearly convicted of corrupting the doctrines and worship of Christianity, then take shelter under the pretence that no molestation ought to be offered to the *successors of the Apostles.* Now this question of being successors of the Apostles, must be decided by an examination of the *doctrines* maintained. To this examination, confident of the goodness of our cause, we cheerfully appeal. Let them not reply, that they have a right to assume that their doctrine is Apostolic; for this is begging the question. What! shall they who have all things contrary to the Apostles, prove that they are their true successors solely by the continuance of time? As well might a murderer, having slain the master of the house and taken possession of the same, maintain that he was the lawful heir. . . . For suppose that such an unbroken line as they pretend, really existed, yet if their Apostleship had *perished*, (and it necessarily did by their corruption of God’s worship, by their destruction of the offices of Christ, by the extinction of the light of doctrine amongst them and the pollution of the sacrament,) what then becomes of their succession?

Except, indeed, as an heir succeeds to the dead, so they, true piety being extinct among them, succeed to domination. But seeing they have changed entirely the government of the Church, the chasm between them and the Apostles is so vast, as to exclude any communication of right from the one to the other. And to conclude the point in one word, I deny the *succession scheme* as a thing utterly without foundation.”<sup>1</sup>

*Melancthon*:—“The Church is not bound to an ordinary succession, as they call it, of Bishops, but to the Gospel. When Bishops do not teach the *truth*, an ordinary succession avails nothing to the Church; they ought of necessity to be forsaken.”<sup>2</sup>

*Peter Martyr*:—“It is a most trifling thing which they object against us (the Reformers,) that we want the right succession. It is quite enough that we have *succeeded to the faith* which the Apostles taught, and which was maintained by the holy fathers in the best ages of the Church.”<sup>3</sup>

*Bradford the Martyr*:—“You will not find in all the Scripture this grand essential point of the succession of Bishops.”<sup>4</sup>

*Bishop Jewell*:—“The grace of God is promised to pious souls, and to those that fear God, and is not affixed to *Chairs and Successions*.”<sup>5</sup> “For that ye tell so many fair tales about Peter’s succession, we demand of you wherein the Pope succeedeth Peter? You answer, “He succeedeth him in his chair;” as if Peter had been some time installed in Rome, and had solemnly sat all day with his triple

<sup>1</sup> Vera Eccl. Ref. Ratio.

<sup>4</sup> Fox’s Acts and Monuments.

<sup>2</sup> Loci Com. de Signis monstr. Eccl.

<sup>3</sup> Loci Com. Cl. 4.

<sup>5</sup> Apology.

crown, in his *Pontificalibus*, and in a chair of gold. And thus, having lost both religion and *doctrine*, ye think it sufficient at last, to hold by the *chair*, as if a soldier that had lost his sword, would play the man with his scabbard. But so Caiaphas succeeded Aaron; so wicked Manasses succeeded David; so may *Anti-christ* easily sit in Peter's chair."<sup>1</sup>—The learned Whitaker, in confuting Bellarmine, observes, "This argument proves not that the succession of *persons* alone is conclusive, or sufficient of itself; but only that it avails when they had first proved (from the Scriptures) that *the faith* they preached was the same faith which the Apostles had preached before them. *Faith*, therefore, is, as it were, the *soul* of the succession; which faith being wanting, the *naked succession of persons* is like a *dead carcase without the soul*." Dr. Field, another distinguished divine of the Church of England, says;—"Thus still we see that *truth of doctrine* is a necessary note whereby the Church must be known and discerned, and not ministry or succession, or any thing else without it."<sup>2</sup>

I find another passage quite to my purpose in the thirteenth examination of archdeacon Philpot, the Martyr, before the archbishop of York and other Popish dignitaries.

"*York*:—'How answer you this argument?—Rome hath known succession of Bishops; which your Church hath not. Ergo, that is the Catholic Church, and yours is not, because there is no such succession can be proved in your Church.'

"*Philpot*:—'I deny, my Lord, that succession of Bishops is an infallible point to know the Church by:

<sup>1</sup> Defence of Apology, p. 634.

<sup>2</sup> On the Church, B. ii. ch. 6.

for there may be a succession of Bishops known in a place, and yet there be no church, as at Antioch and Jerusalem, and in other places where the Apostles abode as well as at Rome. But if you put to the succession of Bishops, *succession of doctrine* withal (as St. Augustine doth,) I will grant it to be a good proof for the Catholic Church; but a local succession is nothing available.’”<sup>1</sup>

I add to this series only one more testimony—that of Bishop Pilkington. In his “confutation” of the charges brought against the Reformers (of whom he was one) by a popish writer, he has occasion to meet and refute the very theory of succession now insisted upon by nominal Protestants. I shall quote only a few sentences from his answer—“We do esteem and reverence the continual succession of good Bishops in any place, if they can be found; if they cannot, we run not from God, but rather stick fast to his word. . . Succession of good Bishops, is a great blessing of God: but because God and his truth hangs not on man nor place, we rather hang on the undeceivable truth of God’s word in all doubts, than on any Bishops, place, or man.” “The glorying of this succession is like the proud brags of the Jews, for their genealogies and pedigrees, saying, ‘We have Abraham for our father;’ but our Saviour, Christ, said, ‘Ye are of the devil, your father, and his works will ye do.’ So it may be said to these which crack that they have the Apostles for their fathers, that they have the Pope their father; for his works and doctrine they follow, and not the Apostles’. As Christ our Lord therefore proved the Jews to be of the devil,

<sup>1</sup> Philpot’s Examinations and Writings: Parker Society’s Edit. p. 139.



because they filled his desires, and not the children of Abraham; so it is easy to see whose children these be, when they follow the Pope and not the Apostles. *Succession in doctrine* makes them the sons of the Prophets and Apostles, and not setting in the same seat nor being bishops of the same place.”—He names several of the most abandoned of the Popes, and adds—“This is the goodly succession that he would have us to follow, of doctrine in Romish Popes, . . . these be the successors and fathers, whom he would have us to be like unto. God defend all good folk from all such doings, sayings, believing, living, loving, or following! Except God dwell and be tied in chairs, seats, and places, he cannot dwell in such wicked men as these Popes be.” “So stands the succession of the Church, not in mitres, palaces, lands, or lordships, but in *teaching true doctrine*, and rooting out the contrary. . . . He that does these is the true successor of the Prophets and Apostles, though he live in the wilderness, as Elias did, or be tied in chains, as Peter and Paul: he that does not, is not their successor in deed, but in name only, though he have the Pope’s blessing, cruche, and mitre, lands, and palaces, hallowings and blessings, or all that the Pope has devised for his Prelates.”<sup>1</sup>

These authorities, which might be multiplied if it were necessary, show that the High-Church party in making a personal succession of Prelates the principal mark of a true church and ministry, have taken up a Popish figment which was rejected by the Reformers and Reformed Churches, the Church of England included. In insisting upon a succession of *sound doctrine* instead of a mere personal succession, the Re-

<sup>1</sup> Works, pp. 597—605. Parker Soc. Edit.



formers did not (as already remarked) intend to disparage the importance of that *order* which Christ has established in his house. They inculcated submission to lawful ecclesiastical authority. They taught that separation from a Church on any other than imperative grounds, was a grievous sin. Cherishing the ministry as a divine institution, while they admitted that exigencies *might* occur<sup>2</sup> in which the Church would be justifiable in receiving as ministers individuals who were evidently called of God to the work, but who *could* not be set apart to it with all the usual forms, they held that the orderly method of induction into the sacred office was by the laying on of the hands of those already invested with it, and to this method of ordination they required a rigid adherence. An examination of the public symbols of the various Presbyterian Churches, would show that they have guarded this point with quite as much care as the Church of England. And if it were otherwise,—if they even practised lay-ordination—with what consistency could *they* except to it, who allow *women*, in some circumstances, to administer one of the sacraments?

Without pursuing further this examination of the principles on which the High-Church theory rests, I now assert *as a matter of fact*, that whatever virtue there may be in any actual or supposed personal succession in the ministry, BELONGS AS REALLY AND FULLY TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES AS TO THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH. High-Churchmen are much in the habit of boasting of the “antiquity” of their Church, as a Church planted by the Apostles, while the “sects” around them are at most only two or

<sup>1</sup> See above, Art. xxxi. of the French Prot. Church.

three centuries old. Leaving other Churches to speak for themselves, I have only to say that as far as the Presbyterian Churches are concerned, this glorying is quite out of place. The true Church of Christ, excepting those portions of it composed of the Waldenses and Albigenses, and others of an earlier date, who refused submission to the Papal See, together with such real believers as were preserved in the Oriental Churches, was, for a thousand years before the Reformation, in the Church of Rome. They were *in* it, though not *of* it—in it, as the Hebrews were in Egypt and afterwards in Babylon; as the seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal, were among their idolatrous countrymen; and as God's chosen ones at the time of the advent, the few who "waited for the consolation of Israel," were mingled with the multitude whose priests and rulers were about to crucify their Messiah. At the Reformation, they, many of them at least, came out. The English Reformers and ours had *the same ordination*. As they were alike ordained, so they were alike deposed and excommunicated by the Romish Church. If her orders were good for the English Reformers, they were good for ours. As to the validity of her acts of deposition and excommunication, it is a question upon which there is a diversity of sentiment among Protestants. All that is essential to my present argument, is, that if those acts were valid against a part of the Reformers, they were valid against the whole. If they were a mere *brutum fulmen* as to one portion of them, they could be no more as to the rest. Our orders, then, at the period of the Reformation, stand *on the same footing* as theirs; and our churches, whose *origin* was at least as much earlier than theirs

as the Apostles were anterior to the Fathers of the third or fourth century, are also older than theirs as *Reformed Churches*; for Presbyterianism was established on the continent many years before the English Church separated from Rome. Before the Reformation had made much progress in the Church of England, the *Puritans*—its pride and glory, if truth and holiness have any value above rites and ceremonies—were driven out of it by the tyranny of Elizabeth and her Bishops. About eighty years later that Church was severed, by act of Parliament, from its union with the State, and the Presbyterian Church was established in its place. All the English divines who sat in the Westminster Assembly, and very many others of that period, had received Episcopal ordination. It will not be denied that their orders, and those of the Puritans and all others who left the English Church, were valid. From that period to the present, we are far more certain of an unbroken succession in our ministry than Prelatists can be of theirs. Our ordinations have been performed with appropriate solemnities and after the Scripture model, “by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery:” and while it is necessary for them to make out a continuous series of Prelates, each one eligible and validly ordained, we have only to make out a continuous series of Presbyters. The state of the question between us, then, is this. Down to the period immediately subsequent to the Reformation, our orders and those of the Episcopal Church stand on precisely the same footing. Since that period ours have been handed down—whether through the Reformed or Lutheran Churches of the continent, the Church of Scotland, or the Non-Episcopal Churches of England, Wales,

and Ireland,—by a series of Presbyterian ordinations; while theirs have come down *from the same sources* through a series of prelatical ordinations. The controversy resolves itself, therefore, into the question, WHETHER PRESBYTERS HAVE A RIGHT TO ORDAIN. If they have, our succession is even better than theirs, because it can be traced with more certainty.

The question here stated has already been argued. It has been shown, if I mistake not, that the Scriptures distinctly recognize the right of ordination as belonging to Presbyters. That which has a clear scriptural warrant, needs no confirmation from other sources. It may be satisfactory, however, to adduce a few authorities, which show how the Bible has been understood on this point, by learned and eminent divines of the Church of England.

It was the common sentiment of the English Reformers, that Bishops and Presbyters were of *one order*—that they had inherently the same powers—and that the distinction between them, by virtue of which the right of ordination was given exclusively to the Bishops, was, as Jerome so clearly teaches, a human arrangement, adopted from views of expediency merely. Cranmer's opinion has been often quoted: "The Bishops and Priests were at one time, and were no two things; but *both one office*, in the beginning of Christ's religion." This was not only his opinion, but that of the entire English Church in his time, as appears from two remarkable documents which are thus referred to by Prynne in his "*Un-bishoping of Timothy and Titus.*"<sup>1</sup> "All the Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons and Clergy of England,

<sup>1</sup> London, 1636, p. 106. Published *anonymously*.

in their book entitled, 'The Institution of a Christian Man,' *subscribed with all their hands*, and dedicated to king Henry VIII., An. 1537, chapter of Orders; and king Henry VIII. himself, in his book styled 'A necessary Erudition for any Christian Man,' set out by authority of the statute, approved by the lords spiritual and temporal, and nether-house of Parliament, prefaced with the king's own royal epistle, and published by his special command in the year 1543, in the chapter of Orders; expressly resolve, that '*Priests and Bishops* by God's law are ONE AND THE SAME, and that the power of *ordination and excommunication* belongs *equally* to them both.'" The documents here mentioned have been preserved by Burnet, and, as his history is generally accessible, can be examined by those who feel curious to see them. The party who are perpetually exhorting men to "hear the Church," would do well to remember that if their Church has ever spoken on the question now under consideration, her voice is to be heard in these documents. Are *they* willing to "hear the Church?"

I cite further authorities:—"I have ever declared my opinion to be," says Archbishop Usher, "that *episcopus et presbyter gradu tantum differunt non ordine*, and, consequently, that in places where Bishops cannot be had, the ordination by Presbyters standeth valid."—Dr. Forbes, of Aberdeen: "Presbyters have, by divine right, the power of ordaining as well as of preaching and baptizing."—Bishop Burnet: "No Bishop in Scotland during my stay in that kingdom, (that is, from 1643 to 1688, a period of forty-five years,) ever did so much as desire any of the Presbyters who went over from the Church of Scotland,



to be re-ordained." Lord Chancellor King, after showing that Presbyters in the primitive Church had full authority to administer the ordinances, adds— "As for ordination, I find clearer proofs of Presbyters *ordaining*, than of their administering the Lord's Supper." In 1582, Archbishop Grindal licensed John Morrison, a Presbyterian minister from Scotland, to preach over his whole province without re-ordination.<sup>1</sup> The able author of "Essays on the Church," himself a member of the Church of England, says, in speaking of that Church, "It was the judgment of her founders, perhaps unanimously, but at all events generally, that the Bishop of the primitive Church was merely a *presiding elder*; a Presbyter ruling over Presbyters; *identical in order and commission*; superior only in degree and in authority."<sup>2</sup> It would be easy to produce a *catena* of eminent English divines from Crammer to this day, including the present Archbishop of Canterbury, who have held these sentiments and who have recognized the Presbyterian Churches as true Churches. The High-Church notion that Prelacy rests upon a *divine right* to the exclusion of other systems, and that Bishops are *jure divino* above Presbyters, was, it is well known, first broached by Dr. Bancroft in a sermon preached by him at Paul's Cross, London, in 1588. The excitement occasioned by it, showed how opposed this doctrine was to the views of the English divines of that day. Sir Francis Knolls wrote to Dr. Reynolds, one of the most learned and able divines of the age, to request his opinion in relation

<sup>1</sup> The license may be seen in Dr. Smyth's learned work on "Presbytery and Prelacy," p. 435.

<sup>2</sup> P. 251, Lond. Ed.



to the sentiment advanced by Bancroft, that Bishops were superior to Presbyters "by God's ordinance." Dr. Reignold's reply is elaborate and explicit.<sup>1</sup> He says Bancroft's arguments in support of his opinion are "partly weak and partly false." Against the opinion, he cites Bishop Jewell, who, in controverting the same sentiment as urged by the Jesuit Harding, had opposed to it the names of Chrysostom, Jerome, Austin, and Ambrose. To these he adds, Theodoret, Sedulius, Primasius, and Theophylact; Œcumenius, Anselm, Gregory, and Gratian. "To which it may be added," proceeds the Dr. "that all they who have for five hundred years last past endeavoured the Reformation of the Church, have taught that all pastors, whether they be called Bishops or Priests, are invested *with equal authority and power.*" He instances the Waldenses, Marsilius Patavius, Wickliffe and his followers, Huss and the Hussites, Luther and Calvin, Bullinger and Musculus, and, in England, Pilkington, Humphrey and Whitaker, the Regius Professors of Divinity, Bradford, Lambert, and Fulk:—these all agree in this matter; "and so," he adds, "do all divines beyond sea that I ever read, and doubtless many more whom I never read. . . . But what need I make any further mention of particular writers? This is the common doctrine of the *Churches* of Helvetia, Savoy, France, Scotland, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Belgium, and lastly, of *England*, as the 'Harmony of Confessions' witnesseth. Wherefore, (he concludes,) since Dr. Bancroft will certainly never pretend that an 'heresy' condemned by the

<sup>1</sup> It is often referred to by modern writers. All that part of relating to the question in hand, may be seen in Boyse's "Ancient Episcopacy not Diocesan," Lond. 1712, pp. 13—18.

whole Church in its most flourishing times, was yet accounted a sound and Christian doctrine by all these I have mentioned, I hope he will confess himself *mistaken* when he asserted, that the authority of the Bishops over the clergy was founded on divine institution."

To this formidable array of authorities I subjoin only one more. It is that of Mons. Claude, the celebrated French divine, who, after proving that the identity of Bishops and Presbyters and the right of the latter to ordain, has the sanction of many distinguished names among the Fathers and later theologians, closes with these words. "It is, therefore, a right that is naturally belonging to the Priests (or Presbyters) and of which they cannot be deprived by human constitution and orders. . . . In effect, William, Bishop of Paris, has made no scruple to say, according to his hypothesis, that if there were no more but three mere priests in the world, one of them must needs consecrate one of the others to be a Bishop, and the other to be an Archbishop. And to speak my own thoughts freely, it seems to me, that that firm opinion of the *absolute necessity of Episcopacy*, that goes so high as to own no church, or call, or ministry, or sacraments, or salvation in the world, where there are no Episcopal ordinations, although there should be the true faith, the true doctrine and piety there, and which would that all religion should depend on a formality, and even on a formality that we have shown to be of no other than human institution; that opinion, I say, cannot be looked on otherwise than as the very worst character and mark of the highest hypocrisy, *a piece of Pharisaism throughout*, that 'strains at a gnat when it swallows a camel;' and I cannot avoid

having at least a contempt of those kind of thoughts, and a compassion for those who fill their heads with them.”<sup>1</sup>

These extracts show that it is the common judgment of REFORMED CHRISTENDOM, a party in the Church of England and in the Episcopal Church in this country, excepted, that Bishops and Presbyters are, according to the Word of God, of *one order*, and that PRESBYTERS, equally with Bishops, HAVE A RIGHT TO ORDAIN. It detracts nothing from the force of this conclusion, that the churches just named practically deny the validity of Presbyterian ordination. We quote the Church of England, both as to theory and practice, *against itself*; and leave it to its friends to harmonize its inconsistencies. As regards its refusal to recognize any except Prelatical ordinations, it is to be regretted that that Church and its daughter this side the Atlantic, should have suffered the High-Church-ism, which was so heartily repudiated by its founders, to place them in a position which has so offensive and *Popish* an aspect towards other evangelical churches; because this cannot but have an injurious effect upon the general interests of Christianity. But if they choose to give themselves up to the sway of this spirit—if their Bishops should even take Laud himself, the all but canonized “Confessor and Martyr” of the Oxford coterie, for their model, as, indeed, some of them seem quite willing to do—it could not cancel their past testimony to the great scriptural truth, that Presbyters and Bishops are identical in order, and are, in so far as the divine institution of the office is concerned, *clothed with the same powers*.

<sup>1</sup> Defence of the Reformation, II. 286.

This position being fully established by the authority of Scripture, and confirmed by the amplest human testimonies, I now apply it to the doctrine of the SUCCESSION. I have shown above that the Presbyterian and Episcopal Churches have the *same* succession down to the period of their separation from Rome; and that the entire question between us as regards the succession since that time, resolves itself into the single inquiry, whether the right of ordination belongs to Presbyters. This question is now settled affirmatively, by the common voice of the Church of England and the other Reformed Churches, the Fathers, and the Word of God. Our succession, therefore, is proved to be at least as valid, as regular, and in all respects as satisfactory, as that of the Episcopal Church *can* be. I use the phrase "at least," to intimate that on some grounds our succession is *better* than theirs. So it is undoubtedly regarded by Presbyterians. And that, not only for the reason already given, that it can be traced with more certainty than theirs; but also because, in our view, their ordinations are *not performed after the scriptural method*. This is virtually conceded by all those Episcopal divines (and we have seen that they at one period embraced, as far as can be ascertained, the entire clergy of the English Establishment,) who teach that Presbyters are by Divine appointment one with Bishops, and that the sole power of ordination has been given to the Bishops by a mere human compact. This is the same as to say that ordinations were originally performed by Presbyters. With *us*, they are performed by Presbyters still. Which has adhered to the Divine model? Their ordinations of Presbyters, again, are performed by a *single indivi-*

*dual*. We read of no such instance in the New Testament: and *our* ministers are set apart by a plurality of ordainers. Which Church has followed the model here?—I do not mention these defects as vitiating their orders; but defects they certainly are. And in arguing with a party who lay so much stress upon forms, it is proper to refer to them as exhibiting the superiority of our succession to that which is a ground of so much unseemly boasting with a certain order of Prelatists.

It has been my aim in this chapter to show,

1st. That the theory which would suspend the Church and the ministry upon an unbroken succession of Prelates, is radically wrong *in its principles*.

2dly. That this theory is at variance with the sentiments of the Reformers, and with the doctrines of the Protestant Churches as expressed by their leading divines and in their creeds and symbols.

3dly. That the succession which constitutes the chief mark of a true Church and ministry, is a succession of *sound doctrine*. And,

4thly. That, as a matter of fact, the Presbyterian Churches enjoy all the advantages of a *personal succession* which can fairly be claimed for the Episcopal Church.

There are many questions connected with this subject which afford matter, some of them, for curious speculation, others, for mature and profitable inquiry and reflection. Into these questions I have neither the time nor the disposition to enter. One thought which will be likely to suggest itself to those who have followed the train of this discussion, is, that they assume a grave responsibility, who would appropriate all the rights and privileges of the Church of



Christ, all the promises of the Gospel and the gifts of salvation, to societies prelatically organized. If, as the XXXIX Articles teach, "the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments be duly administered," it must be not merely a violation of Christian charity, but a sin against Christ himself, to deny the character of a Church to any society possessing these attributes. This is a matter, let it be observed, which concerns High-Churchmen, much more than it does Non-Episcopalians. With us it is a small matter to be judged of man's judgment.

And even if we were sensitive to the opinions of our fellow-men on this question, the assumptions of the Puseyite school could not disturb our equanimity, counterpoised as they are by the united testimony of all<sup>1</sup> the Reformed Churches. But it may not be so small a matter for *them* to brand as "schismatical organizations," churches which God has owned as his own planting, and which he has richly adorned with the gifts and graces of his Spirit. After all, however, this conduct ought not to excite surprise. A party who can court the friendship of the Church of Rome, would be strangely inconsistent not to shun communion with the Reformed churches. Their Articles, as we have just seen, make "the preaching of the pure word of God and the due administration of the sacraments," the *essential* marks of a true Church. No society which lacks these marks, can, according to these Articles, be a true Church. But *they* acknow-

<sup>1</sup> The few Churches on the Continent which have adopted a modified Prelacy on grounds of expediency merely, are not properly exceptions to this remark.



ledge the Romish Church as a true Church; and if they believe their own Articles, they must, of course, believe that she has these characteristics. What other treatment, then, could *Protestants* look for from men who hold that “*the pure word of God is preached*” in the Church of Rome; and that the Lord’s Supper is “*duly administered*” when one of the elements is withheld from the people, and the other, first transubstantiated “into the body and blood, yea, the whole soul and divinity” of Christ, and then offered up, in the midst of heathenish rites, as a “sacrifice?” It would be very unreasonable for Protestant Churches to expect to be recognized as Churches by persons entertaining these views. For it is certain that if Rome has “the pure preaching of the word and the due administration of the sacraments,” we have *not*; and *vice versa*. And to suppose that any set of individuals can find these two essential notes of a true Church, both in that Church and the Reformed Churches, is to suppose them capable of impossibilities. It will be time enough for them to acknowledge our Churches, when they shall have discovered that to recite from the pulpit the idle legends and “lying wonders” of Popery, is not precisely what our Saviour meant when he said, “GO, PREACH THE GOSPEL;” and that when he instituted the Lord’s Supper, he contemplated something a little different from TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CHARACTERISTICS AND TENDENCIES OF THE HIGH-CHURCH SYSTEM.—THE RULE OF FAITH.

I HAVE endeavoured to show that the dogma of an unbroken Prelatical Succession is condemned by the united testimony of SCRIPTURE, HISTORY, and familiar and admitted FACTS. I have also attempted to expose the fallacy of the principles on which it rests, and have contrasted it with the TRUE DOCTRINE OF SUCCESSION as laid down in the New Testament, and held by the Fathers and all the Reformed Churches. Here the discussion might with propriety be arrested. The dogma in question, however, is a radical part of a SYSTEM, some of the CHARACTERISTICS AND TENDENCIES of which it may be well to notice before dismissing the subject. Of this system, the late celebrated Dr. Arnold has given the following concise and lucid summary.

“ ‘The sacraments, and not preaching, are the sources of divine grace.’ So it is said in the advertisement prefixed to the first volume of the Tracts for the Times. But the only security for the efficacy of the sacraments, is the Apostolical commission of the Bishops, and, under them, of the Presbyters of the Church. So it is said in the preamble to the resolutions already quoted. These two doctrines are the foundation of the whole system. God’s grace and our salvation come to us principally through the virtue of the sacraments; the virtue of the sacraments depends on the Apostolical succession of those who administer

them. The clergy, therefore, thus holding in their hands the most precious gifts of the Church, acquire naturally the title of the Church itself; the Church, as possessed of so mysterious a virtue, as to communicate to the only means of salvation their saving efficacy, becomes at once an object of the deepest reverence. What wonder if to a body endowed with so transcendent a gift, there should be given also the spirit of wisdom to discern all truth; so that the solemn voice of the Church in its creeds, and in the decrees of its general councils, must be received as the voice of God himself. Nor can such a body be supposed to have commended any practices or states of life which are not really excellent, and the duty either of all Christians, or of those, at least, who would follow the most excellent way. Fasting, therefore, and the state of celibacy, are, the one a Christian obligation, the other a Christian perfection. Again, being members of a body so exalted, and receiving our very salvation in a way altogether above reason, we must be cautious how we either trust to our individual conscience, rather than to the command of the Church, or how we venture to exercise our reason at all in judging of what the Church teaches: childlike faith and childlike obedience are the dispositions which God most loves. What, then, are they who are not of the Church, who do not receive the sacraments from those who can alone give them their virtue? Surely they are aliens from God, they cannot claim his covenanted mercies; and the goodness which may be apparent in them, may not be a real goodness. God may see that it is false, though to us it appear sincere: but it is certain that they do not possess the only appointed means of salvation; and

therefore we must consider their state as dangerous, although we may not venture to condemn them."<sup>1</sup>

The system here delineated is held with various unimportant modifications, by the Puseyite party on both sides of the Atlantic. Reserving a fuller exhibition of it for the next chapter, I design in this to show, (and it is not the least exceptionable feature of the system,) that it proposes AN UNAUTHORIZED AND DELUSIVE RULE OF FAITH.

Its advocates express themselves with considerable diversity of sentiment on this subject, while they agree in repudiating the right of private judgment and the great Protestant principle that the Bible alone is the only and all-sufficient rule of faith. The Bible no more meets the exigencies of this system, than it does the demands of the Romish Church: and Romanists and High-Churchmen dread—and for the same reason—the free exercise of private judgment in interpreting the Scriptures. It has been the common expedient of errorists in all ages to cry down the Bible and cry up tradition. This was done by the Valentinian heretics even as early as the time of Irenæus, who says of them—“When they are reprovèd from the Scriptures, they immediately begin to accuse the Scriptures themselves; as if they were not correct, nor of authority, and that they are not consistent; and that *the truth cannot be found out from them by those who are ignorant of tradition.*”<sup>2</sup> This is precisely the Puseyite doctrine. The Bible is a very obscure book, and can be understood only by the aid of “Catholic tradition.” *The Church* is the authorized expounder of the sacred volume, and we are

<sup>1</sup> Christian Life, Pref. p. xv.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by Goode, on the Rule of Faith, I. 308.

bound to defer to her interpretation of it. Thus they say, the notion of the Bible being "the sole authoritative judge in controversies of faith, is a *self-destructive principle*."<sup>1</sup> "The Rule of faith" is "made up of *Scripture and Tradition* together."<sup>2</sup> "When the sense of Scripture, as interpreted by reason, is contrary to the sense given to it by Catholic antiquity, we ought to side with the latter."<sup>3</sup> "The unanimous witness of Christendom is the only and the fully sufficient, and the really existing guarantee of the whole revealed faith."<sup>4</sup> "The Church is, in matter of fact, our great divinely appointed guide into saving truth, under divine grace, whatever may be the abstract power or sufficiency of the Bible."<sup>5</sup> "That the Bible is in the hands of the Church *to be dealt with in such a way as the Church shall consider best for the expression of her own mind at the time* . . . may surely be considered as a Catholic axiom."<sup>6</sup> "The true Catholic pastor who thus receives the word of God, with the transmitted witness of the Church, who guides himself by the Holy Scriptures, *not as he understands them, but as Catholic antiquity has revealed and Catholic consent has kept their meaning*, will be chastised and schooled by this submission of his judgment to the wise and good of every age, into that childlike spirit which God will bless."<sup>7</sup>

The first question that will suggest itself to a thoughtful mind, on reading these extracts, is, what is meant by the phrases, "Catholic antiquity," and "Catholic tradition?" The many-voiced answer to

<sup>1</sup> Newman on Romanism, p. 35.

<sup>5</sup> Brit. Crit. vol. 24. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Keble's Sermon, p. 82.

<sup>6</sup> Ib. No. 60, p. 453.

<sup>3</sup> Newman on Romanism, p. 160.

<sup>7</sup> Bp. Doane, Troy Ser. p. 23.

<sup>4</sup> Tract 78.

this question furnishes a fine illustration of the beautiful *simplicity* of the proposed rule of faith. With some, "Catholic antiquity" means the first two hundred, with others, the first three hundred and fifty, with others still, the first six hundred, years of the Christian era. "Catholic tradition" is, with one class, summed up in the Nicene and the so-called "Apostles'" Creeds: with a second, it comprises the decrees of four, and with a third, the decrees of six general councils. The selection of these four or six councils out of the whole series of early Synods, is left to each man's judgment or caprice. Mr. Palmer names six which he admits as œcumenical and of "binding authority;" and excludes nine others which were held before the division of the eastern and western churches. Among the latter is the Synod of Ariminum which he rejects because it was attended by *only* four hundred Bishops, and could not, therefore, be recognized "as the universal Church." Yet of the six he acknowledges, only one had so many as four hundred Bishops; and the numbers that attended the other five respectively, were as follows: three hundred and eighteen, one hundred and fifty, two hundred, one hundred and sixty-five, and one hundred and seventy. Yet these Synods were, *that* was not, "the universal Church!" Mr. Palmer could have given a better reason for excluding the council of Ariminum, had he seen fit. That council sanctioned the *Arian* heresy: and to recognize an heretical Synod as œcumenical, would spoil the theory that œcumenical Synods cannot err.—The Romanists, again, include in their rule of faith the traditions, written and unwritten, of the Church, (that is, of their own Church,) in all ages; while High-Churchmen would discriminate between



Catholic and un-Catholic traditions, by applying the famous rule of Vincent, the monk of Lerins, "*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus traditum est,*" that is, we are to believe "whatever has been delivered *always, every where, and by all.*"

It is obvious that our rule of faith will be one thing or another according as we adopt one or another of these definitions of "Catholic antiquity" and "Catholic tradition." Who is to decide this preliminary question? A traditionist would reply, "the Church." But, not to ask here what authority the Church has to determine this point, the answer assumes that "the Church" is known and recognized. Before I can suffer any society or institute to decide so important a question for me, I must know that it *is* the Church. And this I can be assured of only by comparing its characteristics with the marks of a true Church as prescribed in the Scriptures. In other words, I must *use my private judgment* in finding out the true Church, before I can suffer the Church to fix for me the bounds and metes of that "antiquity" and "tradition" which are to enter into my rule of faith. If, on the other hand, I define these important terms for myself, this, again, involves the exercise of my private judgment. In either case, it is *private judgment* that decides the fundamental question, "What is the Rule of Faith." And if private judgment may be, and must be, so far trusted as to decide this question, it is not easy to see why it may not be allowed, under that responsibility which every human being owes to his Creator, to interpret the Scriptures also.

Supposing an individual to have made his election out of the various and frequently conflicting meanings attached to the phrases that have been quoted, an-

other question will present itself for his consideration, viz. "What claim has 'Catholic tradition' to constitute a part of the Rule of Faith? Why am I bound to interpret the Bible according to the teachings of the 'early Church?'"

That we are under great obligations to the Christian Fathers and primitive Christians, is a point upon which there can be no debate. We are indebted to them, under Providence, for the canon of Scripture. We rely entirely upon their testimony, in so far as external evidence is concerned, for our knowledge of the fact that the books now composing the Bible were designed to constitute the sacred canon. We learn from them that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, which is indeed distinctly implied in the New Testament, was universally recognized by the first Christians. We have also their attestation to the general prevalence in their day, of those doctrines which are now imbodyed in the creeds and formularies of the Reformed Churches. Besides this, some of the Fathers have left useful treatises and sermons on practical subjects, and expositions of portions of Scripture of greater or less value. But in saying this, we by no means sanction the idea that their writings are to be admitted as an essential part of the rule of faith. We regard the Fathers as *Witnesses*. In this capacity they testify to certain *facts*—such for example, as the exclusive canonicity of the sacred books we have now, and the universal observance of the "Lord's day." Relying upon their competency and credibility, we receive these and other *facts* on their testimony. On the same ground we receive it as a *fact* that certain doctrines which are concisely presented in the early creeds, were current-

ly embraced as of divine origin and obligation in the Churches of their day. And this fact, all ingenuous persons will admit, carries with it a very strong presumption in favour of the truth of those doctrines. But whether the doctrines *are* taught in Scripture, is a point we must decide for ourselves. Because a man may be a good witness to the authenticity of a disputed document, it does not follow that he is better qualified than any one else to interpret the document, or that others are bound to receive his interpretation. All that he can claim for his construction of it, is such a measure of respect as he may be entitled to from his probity, abilities, and opportunities of arriving at a just view of its meaning. This is precisely what we concede to the Fathers. Romanists and High-Churchmen, however, demand that we shall allow the Fathers to *expound* the Scriptures for us. Their "traditions" are to be made of co-ordinate authority with the Bible, or rather to be raised above it. "Catholic tradition," says Mr. Keble, "teaches revealed truth, Scripture proves it; Scripture is the document of faith, tradition the witness of it; the true creed is the catholic interpretation of Scripture, or scripturally proved tradition; Scripture by itself teaches mediately, and proves decisively; Scripture and tradition taken together are the joint rule of faith." This is sufficiently explicit. Tradition is the primary, and Scripture the secondary teacher of Divine truth. Tradition teaches, Scripture proves. The Bible is degraded into a mere echo of tradition. It can speak only in harmony with tradition. It is a rule of faith only as it accords with tradition. And tradition, according to the same writer, includes "*unwritten* as well as written" traditions—an oral law,

*“independent of, and distinct from the truths which are directly scriptural.”* It would be more consistent in Mr. Keble, and those who think with him, to omit the Bible altogether in their definition of the Rule of Faith. This is done in fact by such a theory as that propounded by them, and it would be more respectful to the Word of God to do it also in form. For if “Catholic antiquity” or “the Church,” is entrusted with another revelation which takes precedence of the Bible and to which the latter must conform, why not dispense with the Bible altogether? To bring it forward merely as an automaton, to speak at the bidding of tradition, and utter only such sounds as that may dictate, is in bad taste, and savors much of irreverence. It is in truth the Popish doctrine veiled in too thin a guise to hide its deformity.

But the question returns—What claim has tradition to this “dominion over our faith?” What warrant has “Catholic antiquity” to impose her exposition of the Bible upon all subsequent generations? If it be said, “It is reasonable to presume that those who lived near the time of the Apostles, would be more likely to know their real sentiments than people living ages later, and that we ought therefore to defer to their teachings;” I reply, first, by referring to what has already been said about the measure of respect due to the Fathers, and which it is not necessary to repeat in this connexion. Secondly—as regards the supposed familiarity of the Fathers with the views of the Apostles, nothing is more certain than that many of their expositions of the Apostolical epistles are fanciful and absurd—that their writings abound in idle fables and legends—that some of them fell into grievous errors—and that even before the Apostles had

all died, gross corruptions in doctrine and practice had disclosed themselves in the churches. Our great Epic poet has well illustrated this point, in his treatise "of Prelatical Episcopacy." In speaking of the degree of credit due to the Fathers, he instances the case of Papias, "a very ancient writer, one that had heard St. John, and was known to many that had seen and been acquainted with others of the Apostles; but who being of a shallow wit, and not understanding those traditions which he received, filled his writings with many new doctrines and fabulous conceits." According to Eusebius, "divers ecclesiastical men, and Irenæus among the rest, while they looked at the antiquity of this man, became infected with his errors." "Now (Milton proceeds) if Irenæus was so rash as to take unexamined opinions from an author of so small capacity, when he was a man, we should be more rash ourselves to rely upon those observations which he made when he was a boy. And this may be a sufficient reason to us why we need no longer muse at the spreading of many idle traditions so soon after the Apostles, while such as this Papias had the throwing them about, and the inconsiderate zeal of the next age, that heeded more the person than the doctrine, had the gathering them up. Wherever a man who had been any way conversant with the Apostles was to be found, thither flew all the inquisitive ears, although the exercise of right instructing was changed into the curiosity of impertinent fabling: where the mind was to be edified with solid doctrine, there the fancy was soothed with solemn stories: with less fervency was studied what St. Paul or St. John had written, than was listened to one that could say—  
'Here he taught, here he stood, this was his stature,



and thus he went habited; and, O happy this house that harboured him, and that cold stone whereon he rested, this village wherein he wrought such a miracle, and that pavement bedewed with the warm effusion of his last blood, that sprouted up into eternal roses to crown his martyrdom.' Thus, while all their thoughts were poured out upon circumstances, and the gazing after such men as had sat at table with the Apostles, (many of which Christ hath professed, yea, though they had cast out devils in his name, he will not know at the last day,) by this means they lost their time, and truanted in the fundamental grounds of saving knowledge, as was seen shortly by their writings."<sup>1</sup>

Now, whether Milton's estimate of the fathers be correct or not, it is certain that the mere circumstance of their having lived nearer the Apostolic age than we do, does not of itself confer upon them any authority to regulate our faith. We are willing to treat their "traditions" with due respect; but when we are required to receive them as of co-ordinate obligation with the word of God, we must insist upon a clear scriptural warrant for this claim before we can allow it. If it was the intention of the Saviour that the revelation contained in his written word should be supplemented by tradition, and that the traditions of the first few centuries should be perpetually recognized as the only proper guide to the interpretation of Scripture, it will be easy to make this fact appear from the New Testament. It is one of those points on which it is safe to say the Divine Author of Christianity *could* not have left his creatures in the dark, if his design had been what the traditionists affirm it was.

<sup>1</sup> Milton's Works, 8vo. p. 25.



The response usually made to this requisition for proof, is, that "the Bible is so obscure that it needs an authorized interpreter, and that this interpreter can only be 'Catholic antiquity,' or the Church." That some parts of the Bible are "obscure" both to the learned and the unlearned, will not be denied; but to allege that it is obscure as a whole, or obscure as to the great essential truths which it is necessary for all to understand and believe, is to gainsay its own statements and to cast dishonour upon its author. No right-minded person will refuse to avail himself of all suitable helps within his reach, in studying the sacred volume. He will humbly seek the aid of the Holy Spirit, who is the only infallible teacher. He will consult commentaries, judicious Christians, ministers of the Gospel, and learned and pious authors, as he may have opportunity. He will hold in high esteem those Creeds and Confessions which have been adopted as summaries of doctrine by evangelical churches whether in ancient or modern times. But all this involves no relinquishment of the right of private judgment—no concession that the Bible is, on fundamental points, an obscure book. Indeed, this charge against the Bible is well nigh ludicrous considering the source from whence it comes and the sort of help that is tendered us in threading the intricacies of Scripture. For "let the Scriptures be hard; are they more hard, more crabbed, more abstruse, than *the fathers*? He that cannot understand the sober, plain, and unaffected style of the Scriptures, will be ten times more puzzled with the knotty Africanisms, the pampered metaphors, the intricate and involved sentences of the fathers, besides the fantastic and declamatory flashes, the cross-jingling periods which cannot but disturb,

and come thwart a settled devotion, worse than the din of bells and rattles.”<sup>1</sup>

One assumption leads to another. Having assumed that the Bible is unintelligible without an interpreter, High-Church traditionists claim that “Catholic antiquity” is the authorized interpreter. This is the very point to be proved. The necessity (whether real or imaginary) of *some* interpreter, obviously does not justify the inference, that this office belongs to Catholic antiquity. The Romanists who admit the premises, reject the conclusion. Catholic antiquity by itself is not their interpreter of Scripture; but Catholic tradition of all ages, or rather the Church itself in one age equally with another. What we want of the traditionist—whether Romish, Anglican, or Anglo-American—is *proof* that the Church has been constituted the unerring expositor of holy writ. That a Church should challenge this prerogative to herself, or that indiscreet persons among her children should claim it for her, is not *proof*. The few scattered texts of Scripture that have been put upon the rack to make them speak in support of this theory, furnish nothing that deserves to be dignified with the name of proof. And all they *do* say is extorted by the application of that principle of private judgment, which, we are told, it is so unsafe to rely upon. In other words, the traditionist can only prove that men have no right to interpret Scripture for themselves, and that the Church is the duly appointed expositor of the Bible, by *using his own private judgment* in interpreting those texts he brings forward as his proofs. The consistency and modesty of this conduct are worthy of the system to which they belong.

<sup>1</sup> Milton’s tract, “Of Reformation in England.”

A second consideration relied upon to prove the necessity of some authoritative expositor of Scripture, is derived from the numerous heresies and divisions which, it is alleged, have resulted from the exercise of private judgment, in the interpretation of the Bible. There are various ways of answering this argument. The *argumentum ad hominem* will suffice for the present. Let the objector look at home. Scripture and tradition, he maintains, has *always* been the Church's Rule of Faith. Whence, then, came all the heresies and schisms which agitated and rent the early Church? Whence the "Roman schism?" Whence the numerous contending schools and factions both in the Western and Eastern Churches? Whence the discord and strife which now rage in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church in this country? It were well for traditionists to consider these facts, before indicting private judgment as the chief disturber of the peace of Christendom. That the abuse of this right has sometimes led to disastrous consequences, all will admit. But it remains to be proved that religion gains any thing when men bandage their eyes, and bind themselves to follow wherever the Church leads. This course, if it were generally and implicitly adopted, might preclude excitement and agitation; but the tranquillity it would produce, would be that of the Dead Sea.

Traditionists fail, then, in making out the preliminary position, that the Scriptures require an authoritative expounder: much less can they establish the claim of Catholic antiquity or the early Church to this office.

But let us come to the practical working of the proposed Rule of Faith—*Scripture interpreted by*

*Catholic antiquity*, or, more concisely, *Scripture interpreted by the Church*.

The first question to be asked here, is, "Where and when has the Church spoken?" It is common to answer this question by repeating the maxim of Vincentius Lirinensis already quoted: "Quod semper," &c.—"Whatever has been delivered *always, every where, and by all*, is to be regarded as the voice of the Church." But although this is their own rule, nothing could be more arbitrary and capricious than the mode in which High-Churchmen use it. For example, the "semper" (always) obviously excludes every doctrine not taught in the time of the *Apostles*; and the "ab omnibus," (by all,) every doctrine not taught *by* the Apostles. But this fair and natural construction would be fatal to the whole scheme of the traditionists, and it is therefore not allowed. Again, they take the liberty of rejecting many doctrines and usages prevalent in the early Church, which can plead at least equal authority, under Vincent's rule, with others which they recognize as Catholic and binding. Of this sort, were the celibacy of the clergy, the kiss of charity in their religious assemblies, and the election of Bishops by the people.

But allowing the advocates of the rule to define its terms as they see fit—to make the "always" mean say six centuries, and the "by all," the fathers within that period—the only satisfactory way for an inquirer to proceed, is to sit down to the study of those fathers and make out a scheme of the points in which they all agree. This thorough examination of from one to two hundred folios in Greek and Latin, will occupy the leisure time of any man of business for the best part of an ordinary life. And when completed, he

will have found a lamp with which he can begin to study the word of God!

High-Churchmen, of course, represent this labour as unnecessary. They would substitute for it the more summary process of "*hearing the Church.*" And when it is asked, "How can I hear the Church?" the reply is, "Hear the Church in her creeds and the decrees of her four or six general councils;" or, more compendiously still, "in her Book of Common Prayer." This is Bishop Doane's answer to the question, in his Troy Sermon, (p. 23;) and again, in his sermon at New Brunswick, entitled, "The Faith once delivered to the Saints," he says, "To one and all, then, unlearned not less than learned, we say, with admirable Dr. Hook, 'in taking the Prayer-Book for your guide to the right understanding of Scripture—the whole Prayer-Book, Creeds, Catechism, Articles, Baptismal office, office for the Eucharist, office for the ordaining of Bishops, Priests and Deacons—you take for your guide the consentient voice of the universal primitive Church,'—in other words, 'the faith once delivered to the saints.'"

If this meant only that the Episcopal Church regards the Prayer-Book as containing a compend of the inspired volume in respect to doctrine, the sacraments, the ministry, and worship, and that her members ought to pay great respect to its teachings when they study the Scriptures, no reasonable person could object to it. Other Churches have their standards of doctrine, order, and worship, to which they require their members to conform, and which they confidently recommend as summaries of the teachings of our Saviour and the inspired writers. But more than this is intended. The Prayer-Book is the exponent of



“Catholic tradition.” It utters “the consentient voice of the universal primitive Church.” It has an authority *independent* of Scripture, which it derives from Christ through the Church, and on the ground of which it is to be received as an essential part of the Rule of Faith. We are not to interpret it by the Bible, but to interpret the Bible by it. The Prayer-Book is the *primary*, the Bible the *secondary* source of the true faith.<sup>1</sup>

Now this being the character in which the Prayer-Book challenges my confidence, I must, first of all, assure myself that in hearing it, I “hear the Church.” That book, it is well known, has not the sanction of more than a twentieth, perhaps not more than a fiftieth, part of Protestant Christendom. It has been submitted to a small portion only of the body recognized by High-Churchmen as the Church Catholic. The Eastern Churches have never adopted it. The Western Church pronounces it heretical in its Articles, and declares the Churches which use it to be no part of the true Church. Before an individual, then, can acknowledge the Prayer-Book as a part of the Rule of Faith, he must satisfy himself that the Church of England and its American daughter, are branches of the true Church. This inquiry will necessarily take in the Apostolical Succession, and many other topics of no inconsiderable extent and difficulty. Then he must explore Catholic antiquity to see whether it is faithfully reflected in this volume. If the entire Prayer-Book is proposed as part of the Rule of Faith, its several portions must all be verified by an examination of the sources from which they are derived. If this distinction is claimed for certain portions of it

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Keble's views above.



only, the investigation may be restricted to them. If, again, with these are to be associated, as another constituent part of the Rule of Faith, the decrees of some four or six general councils, the history of those councils must be explored, to ascertain whether they were *general* councils, and therefore of binding obligation. These points being settled, (*by private judgment,*) the next thing is to ascertain the meaning of the documents in question. How is this to be done? If it be said, "every individual must do it for himself, with the best helps he can get;" this is a very sensible and adequate answer, but it throws men upon their private judgment, which it is a radical object with this system to avoid. Besides, if men may use their private judgment in interpreting creeds and synodical decrees which are to govern them in their study of the Bible, this is all one with their using it in interpreting the Bible itself. A consistent High-Churchman will, on this ground, refer us to *the Church* again for the true exposition of these documents. This however, will not mend the matter. For where or when has the Church given the required exposition? We have conceded (for argument's sake) that she has spoken in these formularies and decrees—that they are the voice of the Church Catholic. But where is her commentary on them? To refer for it to the annals of her councils, is to point us to the very parchments which require an annotator. To bid us seek her meaning in the consentient writings of her eminent doctors, is to put us upon a twenty years chase of an *ignis fatuus*. To direct us to the Bishop or Pastor on whose ministrations we attend, is to substitute an individual for the Church—one

fallible man like ourselves, for infallible Catholic antiquity.

The difficulty does not end here. Suppose the inquirer could find, it matters not where, a minute exposition of the creeds and the œcumenical decrees, stamped with the broad and indubitable impress of the universal Church; *that exposition* would need an interpreter as much as the documents it professed to explain. He could no more be allowed to interpret the comment for himself than the text. And if he could get an authoritative exposition of that comment, this would leave him in the same predicament still. And thus exposition might be piled upon exposition, and comment upon comment, without helping him forward a single step in his search after "Catholic truth." Absurd as these consequences are, they are the legitimate fruit of the doctrine which denies the right of private judgment, and makes the Church the only authorized expounder of the sacred oracles.

It is usual for High-Churchmen to say in reply to this view, that for all practical purposes a man "hears the Church" when he hears his own minister. There can be no doubt that people are in the habit of receiving a great many things as true, simply on the word of their pastors. Nor is any great evil likely to ensue from this practice so long as their pastors constantly refer them to the Bible, and urge them to search the Scriptures whether the doctrines they inculcate be really so. But the case is widely different when "Catholic tradition" is placed above the Bible and made essential to a right interpretation of it, and people are admonished that "when the sense of Scripture as interpreted by reason is contrary to the

sense given to it by Catholic antiquity, [or by the Church] they ought to side with the latter." In these circumstances, it becomes a question of paramount importance with every man, whether his minister is one that is empowered to speak for Catholic antiquity, that is, whether he is a true minister of the true Church. Suppose, for example, the question to be asked is this: "What is the doctrine of the Church on the subject of justification?" Admitting the maxim that when a man hears his minister he hears the Church, the Church would give different and conflicting answers to this question, according as the inquirer might happen to belong to the Romish, the Greek, or one or the other division—High-Church or Evangelical—of the Episcopal Church.<sup>1</sup> All but one of these responses must be wrong—that is, allowing that the Church Catholic has, as such, as all traditionists assert, taught any thing on the subject. It cannot, therefore, be the duty of any man to yield an implicit faith to the teachings of his own minister as the oracle of the Church. He must assure himself of the Apostolic lineage of his pastor, and of the right of the church to which he belongs to be regarded as a genuine branch of the Church universal. This will require no little time and study, and no small exercise of private judgment. These difficulties being cleared up, what has he learned when his pastor has told him what the Church teaches on any given point—say justification? Why simply how his pastor, in *the exercise of his private judgment*, understands the decrees or articles of the Church relating to justifica-

<sup>1</sup> It has been shrewdly and justly said in a very able pamphlet published a year or so ago, that "the Bible means one thing in *New Jersey*, and a far different thing in *Ohio*."—*Oxford Divinity*, p. 46.

tion. This answer or exposition, he, again, understands according to the construction put upon it by *his* private judgment. Another pastor might, it is obvious, understand the Church differently; and another auditor (or reader) might understand the reply of his pastor differently. In all these details, the right of private judgment *must* be and is recognized. How ineffably absurd, then, is it to thrust in the Church between man and the Bible, under the pretence that it is dangerous to allow the exercise of private judgment upon the Scriptures, and that this scheme supercedes the necessity of it.

To sum up, then, in a few words what I have to say further upon this subject,—

1. The High-Church doctrine of the Rule of Faith impeaches the perfection and sufficiency of the Scriptures.—It would be superfluous to cite specific texts to prove that the Bible claims these attributes for itself;<sup>1</sup> and equally superfluous, after what has been said, to show in what way this doctrine discards the claim.

2. This doctrine is in conflict with the explicit teaching of the word of God. To name but two passages: The Bereans are commended for bringing the doctrines of Paul himself to the test of Scripture. And this eminent Apostle says to the Galatians, “Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” We are here instructed to try every doctrine, by whomsoever preached, by the written Scriptures. Even if an *angel* should come to us with a message at variance with the revelation we have, it would be our duty to

<sup>1</sup> See Psalms xix. and cxix.

reject him.—Such an admonition could never have been uttered, and it can never be consistently acted upon, by one who holds that Scripture and tradition—Scripture interpreted by the Church—constitutes the Rule of Faith.

3. This doctrine is at variance with the XXXIX Articles of the Episcopal Church.—Thus Article VI. says: “Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.”

And Art. VIII. —“The Nicene Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles’ Creed ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture.” The men who framed these Articles had no idea of enthroning the creeds above Prophets and Apostles. Instead of directing that the Bible shall be interpreted by the Creeds, they say the Creeds are to be received “because they may be proved by Holy Scripture.”

4. The proposed rule of faith is beyond the reach of the great mass of mankind, unless indeed they are willing to trust to the infallibility of their own minister or priest: and it eludes none of the alleged evils which are charged upon the exercise of private judgment in the interpretation of Scripture. For if men examine the “traditions” of the Church for themselves, they must interpret them according to their private judgment; and if they rely upon the declaration of a priest as to their import, they receive only



the interpretation put upon them by *his* private judgment.

5. The theory assumes that the Church cannot err; and that it is always safe for an individual to follow the voice of the Church Catholic as expressed by the great body of her lawful governors. Have the rulers of the Christian Church ever been more united on *any* question, than the rulers of the Jewish Church were in pronouncing the Son of God an impostor? It was the *voice of the Church* which shouted "Crucify him!" "Crucify him!" Was the voice of the Church *then* of equal authority with the Scriptures as a part of the Rule of Faith?

Again, during a part of the fourth century, as was stated in the last chapter, *Arianism* was the avowed faith, not of a few individuals merely, but of the *Church Catholic*. "The poison of the Arians," says Vincentius Lirinensis, "had not only infected one part but almost all the world; and almost all the Latin Bishops, some by force, others by simplicity giving themselves over to be deceived, found themselves engaged in the darkness of error." "We are in that condition," says Phaebadius, "that if we would be called Catholics, it is necessary that we embrace heresy: and yet nevertheless if we do not reject heresy, we cannot be truly Catholics." The sentiments of Arius were adopted by several successive councils, both in the East and the West; and the few orthodox Bishops and Presbyters who refused to conform, were persecuted. Was it the duty of an inquirer, in these circumstances, to "hear the Church?" And was the Church's creed and synodical decrees, the standard by which all men were



bound to interpret the Scriptures? It may be said that these consequences will not follow, because Arianism was established only for a short period, and does not therefore come within the “quod *semper*,” the “always,” of Vincent’s rule, which is essential to prove anything a tenet of the universal Church. I answer, (1.) that the example at least shows the danger of trusting *implicitly* to the teaching of the Church: and (2.) that if the want of the “quod *semper*” precludes the recognition of Arianism as part of the Church’s creed, the fact that it *was* a part of its creed for the *period in question*, obviously excludes the doctrine of *the Trinity* from its creed *on the same ground*. For if “Catholic tradition” embraces only those points which the Church has “*always*” taught, it cannot, of course, include those which were rejected during the prevalence of the Arian heresy.

It should be added, to prevent misapprehension, that the word “Church” is used in this argument in the sense of those whose views I am controverting, as denoting only the visible Church. It is superfluous to say that Christ has always had a chosen and sanctified people in the world—his true, spiritual Church—who have remained steadfast through all the fluctuations and heresies of the visible Church, and who have never denied the Trinity nor any other essential doctrine of the Scriptures.

6. The only remaining observation which it seems worth while to make on this subject, is, that whenever tradition is associated with the Bible as the rule of faith, the inevitable tendency is to expand tradition until it overshadows and nullifies the Bible. It was thus with the Pharisees: they “made the commandment of God of none effect by their tradition.” It is

thus with the Romanists: the Bible is, to use a coarse but expressive figure, a mere "nose of wax" in the Papal system. It is hazarding little to predict, that it will be so also with the High-Church school. Indeed, there are decisive indications of "progress" among them already in this direction. What they now call "Catholic antiquity," as adumbrated in the Prayer-Book, will not, probably, long satisfy them. Their principles demand as extended and flexible a rule of faith, as Rome herself has; and having begun with "tradition," there seems no good reason why they should stop where they are. King James II. told Bishop Burnet, that the reason of his turning Papist was, that hearing so much from the English divines about "the authority of the Church, and of the tradition from the Apostles in support of Episcopacy," he considered that other traditions might be taken on the word of the Catholic Church, as well as Episcopacy on the word of the English, and he therefore thought it "reasonable to go over to the Church of Rome." Many of the Puseyite Episcopalians of our day have reasoned as James did and followed his example. Rome sees her advantage and makes good use of it. It remains to be proved whether the High-Church party will be able to cope with her, without borrowing those "other traditions" which she wields so effectively against them.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE CHURCH PUT IN CHRIST'S PLACE.

I INSERTED in the last chapter, an outline of the High-Church system, from the pen of the late Dr. Arnold. To obtain an accurate idea of the system, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the views it inculcates respecting the nature of the CHURCH and the SACRAMENTS. On this subject I shall now make a few observations, with a view of showing that this scheme PUTS THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY IN THE PLACE OF CHRIST.

On opening the New Testament we find it every where addressing men as *individuals*. It tells them that they are "by nature the children of wrath," "dead in trespasses and in sins." It declares that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It warns them not to trust in names and privileges: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." It says to them, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." It affirms that Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and men; and invites all men to approach God in his name, and supplicate the blessings they need. The Saviour, addressing the whole human family, says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh

unto me I will in no wise cast out." He is the source of grace to his people. They are individually and directly united to Him as the branches to the vine, as the members to the Head. They receive and abide in Him by faith, and He abides in them by the influences of His Spirit. The consummation of this union between Christ and themselves, makes them members of "his body, *the Church,*"—that is, the *true Church*, that Church which is styled "the General Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven," and which is intended in such passages as these: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.—And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Eph. i. 10, 22, 23.) This Church is one. Its members being all "one in Christ Jesus," and united to him as their common Head, are one with each other. They may be widely separated on earth; they may belong to rival and even hostile ecclesiastical societies; but they are children of the same Almighty Parent, and "by one spirit they have all been baptized into one body." A Church thus constituted, must possess the attribute of Unity. Another of its attributes is Sanctity. One portion of its members, those in glory, are perfectly holy; the remaining portion are all regenerated and partially sanctified. This Church, again, is Catholic. All renewed persons belong to it, wherever they may live, or with whatever communion they may be connected. The Church thus constituted is invisible; that is, it is invisible to us *as a Church*. "The Lord

knoweth them that are His." And the individuals embraced in his Church, are of course, as individuals, visible to their fellow-creatures. But they are not associated in any *organized body* which is cognizable to our senses. They live in different lands; some of them, indeed, dwell in the Saviour's presence. They never meet in one place. They belong to different communions, some of which may, as religious societies, have become heretical and apostate. While the true Church of Christ, therefore, is one, it is, as a Church, invisible.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious that out of this Church *there is no salvation*. Mark the distinction here. It is not said that out of this or that particular visible Church, there is no salvation: *that* is one of the arrogant assumptions of the High-Church school. We find not one word in the Scriptures to authorize the dogma that salvation is restricted to the Presbyterian Church, or the Episcopal Church, or the Romish Church, or the Greek Church, or any other branch of the visible Church. But we find ample warrant there for asserting that salvation is confined to the true, spiritual, invisible Church of Christ; for that Church embraces all truly regenerated persons. The moment a sinner receives Christ as his Saviour with a cordial faith—the moment he experiences the renovating power of the Holy Ghost, and is made a "new creature in Christ Jesus"—that moment he is introduced into this Church. It matters not what his external relations may be, or what sectarian name he may bear. It is all one, as to the point in hand, whether

<sup>1</sup> See on this whole subject, a very able "Treatise on the Church," by the Rev. Thomas Jackson, D. D., who is commended by Dr. Pusey as "one of the best and greatest minds our [the English] Church has nurtured." Philad. 1844.



he be an Episcopalian or a Baptist, a Romanist or a Quaker, a Hindoo or a Mahometan; if he truly repents of his sins, and with his heart believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is thereby made a member of his mystical body. This union with Christ, the Bible affirms to be the only way of salvation. We state a very familiar Scripture truth, then, when we say that out of that Church which comprises all genuine believers, there is no salvation.

One of the radical errors of the High-Church system, is, that it confounds or denies the distinction between the invisible Church—the true, spiritual Church of Christ—and the visible Church. The sacred writers frequently apply the word “Church” to societies of professing Christians, as when they say “the Church of Ephesus,” “the Church at Corinth,” and the like. It is common to speak of the aggregate of those societies which profess the true religion as “the visible Church.” Thus the Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter xxv. section 2: “The visible Church, which is also Catholic or universal under the Gospel, (not confined to one nation as before under the law,) consists of all those throughout the world, that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.” I subjoin the remaining sections.

III. “Unto this Catholic visible Church, Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.



IV. "This Catholic Church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less, visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

V. "The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error: and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth to worship God according to his will.

VI. "There is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that anti-christ, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ and all that is called God."

A single clause in this chapter has been sometimes quoted with a view of producing the impression that the Presbyterian Church arrogates to herself an exclusive salvation—viz. the clause which affirms that out of this visible Church "there is no ordinary possibility of salvation." If by the "visible Church" in this connexion, were intended the Presbyterian Church merely, there might be some ground for this imputation. But the context explicitly states that the phrase includes "all those throughout the world *who profess the true religion.*" And the whole history of the Presbyterian Church shows that she regards all other evangelical churches as sister-churches, and as constituting part of "the visible Church." That salvation is "*ordinarily*" (and this is all that is affirmed) restricted to the visible Church, considered in this

extended sense, will not probably be denied by any enlightened believer in Christianity.

It is also asserted in the chapter quoted from the Confession of Faith, that to the visible Church "Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God;" "but it is not taught that this ministry can consist only of Presbyters, ordained by a Presbyterian church; or that these ordinances can be validly administered only by such and after the manner prescribed in our form of worship. On the contrary, it is most explicitly taught, in the very next chapter of our book, that 'all saints that are united to Jesus Christ, their Head, by his Spirit and by faith . . . have communion in each other's gifts and graces, . . . are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification, . . . which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto *all* those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.'"<sup>1</sup>

The initiatory rite of the visible society, or, to speak more accurately, the collection of societies thus constituted, is baptism; which is administered to adults on their professing faith in the Redeemer, and subjection to his authority. The only other sacrament instituted by the Saviour in his Church, is the Lord's Supper, which is not a sacrifice, but simply an ordinance commemorative of Himself:—"This do in *remembrance* of me." "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do *show the Lord's death* till he come." The chief oversight of this Church is committed, not to a *Priesthood*, but to a *Ministry*, whose

<sup>1</sup> See this subject treated at length in Dr. Smyth's interesting work on "Ecclesiastical Republicanism," ch. 5.

authority is, as its designation imports, merely ministerial and declarative. The preaching of the Gospel is the principal instrumentality which God employs in converting men from sin to holiness. The sacraments also are "means of grace," but their efficacy, like that of the ministration of the word, depends wholly upon the work of the Spirit, and is only promised to those who worthily participate in them. The visible Church has always been more or less defiled with error and sin. It includes many "particular churches which are more or less pure," and a mixture of sound and unsound professors, who are for wise purposes permitted to remain together until that great harvest when the tares and the wheat shall be separated. Of course a union with this Church does not necessarily import a spiritual union with Christ; although to those of its members who *are* united to Christ, its ordinances are, through his blessing, means of edification and comfort.

These are substantially the views of the Reformed Churches generally on this important subject. I shall now present a sketch of the High-Church doctrine.

According to this doctrine, all that the Scriptures say respecting the true, spiritual Church of Christ, appertains to the *visible* Church. This Church is a Hierarchy. It consists of a single society (now, unhappily, in a somewhat divided state,) placed under the government of Prelates who derive their authority from its Divine Founder through an unbroken Prelatical succession. These Prelates, indeed, with the inferior clergy, properly constitute the Church—the people being a mere appendage to the ministry. To this Church are confided the gifts of salvation. It stands in the place and is clothed with the authority

of Christ, as his Vicar. It is the storehouse of grace—the only source from which grace can be obtained—the only avenue by which a sinner can approach God. This grace it communicates through the sacraments. In baptism sinners are born again or regenerated, and by the Eucharist, in which the communicant partakes of the “real body and blood” of the Redeemer, the spiritual life communicated in the former sacrament, is mainly nourished and invigorated. Non-Prelatical societies form no part of the Church; but are schismatical organizations. Nor can any one who refuses submission to Episcopal authority, reasonably conclude that he is in the way of salvation.

Now if this *be* a faithful outline of the High-Church system (and whether it be or not, will be seen presently,) it will not require much argument to prove that its whole tendency must be to substitute a delusive *Hierarchism* for the Gospel of Christ. By Hierarchism is meant a religion of which the *Priest* is the centre; a religion which interposes the priest and the *Church* between God and the sinner; which encourages the feeling that there can be no access to God except through sacerdotal officers and sacerdotal rites; which impairs the sense of personal responsibility and leads men gradually to commit the whole business of their salvation into the hands of the minister under whose care Providence may have placed them.

The allegation that they put the Church in the place of Christ, and exalt matters of organization to an equality with the graces and duties of the Christian life, and thus divert the minds of men from the substance to the form of Christianity, is frequently re-

pelled by High-Churchmen as an aspersion. But with what propriety? Their doctrine is that an unbroken Prelatical Succession from the Apostles down, is essential to the very being of a Church—that where such a succession is wanting, there is no ministry, no sacraments, no authorized preaching of the word, no fellowship with the Church, no covenanted hope of salvation. They will not allow that this defect can be counterbalanced by any apparent orthodoxy of doctrine or holiness of life; while they maintain that wherever this succession exists, even though it be associated with gross errors and corruptions, it marks a true Church. What is this but to elevate Church-government not merely to a level with vital godliness but above it? to put the form above the substance?

The Oxford Tract writers deny this consequence, though they admit the premises. They contend that the Apostolical Succession *belongs* to “the substance” of Christianity. “To be admitted within the mysterious precincts of the kingdom of heaven, to be miraculously blessed and miraculously fed with the bread that came down from heaven, these are surely something more than forms and externals; and the Episcopacy that has (if indeed it has) preserved them to us, is something more than a matter of bare discipline, observed in conformity to Apostolical practice. According to this view of the subject, to dispense with Episcopal ordination is to be regarded not as a breach of order merely or a deviation from Apostolical precedent, but as a surrender of the Christian priesthood, a rejection of all the powers which Christ instituted Episcopacy to perpetuate; and the attempt to substitute any other form of ordination for it, or to seek *communion with Christ* through any Non-Epis-



copal association, is to be regarded, not as a schism merely, but as an *impossibility*.”<sup>1</sup>

With this view agree the leading Tractators. Mr. Perceval, one of their number, in specifying the points agreed upon at one of their early conferences, as suitable “to be put forward by them,” mentions as the first—“The doctrine of Apostolic Succession as a rule of practice; that is, (1.) That the participation of the body and blood of Christ is essential to the maintenance of Christian life and hope in each individual. (2.) That it is conveyed to individual Christians only by the hands of the successors of the Apostles and their delegates. (3.) That the successors of the Apostles are those who are descended in a direct line from them by the imposition of hands; and that the delegates of these are the respective Presbyters whom each has commissioned.”<sup>2</sup> According to this statement, communion with a Prelatical Church is “*essential* to the maintenance of the *Christian life* and hope:” in other words, true piety cannot be kept alive except in Episcopal Churches:—and this is given as the unanimous judgment of the Tractators. Is there no evidence here that the system puts *order* above doctrine, and interposes a priest between man and his God as the exclusive medium of salvation?

We are not, however, left to mere inferences on this point. The doctrine is explicitly maintained that the **VISIBLE CHURCH**, in its officers, is the representative and vicar of Christ, and can, in his absence, exercise the functions which belong to Him as the King and Head of Zion. The British Critic, one

<sup>1</sup> Froude's Remains, edited by Messrs. Keble and Newman, Vol. III. p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Appendix to Perceval's Letter to Dr. Arnold.



of the accredited organs of the school, and which, at the date of the number from which I am about to quote, was circulating in this country under the official and emphatic recommendation of one of the Bishops<sup>1</sup> of the Episcopal Church, is my authority for this statement.

“The essence of the doctrine of the one only Catholic and Apostolic Church, lies in this—that it is the *representative of our absent Lord*, or a something divinely *interposed between the soul and God*, or a visible body with invisible privileges. All its subordinate characteristics flow from this description. Does it impose a creed, or impose rites and ceremonies, or change ordinances, or remit and retain sins, or rebuke or punish, or accept offerings, or send out ministers, or invest its ministers with authority, or accept of reverence or devotion in their persons—all this is because it is Christ’s visible presence. It stands for Christ. Can it convey the power of the Spirit? does grace attend its acts? can it touch, or bathe, or seal, or lay on hands? can it use material things for spiritual purposes? are its temples holy? all this comes of its being, so far, what Christ was on earth. Is it a ruler, prophet, priest, intercessor, teacher? It has titles such as these, in its measure, as being the representative and instrument of him that is unseen. Does it claim a palace and a throne, an altar and a doctor’s chair, the gold, frankincense, and myrrh, of the rich and wise, an universal empire and a never-ending session? All this is so, *because it is what Christ is*. All the offices, names, honours, powers, which it claims, depend upon the simple question, ‘Has Christ, or has he not, left a represen-

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Doane, of New Jersey.

tative behind him?" Now, if he has, all is easy and intelligible: this is what Churchmen maintain; they welcome the news; and they recognize in the Church's acts, but the fulfilment of the high trust committed to her."<sup>1</sup>

There is no ambiguity here. "THE CHURCH IS WHAT CHRIST IS." It can make and unmake "rites," "ordinances," "creeds." It can punish, pardon, impart the Holy Spirit, justify, renew, sanctify, seal. It is a Prophet, Priest, King. In a word, it is entitled as Christ's representative, to the "offices, names, honours, and powers," which belong to Christ himself. What has the harlot who sits upon the seven hills, ever claimed for herself beyond this?

Let us hear the Tractators on the same subject. "The notion of the Church as *the storehouse* and direct channel of grace, as a divine ordinance not merely to be maintained for order's sake, or because schism is a sin, but to be approached joyfully and expectantly as a definite instrument, or rather the appointed means of spiritual blessings—as an ordinance which conveys secret strength and life to every one who shares in it, unless there be some actual moral impediment in his own mind—this is a doctrine which as yet is but faintly understood among us. . . . We have almost embraced the doctrine, that God conveys grace only through the instrumentality of the mental energies, that is, through faith, prayer, active spiritual contemplations, or (*what is called*) *communion with God*, in contradiction to the primitive view according to which the Church and her sacraments are the ordained and direct visible means of conveying to the soul what is in itself supernatural and un-

<sup>1</sup> Brit. Critic, No. 66, p. 451.

seen.”<sup>1</sup> “Had we been left to conjecture, we might have supposed that in the more perfect or spiritual system, the *gifts of grace* would rather have been attached to certain high moral performances, whereas they are *deposited in mere positive ordinances*, as if to warn us against dropping the ceremonial of Christianity.”<sup>2</sup> “Almighty God has said, his Son’s merits shall wash away all sin, and that they shall be conveyed to believers through the two sacraments.”<sup>3</sup> “These powers of the Church,” observes Prof. Sewell, a writer of high repute with this school, in speaking of the Church and the clergy, “are very great; they are even awful; if not conferred by God, they are blasphemously assumed by man. The power of communicating to man the divine nature itself, of bringing down the deity from heaven, of infusing the Spirit into the souls of miserable mortals—this, which is nothing more than the every-day promise of the Church, every time he [the priest] stands at the font, or ministers at the altar, is so awful and so tremendous, that we scarcely dare to read it, except in familiar words which scarcely touch the ear.”<sup>4</sup>

To say, after citing these passages, that the Puseyite system puts the Church and the ministry in the place of Christ, is only to express a feeling which must force itself upon every mind that is open to conviction.

This feature of the system has been officially and severely censured by Dr. Sumner, the able and excellent Bishop of Chester. “Practically,” he observes in his Charge to his clergy for 1841, “the Saviour is treated with dishonour, when the Church which he

<sup>1</sup> Oxford Tracts, Vol. II. Pref.

<sup>2</sup> Tract, No. 32.

<sup>3</sup> Tract, No. 41.

<sup>4</sup> Christian Morals, p. 27.

has established is made to usurp his place, to perform his acts, to receive his homage; is so represented as to be virtually the author of salvation, instead of the channel through which salvation flows. This is, in truth, to depose him from his throne, and to invest his subjects with the authority which belongs to himself alone." "To set up, as it were, Church-principles in opposition to the principles of the Gospel, and place them in invidious contrast, is alike unreasonable and unscriptural. It is to confound the means of grace with the author of grace; to worship the thing made and to dishonour the maker. *It is to array against Christ the instrumentality which he has established against Satan.*" "Therefore he ordained the ministry and he ordained the sacraments, that there might be a Church—a continual 'congregation of faithful men.' And shall this Church boast itself against its Author, and claim a power which he has never given? Shall the earthly members assume the authority of their heavenly principal? Such seems to be the case when they confound church-membership with faith; or so magnify the ministrations belonging to their office, as virtually to represent that, except through their instrumentality, there is no salvation." "The Church has been made first an abstraction, then a person, and then a Saviour. The Church thus invested with divinity, has the minister as her visible representative, and he, explaining the prophetic anticipation, *has assumed the place of God.*"

The justness of this rebuke will be still more apparent as we proceed, for I shall have frequent occasion to advert to the subject before I conclude.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE SYSTEM AT VARIANCE WITH THE GENERAL TONE OF  
THE NEW TESTAMENT.

AFTER the tolerably complete delineation of the High-Church system given in the last chapter, I feel warranted in specifying as another of its leading characteristics, ITS CONTRARIETY TO THE WHOLE SCOPE AND TENOR OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

I speak of it now as a system, without reference to the arguments that may be urged for or against its several parts. No man who is not already a High-Churchman, can lay down the New Testament and take up the Oxford Tracts, without feeling that the works are devoted to the exposition of two different kinds of religion. The transition is like that a traveller experiences in ascending from the sunny plains of Italy to the bleak and sterile region of the upper Alps. He may, it is true, find here and there in some sheltered spot a sweet flower or two, but they only serve as a foil to the surrounding desolation. So there are many admirable Scripture truths scattered through the Oxford Tracts, and other works of that class, but they only set off the more vividly the contrast between the frigid, ceremonial system upon which they are engrafted, and the glorious Gospel of Christ. If the High-Church scheme be true, it is inexplicable why the New Testament should have been written as it is. That scheme makes the polity of the Church—its external form and organization—the

primary thing. It does, it is true, enforce the necessity of justification and spiritual renewal: but it teaches that no man is authorized to expect these blessings unless he places himself under a Prelatical ministry. It inculcates faith and repentance, and other Christian graces: but it is careful to say that these graces are only to be cultivated with success in a communion Prelatically organized. The organization is the fundamental thing. It is so in the theory, and in the authorized expositions of it. The first volume of the Tracts for the Times, contains no less than eight distinct papers on "Apostolical Succession." And the same precedence is given to matters of order in the writings of the school generally. The word "Church" will be found in their books ten times where Christ is named once. They abound with disquisitions on the dignity, Apostolic lineage, and powers of the Bishops, but have little to say of the moral qualifications essential to the office. They present us with elaborate essays on crucifixes and surplices, painted windows and wax candles, attitudes and genuflexions, and such like "mint, anise, and cummin;" while the weightier matters of the law are too often enforced, if enforced at all, on principles which savour more of Popery than of the free spirit of Christianity.

Now the most superficial reader of the New Testament must be aware that its whole tone is alien from a system like this. The subject of Church government is rarely introduced, and then, for the most part, in an incidental way. A few general principles are clearly laid down; but no one model is so prescribed as to countenance the idea that its adoption is essential to the being of a Church. This is not to say



that all forms of Church government are equally good or equally *allowable*. The author has no such belief; nor does he regard questions of polity and order as trivial matters. It is only the *relative* position they occupy in the New Testament with which he is concerned in this connexion.—“Bishops” are repeatedly mentioned, but it is for the most part to specify the spiritual qualifications they ought to possess, or to admonish them of their duties and responsibilities. If the people are commanded to “obey” their pastors, they are also instructed to prove those who come to them as religious teachers—to prove them, not as a High-Churchman would direct, by ascertaining their ecclesiastical pedigree, but by scrutinizing their doctrine and their lives. (See Matt. vii. 15—20. 1 John iv. 1—3. 2 John v. 10.) And as to rites and ceremonies, they are seldom adverted to except for the purpose of guarding men against placing an undue reliance upon them.

The New Testament, then, does not at all harmonize with this system. It would require to be *re-cast* before the two could be brought together. To effect this, the doctrines of the atonement, justification by faith, and regeneration, would have to be taken out of the niches in which they have been placed, and the vacancies supplied by dissertations on “Apostolical Succession.” The marks of a “true Church,” should supersede the manifold exhortations to holiness of life—a sprinkling of these being of course retained in suitable connexions. The sacraments should be largely dwelt upon as the chief sources of grace; and *preaching* be thrown into any recess where it would not impair the general symmetry of the plan. At least one-half the book should be ap-

propriated to rites and ceremonies. In this, provision should be made for an order of *Christian Levites* whose business it should be to keep *genealogical tables* of the Bishops. Minute directions should be given as to sacerdotal vestments, the forms of Churches, the arrangement of the chancel, the desk, the "altar" and the font. No room should be left for incertitude as to whether matins and vespers should be celebrated daily or only on Saints' days—whether the crucifix should be worn about the person and put on the tops of houses and churches—whether churches should be constructed with or without pews—whether flowers should be worn on festival days, and if so, whether *green-house* flowers or flowers of forced growth, would in any case answer—whether one candle or two should be put upon the "altar," and whether they should be lighted or not.<sup>1</sup> These and many similar points which have occasioned no small debate in our day, would all require to be authoritatively settled in the New Testament in order to adjust it to the system we are examining. Furthermore, the "Apostolical Succession," as lying at the foundation of the system, should be presented in the most lucid and imposing manner. Not only should the Apostle's fling at those who busy themselves about "endless genealogies" be struck out, but also the account of Simon Magus, whose baptism, though administered by Peter himself, was so far from

<sup>1</sup> Even the Bishop of London in a late charge, while he reprobates some of the Oxford superstitions, sees "no harm" in two wax candles, *provided they are not lighted*, and approves of the arrangement "lately adopted in several churches, by which the clergyman looks to the *south* while reading prayers, and to the *west* while reading lessons!" *Tendimus in Latium.*

*regenerating* him, that he was immediately afterward pronounced to be “in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.” Again, the requisite information should be supplied for solving a great many important practical questions which now divide those who agree on most other points. Of this kind are the following, to-wit:—What is essential to the validity of orders? If a Bishop becomes an avowed Arian or Infidel, are his ordinations valid? If a Bishop obtains his office by fraud and Simony, can he perpetuate the true succession? Should the leading Bishops for several centuries be, on the showing of their own historians, a race of *profligates, simoniacs, usurpers, murderers*, and the like, can they keep up the succession and *transmit the Holy Ghost*? And are these Bishops to be recognized as being in the Church, while ministers of the gospel who *appear* to be eminently wise, holy, and useful men, but who have not been prelatically ordained, are to be denounced as schismatics and consigned to “uncovenanted mercy?”—Facts show that there is some room for a difference of opinion on questions of this sort, even among High-Churchmen, and this might be effectually precluded, if the New Testament were adjusted to the system, and made as explicit as it is now “reserved” on all matters of form and external order.

That the Bible in its present form, does not meet the wants of this school, is not merely admitted but insisted upon by themselves. The Romanists are not more hearty than they are, in repudiating the great Protestant principle, that the Bible is the all-sufficient and only rule of faith and practice.<sup>1</sup> The system, on the confession of its ablest advocates, can-

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter VII.

not be bolstered up without the aid of the Fathers; and the Bible will only speak its language when stretched upon the Procrustean bed of "Catholic tradition." It ought not to surprise us, then, to find, on instituting the comparison, that this system is *at variance with the whole scope and tenor of the New Testament*: for this is just what the teachings of its expounders would naturally lead us to expect.

The same discrepancy will appear, if, instead of comparing the system as a whole with the general tone of the New Testament, we bring its several parts to the test of Scripture. To select a single feature,—one would think from the writings of this school, that the New Testament must be a treatise on *baptism*; that baptism was the main topic of our Saviour's discourses and the pervading theme of the Apostles' preaching; and that the great business of the Christian ministry was, not to preach the Gospel, but to administer the sacraments. Baptism is, in their scheme, the grand instrument by which men who are "dead in trespasses and sins," are to be made alive, rebels restored to the favour of God, and this apostate world reclaimed from the countless evils of the fall.—"It is notoriously the doctrine of the Trent Decrees," observes Bishop McIlvaine in his elaborate work on "Oxford Theology," "that *baptism* is 'the only instrumental cause' of justification; so absolutely necessary thereto that without it justification is obtained by none. This is precisely the doctrine of the Oxford School. . . Justification in baptism, and only there, is the sole subject of a whole volume of Oxford Tracts, called '*Scriptural Views of Holy Baptism.*'" (p. 213.) Again, he says, "Without a doubt baptism is considered in Oxford

divinity, as efficacious to justification in the adult recipient, without any faith except such as devils may have, as well as we. He is made *righteous* by baptism, from being, up to the time of baptism, *unrighteous.*" (p. 217.) In proof of the accuracy of this representation, it might be sufficient to refer to the passages already given from Puseyite writers. The importance of the subject will, however, justify a few additional quotations.

Dr. Pusey earnestly maintains that by baptism an individual receives "the forgiveness of sin and a new nature," and "is made a *real child of God and a real member of Christ*, not an outward member of an outward body of people called Christians." Again, he says, "Indeed this may be set down as the essence of sectarian doctrine, to consider faith, and not the sacraments, as the proper instrument of justification and other gospel gifts; instead of holding that the grace of Christ comes to us altogether from without (as from Him, so through the externals of his ordaining.\*)" The tract writers have a great deal to say about "justification by faith:" but when their views come to be examined, it turns out that faith itself derives all its efficacy from *baptism*. Thus they say, "Faith, *as gaining its virtue from baptism*, is one thing before that sacred ordinance; another after." "Justifying faith before baptism, is not necessarily *even a moral virtue*, but when illuminated by love and ennobled by the Spirit," (in baptism) "it is a name for all graces together." Before baptism, "it is without availing power, *without life* in the sight of God, as regards our justification"—that is, "as regards the indwelling of the Spirit," which is the ground of justification according to this system.



Until it is *baptized*, "it [faith] is full of terror and disquiet, vague, and dull-minded, feeble, sickly, wayward, fitful, inoperative," "nothing till Christ *regenerate* it" in baptism. "When it comes for baptism. . . it comes to the *fount of life* to be *made alive*, as the dry bones, in the prophet's vision, were brought together in preparation for the breath of God to quicken them." "We are saved," says Dr. Pusey, "by faith bringing us to baptism, and by baptism God saves us"—"faith being but the *sine qua non*, the necessary condition on our parts for duly receiving the grace of Christ"—and "the sacraments, not faith, being the proper instrument of our justification." Again; "Faith," says Mr. Newman, "does not precede justification; but justification precedes it and makes it justifying. *Baptism* is the primary instrument and *creates faith to be what it is*, and otherwise, is not, giving it power and rank, and constituting it as its own successor. Each has its own office; baptism at the time, faith ever after,—the sacraments the instrumental, faith the sustaining, cause." The same view precisely is given by Bishop Doane, in his funeral sermon at Troy: "His first care [he is speaking of the deceased Rector,] was to graft them in, by holy *baptism*, into the living vine; and then to *keep* them there by *grace through faith*, unto salvation."<sup>1</sup> In other words, men are first united to Christ by baptism, and then the union is sustained by faith. Or, as Bishop McIlvaine has more comprehensively summed up this part of the system; "Faith *before* baptism, is, in this divinity, no instrument at all, because *dead*. In baptism, it is no instrument at all, because not made alive till baptism is completed.



*After* baptism, it is an instrument of justification, only as it *sustains* what baptism has already effected, and which, when lost, it cannot renew." (p. 209.)

Now every reader of the Bible who is not already entangled in the web of a mere sacramental religion, must know that the sacred writers assign no such place as this to baptism in *their* scheme of Christianity. That regeneration *may* accompany baptism, no one denies. But so far were the Apostles and their associates from regarding this ordinance as the specific means of regeneration and of "*creating*" true faith, that they baptized no one until he *professed repentance and faith* in the Redeemer. We never find *them* sending an anxious sinner to the "Church" and the baptismal font for relief. They knew where the "storehouse of grace" was, and it was their delight to show trembling, heavy-laden souls the way to it. The presumptuous thought had not occurred to them, which is so captivating to many of their "successors," that God could not accept a sinner, until *they* had received him into the Church—that the Spirit could not apply the "blood of sprinkling" to his conscience, until *they* had washed him with water—that Christ could not say to him, "Thy sins are forgiven thee: go in peace!" until *they* had pronounced over him the words of absolution—that no divine influences could reach his agitated breast, until *they* had put him "in communication" with his Maker, by establishing a sacramental connexion between him and themselves. If they baptize three thousand on the day of Pentecost, they are those who have "gladly received the word:"<sup>1</sup> if an Ethiopian Eunuch expresses an earnest desire for baptism, he is

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 41.

told on what condition his request will be granted, —“If thou believest [not with a ‘vague,’ ‘sickly,’ ‘inoperative’ faith, but] with all thy heart, thou mayest:”<sup>1</sup> if Saul of Tarsus is baptized, it is not until he has spent three days in prayer and humiliation:<sup>2</sup> if Cornelius and his “kinsmen and friends” are baptized, it is after they have “received the Holy Ghost:”<sup>3</sup> if Lydia and the jailer are baptized, it is because “the heart” of one has been “opened” by the Lord to attend to the things spoken by Paul, and the other avows himself a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> This was the uniform practice of the Apostles. Not an instance can be pointed out of their baptizing an adult otherwise than on a profession of his faith. The case of Simon Magus is no exception, for he *professed* to believe: although his case does (as before intimated) confute the dogma of “baptismal regeneration.” So far, indeed, were they from restricting salvation to those already in communion with themselves, and binding the Most High to bestow his grace only through their ministrations, that Peter, enslaved as he had been to Jewish prejudices, dared not withhold baptism from Cornelius and his friends, after “the Holy Ghost had fallen upon them:” and in defending himself for this act before his brethren, he says with unanswerable force of reasoning, “Forasmuch, then, as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?” It was reserved for the “Apostles” of a later age, to seize upon the Church as *their* Church, and challenge a monopoly of the gifts and graces of the Spirit, and put themselves and the

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ix. 9. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. x. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. xvi. 14, 31.

sacraments in the place of the Saviour, and “withstand God” by consigning to “uncovenanted mercy” those whom He has beautified with holiness and adorned with the gems of salvation. The elements of this scheme, however, were, it is evident from their epistles, at work even in the days of Paul and his fellow-labourers; and after a few centuries the system was evolved in all its colossal proportions—a baptized paganism—a pompous, oppressive, bloody hierarchy.

It is substantially the same system which has now sprung forth from the bosom of a Reformed Church, (too scantily reformed, indeed, as the best and wisest of the men engaged in its Reformation, declared with sorrow at the time) and which is arming the Protestants of every land against its lordly aggressions.



## CHAPTER X.

TENDENCY OF THE SYSTEM TO AGGRANDIZE THE PRELITICAL CLERGY;—AND TO SUBSTITUTE A RITUAL RELIGION FOR TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

ALL false religions minister to the pride and ambition of their priesthood. The same characteristic marks the various corrupt forms of Christianity; and the degree in which it attaches to them, will usually denote the measure of their corruption. Tried by this rule, the High-Church system will be found seriously defective. I shall exhibit, in this chapter, its tendency to AGGRANDIZE THE PRELITICAL CLERGY. The reader

will understand me as speaking not of their *design*, for with this I have nothing to do; but simply of the tendency of the *system*. What this tendency is, may be learned from a single fact, viz. that some of the High-Church party have gone to the length of affirming that Christ has actually TRANSFERRED HIS HEADSHIP OVER THE CHURCH, in so far, that is, as the government of the Church-militant is concerned, TO THE BISHOPS. This doctrine is distinctly laid down by Bishop McCoskry of Michigan, in his sermon entitled, "Episcopal Bishops, the Successors of the Apostles." From this sermon I quote a few passages. "He [Christ] is the Head and permanent Ruler thereof, and although now removed from sight and seated on his mediatorial throne, yet he governs and regulates this Church, or Kingdom, (as it is frequently called,) by his constituted agents, *to whom he has committed THE VERY SAME AUTHORITY which he received from the Father.*" "Every thing that could be possessed by a mere human being, was given by the Saviour. He was, as the Apostle declares, "the Head of the body"—consequently *this Headship was transferred*, and all the power necessary to preserve and regulate the body. For if the power to preserve and regulate the body be not transferred with the Headship of the body, the body itself must cease to exist; and of course the Church of Christ comes to an end. This cannot be. It must follow, then, that as Christ is the permanent Ruler and Head of this body now in heaven, so are those to whom He transferred this power, permanent rulers and heads on earth, for He transferred the earthly power over his Church." "In this transaction [referring to John xx. 21—23,] *they* [the Apostles] *were raised up to the very same office which*

*Christ himself held*,—I mean that which belongs to Him in his human nature as head and governor of the Church. They were to supply his place in this respect . . . and, in short, *to do every thing which Christ would have done*, had he continued on the earth." "They received *the full power which Christ possessed*." "So long as the Saviour exercised *the office of High Priest, and before he transferred it to the Apostles*, immediately preceding his ascension, there were three grades in the ministry." "It cannot be supposed for one moment, that the Saviour would transfer so great an office as he himself had received from his Father, to feeble and short-sighted men, without giving them instructions as to the manner in which its duties were to be performed, and more especially, whether it could be transferred to others." The writer goes on to argue, that this Headship and power over the Church which were transferred from Christ to his Apostles, were by them transferred to others, and by their successors to others, and so on down to the Bishops of our day. And if this has not been done, "all," he declares, "who profess to be commissioned as ambassadors of Christ, are *gross impostors*."<sup>1</sup>

I have multiplied these quotations in order that it may be seen that the doctrine ascribed to the author, is not thrown out by mere implication, but explicitly laid down and earnestly defended. According to the views here presented, Christ has transferred his High-Priesthood, the earthly Headship of his Church, and the power to govern it, to the Bishops. They hold "the very same office which he held,"—they

<sup>1</sup> See the Sermon, pp. 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 17. See also an able review of it in "Duffield on Episcopacy."



“have received the full power which He possessed,”—they are “to do every thing which He would have done, had he continued on the earth.” If this is not putting the Bishops in the place of Christ, it is difficult to say what *would* be. Rome herself has scarcely gone further in usurping His royal prerogatives and priestly functions. The Scriptures teach with a fulness of statement and illustration which would render specific references superfluous, that Christ has never parted with his regal or priestly office—that he is the *only* Priest of the new dispensation, and is now exercising his sacerdotal function of intercession; and that as King, he reigns *on earth* over the Church, as well as in heaven. The author of the Sermon, on the other hand, assumes that Christ has “transferred” these offices and powers to the Bishops. To “transfer” is to “convey, or make over from one to another.” Of course, if He has made this “transfer,” he is no longer the High Priest, or the Head of the Church militant. Whatever prerogatives or functions, pertain to these offices, now vest in the Bishops. He has delegated his sovereignty to them; and deals with men in spiritual affairs, only through them as his “Vicegerents.” I am not disposed to characterize this doctrine as it deserves. It is a striking proof of the pernicious and blinding influence of the High-Church system, that a passage so opposed to the whole tenor of the New Testament, and so deeply injurious to the Saviour’s honour, could have been penned *by the author of that Sermon*. I adduce it now, however, only to show that the system tends legitimately *to aggrandize the Prelatical clergy*. If this is not evident from the doctrine presented in the foregoing extracts, no comments of mine could make it so.



There is another aspect of the system, frequently hinted at in the progress of this discussion, which exhibits this tendency with no less clearness.—The whole High-Church theory of the Christian ministry, differs materially from the common Protestant views on the subject. That the ministry is a divine and permanent institution—that it is essentially connected with the best interests of mankind for time and eternity—that great care should be taken to prevent unworthy persons from assuming its functions—that faithful ministers are entitled to the respect and affection of their people, and are, within the sphere of their legitimate authority as rulers in the house of God, to be obeyed,—these are points on which the Protestant world is, with few exceptions, united. Christianity differs, however, from Judaism and the various false religions, in not being a SACERDOTAL system. It knows no *Priest* except the great High-Priest of our profession. It has no *sacrifice* except that which He offered on Calvary. It acknowledges no Mediator besides Him who “ever liveth to make intercession” for his people. Christians are styled a “holy priesthood” and are said to offer up “spiritual sacrifices.” But the terms “priest” and “sacrifice,” are not once applied in the New Testament to Christian ministers as such and their official functions. The entire vocabulary of terms proper to a sacerdotal religion, is left behind by the sacred writers in passing from the Old Testament to the New. Popery, with its usual disregard for the authority of the Bible, has compounded Judaism, Paganism, and Christianity together, and presents the anomaly of a *sacerdotal Christianity*. Its ministers are priests; the mass is an actual sacrifice of Christ; and the rights and

usages of the Church are all modeled upon this basis. Puseyism has betrayed its affinity for this scheme in ways not to be mistaken. It distinctly teaches that a change is effected in the eucharistic elements by the consecration, and that a sacrifice of some sort is offered in that ordinance. What this change is, the Oxford doctors teach with so much "reserve" that it is difficult to ascertain their precise views. But it is certain that few problems have puzzled them more than that of finding a *via media* between the Protestant view of the ordinance, and transubstantiation. The ministry, also, in their scheme is a Priesthood. They are not prepared as yet to adopt the entire Romish doctrine on this point; still less do they incline to the Protestant doctrine. They talk familiarly of "the Priesthood in the Church." And when they apply this designation to the ministry, they *mean* it. Ordination is, according to the New Testament, a very simple though solemn rite. It is the setting apart of a person to a particular office in the Church, to which he has been duly appointed; and is to be performed, with prayer and the laying on of hands, by persons already holding the same or a higher office. The Church of Rome, corrupting every thing in Christianity that she touched, has transmuted this ceremony into something very mysterious and inscrutable. She teaches that a certain "indelible character" is imparted or imprinted in ordination. What this "character" is and where it is lodged—whether in the essence of the soul, the will, the understanding, the hand, the tongue—are questions that have been fiercely debated among the Papal theologians. The Oxford School have borrowed the notion, as they have too many other articles, from

the same source. They speak of ordination as conveying some mysterious "gift" to the recipient. This gift they do not hesitate to affirm is the *Holy Ghost*, which, they allege, is actually imparted by the Bishop when he says to the candidate, "Receive the Holy Ghost." It is an essential part of the dogma of the "Apostolical Succession," as the passages cited in former parts of this volume show, that this gift has been transmitted from Christ himself to the Prelates of our day. It is the possession of this rare endowment which qualifies them to be dispensers of the grace stored up in the Church. It is this which gives such wonder-working efficacy to the ordinances they administer, and imparts to them the capacity of propagating spiritual and saving influences to the souls of those who receive the sacraments at their hands.

Now—to pause here for a moment—where is the *evidence* that any such gift as this is imparted in ordination? An endowment so rare, so miraculous in its effects, must needs carry with it convincing proof of its own existence? Physical strength, symmetry, beauty, intellectual acumen, learning, benevolence, meekness, fortitude—these, and all other personal attributes of whatever kind, attest their reality by evidences cognizable to our faculties. But here is an attribute which, estimated by the functions ascribed to it, far surpasses in value and efficacy any other conferred on man. *Where is the evidence of it?* What proof have we that the Bishop, who is said to confer it in ordination, has it to bestow? What proof has the supposed recipient that he receives it? What proof does he give others that he has acquired it? The New Testament speaks of two ways in which

the *Holy Spirit* is given to men, viz. 1st, in his miraculous, and secondly, in his gracious endowments. In each of these, the gift always manifests itself. In the former case, the recipient displays superhuman powers or works miracles; in the latter, there is a decisive, though not in all cases uniform, change in his moral character. In which of these ways are we to understand the Spirit is given in ordination? If the reply is, in his gracious or sanctifying influences, this is confuted by the fact that multitudes of men have been ordained, who remained the same profligate, simoniacal, sensual wretches after ordination, that they were before. If the other alternative be taken, then we further demand the proof that these miraculous gifts have been imparted. Can the individuals who are affirmed to have received them, speak with tongues, or prophesy, or heal the sick, or give sight to the blind? This is not pretended. But, forsooth, "they are now invested with a capacity of conveying regenerating grace to sinners, through the ordinance of baptism," and "they can 'make the body and blood' of the Redeemer out of the bread and wine of the Eucharist." Well, *if they can*, the question has an answer, and the requisition for proof is met. But how do we know that they can? Why, "because (so the argument runs) it is the prerogative of all priests who have been Prelatically ordained, to convey regenerating grace to men in baptism, and to convert the elements in the Lord's Supper into the body and blood of Christ. But these persons have been thus ordained. Therefore, the prerogatives in question belong to them." The only fallacy in this reasoning is, that it takes for granted the thing to be proved. The major proposition assumes that Prelati-

cal ordination confers the power to effect these sacramental miracles, which is the whole thing in dispute. Will the High-Church theorist, then, abandoning this ground, appeal to *facts* in evidence that this power is communicated in ordination? But how will this avail him? Can any human being detect the least difference in the eucharistic emblems before and after consecration? Tried by every test to which it is possible to subject them, are they not the identical bread and wine now that they were before? And as to baptism, are adults (to say nothing of children) *conscious* of any *radical transformation of character* while submitting to this ordinance—of such a change as must mark a transition from the bondage of sin to their renewal in the image of God, from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Christ? And are not thousands baptized every year, whose lives afford no satisfactory evidence whatever that this mighty renovation has passed upon them? We repeat the demand, then: Where is the *evidence* that the “gift of the Holy Ghost” is conferred in Prelatical ordination? This demand will probably be met, as similar requisitions are apt to be, by a repetition of the favourite maxim of the Oxford gentlemen, that “it is better to believe than to reason” on such subjects,—and so all those must think, who are willing to suspend their salvation upon this pretended transmission of the Holy Ghost along an unbroken line of Prelates.

There is another aspect of this matter which deserves to be adverted to. The “gift of the Holy Ghost,” we are told, has been transmitted from Christ through the supposed Prelatical line, to the Bishops of the present day. Many of the Prelates in this line have been, not simply men destitute of religion, but as

has been clearly shown, and as the Roman historians declare, drunkards, voluptuaries, simoniacs, usurpers, and, in fine, monsters in wickedness. The doctrine under consideration requires us to believe that every one of these monsters, who was ordained with the requisite forms, received "the gift of the Holy Ghost"—that this gift remained in them through all the scenes of infamy in which they were afterwards concerned and while perpetrating numerous crimes, any one of which would, in a land of law and Christian morals, have consigned them to the penitentiary or the gallows—and that these mitred villains, reeking with pollution, actually imparted this gift, the gift of the "HOLY GHOST," to every individual upon whose head they laid their hands in ordination! Can this horrible dogma be believed? Can intelligent and candid Episcopalians give their assent to a doctrine so insulting to that pure and blessed Spirit who is the author of all gracious affections and desires, and upon whom we are absolutely dependent for spiritual illumination, strength, consolation, and final triumph over death and hell? Yet this doctrine is *inseparable* from the High-Church theory of the Apostolical Succession.

To return now from this digression, if, indeed, it be a digression,—nothing can be plainer than that such views of the Christian ministry and of ordination, as we have been considering, must, wherever they are allowed to be carried out, tend to *aggrandize the Prelatical clergy*. It is not asserted that the scheme is advocated with this design, but that this is its legitimate tendency. The ministry occupy substantially the same relative position, according to this system, as the Jewish or Pagan "priesthood."



The sanctuary is a "temple," with its "altar," and "sacrifices," and "incense;" and they are the hierophants who celebrate its mysteries. They are the channel of spiritual intercourse between heaven and earth. If men would approach God acceptably, they must do it through them. If they would obtain renewing and sanctifying grace, they must receive the sacraments at their hands. They, and they alone, have the "gift of the HOLY GHOST." They are the "stewards" of the "storehouse of grace," the *Church*; and this grace it is their prerogative to dispense in baptism and the Lord's Supper. God is a merciful being, and *may* save one who through "involuntary error" refuses to submit to their authority; but no man can reasonably expect to be saved who does this. In so far as His "covenant" is concerned, mankind must look to them and the sacraments as they administer them, as the only avenue through which they can obtain renewal, reconciliation to God, the indwelling of the Spirit, and a title to eternal life.

No set of men can fancy themselves invested with such powers as these without being puffed up by it. This effect has uniformly followed, and followed just in the degree in which it has been found practicable to secure a recognition of the claim on the part of the people. It was the gradual assumption of these spiritual prerogatives, which led to the establishment of that proud and oppressive Hierarchy whose usurpations and crimes make up so large a portion of the history of the civilized world for the last twelve centuries. The same spirit in England forged the chains of the Puritans, and in Scotland shed the blood of the Covenanters like water. In this country, it has disclosed itself in the more frequent and unscrupulous

avowal of the dogma that "there cannot be a Church without a Bishop," in a growing sycophancy on the part of many of the inferior clergy towards their Bishops, in the glorification of the "Church" at the expense of its adorable Head, in the application of the term "Dissenters" and other offensive epithets, to Non-Episcopalians, in the assumption by High-Church Bishops of new prerogatives and the inculcation of the doctrines of implicit faith and passive obedience upon the laity, and in many other ways no less significant. These are the natural, and, without a miracle, unavoidable fruits of a system which teaches the few hundred Episcopal ministers in the United States, to regard themselves and the Roman Catholic clergy, as the only channel through which *the eighteen millions of people* who make up this nation, can have any "covenanted" access to God. And just in proportion as these extravagant pretensions come to be acquiesced in, will these and similar effects follow—all tending to one result, **THE AGGRANDIZEMENT OF THE PRELITICAL CLERGY.**

With this tendency there is, in the scheme we are examining, associated another, which forms its counterpart, *viz.* **THE GRADUAL SUBSTITUTION OF A CEREMONIAL FOR A SPIRITUAL RELIGION.**

It is a great mistake to suppose that men are naturally averse to the principle of Hierarchism. "The truth is," as Dr. Whateley has observed, "mankind have an innate propensity, as to other errors, so to that of endeavouring to serve God by proxy;—to commit to some distinct order of men the care of their religious concerns, in the same manner as they confide the care of their bodily health to the physician, and of their legal transactions to the lawyer; deem-

ing it sufficient to follow implicitly their directions, without attempting themselves to become acquainted with the *mysteries* of medicine or of law. Even thus are they willing and desirous that others should study, and should understand the mysterious doctrines of religion in their stead—should practise in their stead some more exalted kind of piety and of virtue—and should offer prayers and sacrifices on their behalf, both in their lifetime and after their death. For man, except when unusually depraved, retains enough of the image of his Maker, to have a natural reverence for religion, and a desire that God should be worshipped, but, through the corruption of his nature, his heart is (except when divinely purified) too much alienated from God to take delight in serving him. Hence the disposition men have ever shown, to substitute the *devotion of the priest* for their own;—to leave the duties of piety in his hands—and to let him serve God *in their stead*. This disposition is not so much the *consequence*, as itself the origin, of priestcraft. The Romish hierarchy did but take advantage from time to time of this natural propensity, by engrafting successively on its system such practices and points of doctrine as favoured it, and which were naturally converted into a source of profit and influence to the priesthood. Hence the gradual transformation of the Christian minister—the presbyter—into the sacrificing priest, the hierews, (in Latin, “sacerdos;” as the Romanists call theirs,) of the Jewish and Pagan religions.”<sup>1</sup>

The High-Church system is fitted to gratify this perverse craving of the unrenewed heart after a “vi-

<sup>1</sup> The Errors of Romanism traced to their origin in Human Nature, chap. ii.

carious religion.” If the ministry be what this system represents it—if the Church is the “storehouse of grace”—if “the gifts of grace are deposited in mere positive ordinances,” as distinguished from prayer, preaching, “*what is called*, communion with God,” and the like—and if all who receive the sacraments at the hands of persons duly commissioned, do, (unless there be some actual moral impediment in their own minds at the time) thereby receive spiritual life,—it will be miraculous if the mass of the people who are brought under the influence of this system, shall be kept from making the priest their proxy, and committing their salvation into his hands.<sup>1</sup>

The disposition which leads men to trust in a priest for salvation, prompts to THE MULTIPLICATION OF RITES AND CEREMONIES. The two things are branches of the same tree, and are never long separated. Whenever the mind is diverted from spiritual religion, it seeks repose in forms. And it matters comparatively little what the forms are. Christianity has its symbols and ceremonies; but they are few and simple. Its Divine Author “knew” too well “what was in man,” to infold the sublime truths of his religion in a pomp-

<sup>1</sup> The following anecdote will not be deemed out of place in illustrating this feature of the High-Church system.

Matthew Mead, the eminent non-conformist, was politely addressed by a nobleman—“I am sorry, sir, that we have not a person of your abilities with us in the Established Church. They would be extensively useful there.” “You don’t, my lord, require persons of great abilities in the Establishment.” “Why so, sir; what do you mean?” “When you christen a child, you regenerate it by the Holy Ghost. When you confirm a youth, you assure him of God’s favour and the forgiveness of his sins. When you visit a sick person, you absolve him from all his iniquities: and when you bury the dead, you send them all to heaven. Of what particular service, then, can great abilities be in your communion?”

ous ceremonial. He did this under the ancient economy, because that economy, as being a mere preparatory dispensation, was designed to subserve certain important purposes which required an imposing and complicated apparatus of ritual observances. But when "life and immortality were brought to light," when the "True Light" appeared in the world, these shadows and emblems were laid aside. Man, however, with his strong predilection for the sensual in place of the spiritual, in religion, has been ever since trying to bring them back. Christianity has had to struggle, from its commencement, against persevering exertions on the part of professed friends, to reduce it to its former servitude. This contest has been waged in every Christian communion—the elements of it are in every man's breast. In the Greek and Roman Churches, "the son of the bond woman" has triumphed over the free; Mount Zion has given place to Mount Sinai; the priest has usurped his Master's crown; and the deluded people have "turned again to the weak and beggarly elements" from which they had escaped. Puseyism is successfully carrying on the same conflict. It is hastening towards Rome just as fast as a wise *policy*, and rather faster than a becoming regard to the solemnity of oaths and subscriptions, will permit. Even in the Episcopal Church in this country, a candidate has been recently admitted to Deacon's orders, who on his examination declared that he "deemed the differences between us [i. e. the Episcopal Church] and Rome, such as embraced no points of faith—doubted whether the Church of Rome or the Anglican Church were the more pure—considered the Reformation from Rome unjustifiable, and followed by grievous and

lamentable results, though not without others of an opposite character—faulted not the Church of Rome for reading the Apocrypha for proof of doctrine—did not consider that we were bound to receive the XXXIX Articles of our Church, in any close and rigid construction of the same—declared that he knew not how to answer the question, which had been repeatedly asked, Whether he considered the Church of Rome to be now in error in matters of faith?—was not prepared to pronounce the doctrine of transubstantiation an absurd or impossible doctrine, and regarded it, as taught within the last hundred years, as possibly meaning no more than we mean by the doctrine of the Real Presence—did not object to the Romish doctrine of Purgatory, as defined by the Council of Trent—believed that the state of the soul after death, was one in which it could be benefited by the prayers of the faithful and the sacrifice of the altar—regarded the denial of the cup to the laity as a severe act of discipline only—justified the invocation of saints—in one instance declared that he did not deny, but would not positively affirm, the decrees of the Council of Trent; in another, that he received the Articles of the Creed of Pius IV., so far as they were repetitions of the decrees of that Council.”<sup>1</sup> With the fact before us, that a man avowing these sentiments has been ordained by an Episcopal Prelate, it would be superfluous to *argue* on the tendencies of High-Churchism to smother the vital spirit of Christianity, as Rome has done, with a load of human inventions and idle ceremonies. How far the school

<sup>1</sup> Drs. Smith and Anthon’s “Statement of Facts in relation to the recent ordination [of Mr. Carey] in St. Stephen’s Church, New York,” p. 27.



have advanced in this direction, on the other side of the water, may be learned from one of themselves, who seems to be astounded at the discovery he has but lately made, that Puseyism leads naturally to Popery. Alarmed at the rapid strides his fellow-Tractarians and their disciples are making towards Rome, the writer in question<sup>1</sup> has published a pamphlet, disclosing a good many interesting facts respecting the progress of the Oxford views.

“The blame of separation, (he says,) of *schism*, is [among the Tractarians] openly and unscrupulously laid on the English Church.”

“Invocation of saints is sanctioned in some quarters; purgatory is by no means unacceptable in others; images and crucifixes are purchased and employed to aid in private devotion; celibacy of the clergy—auricular confession, are acknowledged to be obligatory.”

“Among other evidences of a ‘holy life,’ which are held up to our admiration, are ‘*the use of shirts of hemp, in which the splinters of the stalk were left; the harbouring of vermin; the use of ‘disgusting’ food.*’ It is held questionable, whether some saints have not ‘been even marked externally by the semblance of *the five adorable wounds.*’ We are left in doubt whether the healing of a young lady by a *thorn*, ‘said to have been one of those that pierced our Saviour,’ was miraculous or not. It is argued, however, that one would naturally look for such miraculous events in *monasteries*, ‘where persons take the kingdom of heaven by violence, and begin on earth the life of angels, neither marrying nor giving in marriage.’”

This, let it be noted, is the testimony of one of the

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. W. Palmer.

leaders. He has been behind the curtain; and now, alarmed at the follies he has helped to introduce, makes his report of the scenes that are passing there. It is safe to presume that the loathsome devices he has mentioned for mortifying the flesh, will not very soon become *popular* with the school to which he belongs; but novitiates are put upon a milder regimen. Those who are not prepared for the "hempen shirts," and the "disgusting food," may begin with the sign of the cross—"the *sanctifying* and perhaps half *sacramental* use of the cross," as it is expressed by the Tract-writers. The wonderful efficacy of this slight manipulation, in exciting good thoughts and putting to flight evil spirits, is thus delineated by one of them.

"Whene'er across this sinful flesh of mine  
*I draw the Holy Sign,*  
 All good thoughts stir within me, and collect  
 Their slumb'ring strength divine;  
 Till there springs up that hope of God's elect,  
 My faith shall ne'er be wrecked.

And who shall say, but hateful spirits around  
 For their brief hour unbound,  
*Shudder to see, and wail their overthrow?*  
 While on far heathen ground  
 Some lonely saint hails the fresh odour, though  
 Its source he cannot know."<sup>1</sup>

No man can stop here. He who has learned to ascribe such marvels as these to the mere "crossing" of himself, is prepared to expend upon trifles the reverence which belongs to the solemn realities of religion. And accordingly we find in the writings of

<sup>1</sup> *Lyra Apostolica.*

the sect a great prominence given to every thing pertaining to the exterior of religion—to Saints' days, and decorations of churches, to vestments, and attitudes, and such like impertinences—while it is rare to meet with exhortations to personal holiness, in the style of the Apostolic Epistles. The sort of Christianity which the system fosters, lays out its strength upon externals. It is not that it lacks emotion, but its strongest emotions are excited by insignificant objects. "The venerable fathers of the Church of England," says a masterly writer, "were familiar with the exercises of holy joy and godly sorrow. But their joy sprang from the sense of Divine favour, and their sorrow from the sense of their own sin. The one was never higher, and the other never deeper, than at those times when external forms were hidden from their view by the superior brightness of the spiritual objects which they merely represented. When they wept, it was not because the pulpit was too high above the reading-desk. When they exulted, it was not because the altar had been thrust back to the east end of the chancel. When they repented, it was not because they had tasted goose on Friday.<sup>1</sup> When they thanked God, it was not for bells and organs and baptismal fountains. Their communion was with God and with his Son directly, not circuitously through a line of Priests or Bishops. Their delight was in the word of God itself, not in the spread-eagle upon which it rested. The graces which distinguished them were not those of a posture-master. The cross in which they gloried, was the cross of Christ, and not that of the carpenter, the gilder, or the silversmith. They kept it at the bottom of their hearts, and not

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Froude's Remains.

upon the tops of their houses. In a word, they walked by faith and not by sight, looking not at things which are seen, but at things which are unseen. And yet now, their Apostolical Successors use the very same expressions, in relation to their baubles and their mummeries, which these old worthies used in reference to spiritual and eternal objects. What they said of the foundation, their successors say of the wood, hay, and stubble heaped upon it.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the process so much to be dreaded from the prevalence of High-Churchism. The whole tendency of the system is to substitute a mere outward Christianity for true religion—to put the Church in the place of Christ, and rites and forms in the place of regeneration by the Holy Spirit and justification through the righteousness of Christ. This is only saying in other words, that its tendency is *to delude men and destroy their souls*—a result that may be expected to follow wherever the system is allowed to exert its legitimate influence without obstruction.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### INTOLERANCE OF THE SYSTEM.

The INTOLERANCE of High-Churchism has been frequently adverted to in former chapters, but I cannot consent to dismiss it without a further notice.

Ample evidence has already been adduced that the *unchurching* dogma constitutes a radical part of

<sup>1</sup> Bib. Repertory, Vol. XIV. 135.

the system. There was a time when this dogma was unknown in the Church of England. The English Reformers and many of the illustrious men who succeeded them, cordially acknowledged the Presbyterian Churches of the continent as true churches. They contented themselves with the doctrine that Prelacy was *authorized* by the Bible—that it was exclusively authorized, they neither asserted nor believed. They held that Bishops and Presbyters were properly of one order; and that the investiture of Bishops with certain exclusive functions, was a matter of expediency and human arrangement. This is so well known that no one versed in English ecclesiastical history, will question it.<sup>1</sup> On one part of the statement, however, I may be permitted to quote the testimony of the present excellent and able Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio, from a pamphlet written some years ago when he was Chaplain at West Point.

“Is it characteristic of a *Low-Churchman* that he does not believe in the *exclusive divine right* of Episcopacy; that he does not deny the validity of all ordinations which have not been performed by a Bishop; that he cannot consider all those Christian brethren who do not receive the sacraments from ministers Episcopally ordained, as destitute of the sacraments of the gospel, and that he finds it neither in the Bible, the doctrines of the Church, nor in his own heart, to give up all his brethren, who are not partakers of ordinances Episcopally administered, to nothing more comforting nor scriptural than what are called by some regarded as High-Churchmen, “uncovenanted mercies?” If so, then Mr. M. is very free to own that in all these particu-

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VI.

lars, he is "one of the most decided of Low-Churchmen." But is there any reason to be timid of such an acknowledgment while our Church, by saying not a syllable upon either of these points in her Liturgy, Catechism, Articles, or Homilies, has given ample room for difference of opinion? As for the *exclusive divine right of Episcopacy*, Mr. M. has never cared to conceal that he *does not believe it*; and why should he care to conceal his opinion when, on the testimony of such historians as Warner and Mosheim, "Archbishop Bancroft was the *first man* in the Church of England, who preached up the divine right of Episcopacy;" when Bishop Stillingfleet has not scrupled to call the *jus divinum*, "*a novel pretence*;" when such men as Cranmer, Jewell, Hooker, Whitgift, Hall, Usher, Burnet, Tillotson, Wake, Pretiman, and "a cloud of witnesses" besides, have expressed opinions directly at variance with the notion of exclusive divine right; and finally, when in a pamphlet published some years ago by *Bishop White*, ["Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States considered,"] and of which in 1820 he said in his "Memoirs," that "there did not appear to his mind any reason to retract the leading sentiments of that performance," we meet the following paragraph: "Now, if even those who hold Episcopacy to be of divine right, conceive the obligation of it not to be binding when that idea would be destructive of public worship; much more must they think so, who indeed venerate and prefer that form as the most ancient and eligible, but *without any idea of divine right in the case*. This the author believes to be the sentiment of the great body of Episcopalians in America; in which respect they have in their favour



unquestionably the sense of the *Church of England*; and, as he believes, the opinions of her most distinguished Prelates for piety, virtue, and ability."

As to the validity of the orders, ministry, and sacraments, of all churches destitute of Episcopal organization, Mr. M. ought assuredly to have no hesitation in owning that he is neither able nor disposed to deny it, when, besides the inferences which may be drawn from what has just been mentioned, such a man as Bishop Hall asserts, that "all (in his day) professed to believe the mode of constituting the external ministry, not to be an *essential* of the Church;" when such a man as Archbishop Usher writes, "for the testifying of my communion with these churches (Non-Episcopal churches of the continent) which I do love and honour as true members of the church universal, I do profess that with like affection, I should receive the blessed sacrament at the hands of the *Dutch* ministers, if I were in Holland, as I should do at the hands of the *French* ministers, if I were in Charenton;" and especially, when an Archbishop of Canterbury, and such an one as Wake, is remembered to have written as follows: "The Reformed Churches, though differing in some things from the English, I freely embrace. I could wish indeed that a well-moderated Episcopal government, freed from all unjust domination, such as obtains among us, and, if I have any skill in such subjects, was received in the Church from the very age of the Apostles, had been retained by them all. Nor do I despair, though I should not see it restored, that posterity will. In the meantime, far be it that on account of such a defect, (for so, without uncharitableness, it may be called,) I should be of such an iron heart as to think that any

of them should be cut off from the communion of the Church; or with certain *furious writers* among us *should pronounce that they have no true and valid sacraments and so are scarcely Christians.*"<sup>1</sup>

Had these sentiments continued to prevail in the Church of England, the controversy which is now going on would not have occurred. That Episcopalians should regard the absence of Prelacy as a defect in Non-Episcopal Churches, is a thing of course. *We* look upon its *existence* in their system as a "defect," and believe they would be far better off without it. These opinions are quite compatible with the maintenance of Christian fellowship. But the present High-Church party have gone to the length of denouncing the whole Non-Episcopal body as being out of covenant with God, because they have not that unbroken Prelatical succession which they, with so little warrant, lay claim to themselves. "We cannot," says one of them<sup>2</sup> in a late lecture, "be brought into the holy covenant, except in an Episcopal Church, or by the agency of an Episcopal ministry." "The supposed commission" of Non-Episcopal ministers, "is worse than a nullity. It involves the guilt of schism and rebellion. They assume powers that were never granted to them, and exercise those powers not only independently of the divine authority which the Saviour and his Apostles transmitted to their successors in the government of the Church, but in direct opposition to that authority."

<sup>1</sup> Reply to Dr. (now Bishop) H. U. Onderdonk, p. 13—15. See numerous additional testimonies to the same effect, exhibiting (inter alia) the obligations of the Church of England to Luther and Calvin, in the pamphlet already mentioned, entitled, "Oxford Divinity, by a Presbyterian."—Burlington, New Jersey, 1843.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Palmer Dyer, of Whitehall, N. Y.

This modest preacher is one of a large and growing number who are fomenting strife in the bosom of the Episcopal Church, and making themselves ridiculous by their arrogant pretensions. A late writer in the *Edinburgh Review* has described the *genus* very graphically. "The country," he says, "is infested by not a few *young 'priests,'* raving about *their* Apostolic Succession; founding the most absurd pretensions on their mere sacerdotal character, though backed neither by experience nor wisdom; boasting of the thaumaturgic powers they can exert in the administration of the sacraments; contending not for the faith once delivered to the saints, but for wax candles, altar-cloths, chaplets, crosses, crucifixes, and mummerly of all kinds;—at the same time modestly consigning all Protestants out of the Episcopal pale, either to perdition or the 'uncovenanted mercies;' in a word, exhibiting zeal indeed, but zeal that is utterly unacquainted with any other of the Christian graces—zeal that is not even on speaking terms with knowledge, faith, or charity."<sup>1</sup>

The intolerance of this party is aggravated by several considerations which deserve to be mentioned here. One of these, is, that the system in behalf of which this intolerance is exercised, *was originally established by the civil power*, in opposition to the principles and wishes of the wisest and best men in the Church. I refer in this language to the English Reformation and the Church of England. I have no intention of charging the sins or imperfections of the English hierarchy upon the Episcopal Church in this country. But that Church was confessedly the mother, and, in respect to its general

<sup>1</sup> No. 156, p. 290.

polity, ceremonies, and worship, the model, of this. High-Churchism too, is essentially the same spirit on both sides the Atlantic. It is, therefore, quite appropriate to the object of this discussion, to show that the system of order and worship which all men are now called upon to adopt under penalty of being abandoned to "uncovenanted mercy," was A CREATURE OF THE STATE, not a system deduced by pious and learned divines from the Scriptures of truth.

It was the common sentiment of the English Reformers, that their Church was only *partially reformed*, both as to polity and worship. They struggled long and hard to free it from the "clerical habits" and many rights and usages which had been retained from the Church of Rome. But the authority, first of a sensual king, and then of a vain, despotic, capricious queen, was against them; and their struggle was fruitless. "We should mistake exceedingly, if we supposed that they were men of the same principles and temper with many who succeeded to their places, or that they were satisfied with the pitch to which they had carried the Reformation of the English Church, and regarded it as a paragon and perfect pattern to other Churches. They were strangers to those extravagant and illiberal notions which were afterwards adopted by the fond admirers of the hierarchy and liturgy. They would have laughed at the man who seriously asserted, that the ecclesiastical ceremonies constituted any part of "the beauty of holiness," or that the imposition of the hands of a Bishop was essential to the validity of ordination; and they would not have owned that person as a Protestant who would have ventured to insinuate, that where these were wanting, there was no Chris-

tian ministry, no ordinances, no Church, and perhaps —no salvation. Many things which their successors have applauded, they barely tolerated; and they would have been happy if the circumstances of their time, would have permitted them to introduce alterations which have since been cried down as puritanical innovations. Strange as it may appear to some, I am not afraid of exceeding the truth when I say, that if the English Reformers, including the Protestant Bishops, had been left to their own choice,—if they had not been held back and retarded by a large mass of popishly affected clergy in the reign of Edward, and restrained by the supreme civil authority on the accession of Elizabeth, *they would have brought the government and worship of the Church of England nearly to the pattern of other Reformed Churches.*"<sup>1</sup>

Those who may wish to see the authorities on which this representation rests, will find them in the appendix to the work just quoted. Many of them are to be found also in Neal's History of the Puritans, Burnet's Reformation, and the "Zurich Letters" lately published by the "Parker Society," and containing the correspondence between the English Reformers and the Divines of Switzerland. From these sources I make a few selections.

Hooper, in a letter dated February 8, 1550, informs Bullinger, that "the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Rochester, Ely, St. David's, Lincoln, and Bath, were sincerely bent on advancing the purity of doctrine, agreeing IN ALL THINGS with the Helvetic Churches." Parkhurst, Bishop of Norwich, writing to Gualter, February 4, 1573, exclaims, "O! would

<sup>1</sup> Dr. McCrie: Life of Knox, p. 65. (Lond. 1841.)



to God, would to God, once at last, all the English people would in good earnest propound to themselves to follow the [Presbyterian] Church of Zurich as the most absolute pattern." It was proposed by Cranmer to erect courts similar to the kirk-sessions and provincial synods afterwards introduced into the Scotch Church.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth, who had the chief agency in shaping the polity and worship of the Church and settling it on its present basis, seemed disposed to retain just as much Popery as would comport with the peace of her kingdom, or, as Bishop Short has expressed it, she "was not indisposed to have approached as near as possible to the Romish communion." She instructed the divines whom she appointed to revise King Edward's liturgy, to omit all offensive passages against the Pope, and to make people easy about the belief of the corporal presence of Christ in the Eucharist. On examining the litany as reported by them, she found this passage:—"From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, good Lord, deliver us." This she *struck out*; as she also did the rubric which declared that "by kneeling at the sacrament, no adoration was intended to any corporal presence of Christ." The divines had left it optional with the people whether to receive the communion kneeling or standing. The Queen and Parliament (*i. e.* the *civil* power in opposition to the spiritual officers of the Church,) "restrained it to kneeling."<sup>2</sup> The Reformers were stoutly opposed to what they regarded as "Popish habits." The Queen, with her characteristic love of pomp and parade, and her cordial aversion to spiritual religion, would not allow

<sup>1</sup> Burnet, III. 214.

<sup>2</sup> Neal, I. 177.



the clergy the least discretion in this matter, but enforced the use of the habits, with pains and penalties. "It was only her strong Tudor arm," says an authority which no High-Churchman will discredit, "that kept them within decent bounds. The greater part of them positively objected to the surplice—including Sandys, Grindal, Pilkington, Jewell, Horn, Parkhurst, Bentham, and ALL THE LEADING MEN, who were for SIMPLIFYING OUR CHURCH CEREMONIAL IN THAT AND OTHER RESPECTS, ACCORDING TO THE GENEVAN [*i. e.* THE PRESBYTERIAN] MODEL; Archbishop Parker almost standing alone with the Queen in her determination to uphold the former."<sup>1</sup> All this appears from their letters to the continental ministers. Cox writes to Bullinger, (1551,) "I think all things in the Church ought to be pure and simple, removed at the greatest distance from the pomp and elements of the world. But in this our Church, what can I do in so low a station?"<sup>2</sup> Jewell, in a letter to Peter Martyr, 1559, calls the clerical habits "a stage-dress" to which those alone were attached who "had nothing else to recommend them to the people but a comical dress." He engages that no exertions of his shall be wanting to banish utterly these

<sup>1</sup> Brit. Crit. for 1842, p. 330. Courayer, the celebrated Romish defender of the Anglican Ordinations, makes a similar statement respecting Cranmer and Barlow, and others, in the reign of Edward. After saying that in their answers to the questions proposed to certain divines, these dignitaries "exclude ordination particularly from the number of the sacraments, as carrying no virtual efficacy with it," he adds—"In a word, PURE PRESBYTERIANISM without disguise, discovers itself in *all* the answers; and it is but too apparent that the *chief aim of these divines and Prelates was to EXTINGUISH EPISCOPACY.*"

<sup>2</sup> Cited by McCrie, p. 409.

“ridiculous trifles” (“*ludicris ineptiis*”) and “relics of the Amorites.” And at a later period (1566) he writes to Bullinger, that “he wished that the very slightest footsteps of Popery might be removed out of the Church and minds of men; but the Queen would at that time suffer no change in religion.”<sup>1</sup> Bishops Grindal and Horn, in writing to Bullinger and Gualter, Feb. 6th, 1567, argue that the ministers of the Church of England “may adopt without impiety” the prescribed habits, and regret that the question should have been invested with so much importance. Still, they declare that they are firmly opposed to the use of the habits, and would abolish them if they could. “We call Almighty God to witness,” they say, “that this dissension has not been occasioned by any fault of ours, nor is it owing to us that vestments of this kind have not been altogether done away with: so far from it, that we most solemnly make oath that we have hitherto laboured with all earnestness, fidelity, and diligence to effect what our brethren require and what we ourselves wish.”<sup>2</sup> Among the leading advocates of a more thorough reform, were Sampson and Humphreys, who, says Burnet, “were much distinguished for their learning, piety, and zeal, in religion, and were in great reputation, particularly in the University of Oxford, where one was Dean of Christ’s Church, and the other President of Magdalen’s and divinity professor.”<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Bullinger, dated July 1566, these eminent men go into an ingenious and able argument to show that the question respecting ceremonies and habits, was one of great practical importance. We do not,

<sup>1</sup> Cited by McCrie, p. 410.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. III. 462.

<sup>2</sup> Zurich Letters p. 177.

they say, "place religion in dress:" but "as ceremonies and sacerdotal habits are signs of religion and marks of profession, they are not of a civil character; and being borrowed from our adversaries, as all allow them to be, they cannot be convenient; and being marked with the divine anathema, and detested by all godly persons, and had in honour by the wicked and the weak, who think that without them we can neither be ministers, nor that the sacraments can be administered rightly, they neither can nor ought to be reckoned among things indifferent." They resist the imposition of the habits as an infringement of Christian liberty, and as tending to arrest the reform of the Church. "We have (praised be God) a doctrine pure and incorrupt: why should we go halting in regard to divine worship, which is not the least important part of religion? Why should we receive Christ rather maimed, than entire, and pure, and perfect? Why should we look for precedents from our enemies, the Papists, and not from you, our brethren of the Reformation? We have the same Confession in our Churches, the same Rule of Doctrine and Faith; why should there be so great a dissimilarity and discrepancy in rites and ceremonies? The thing signified is the same; why do the signs so differ as to be unlike yours, and to resemble those of the Papists? We have the same captain and leader, Christ, why are the banners of the enemy set up in our Churches? which, if we were men of God, if we were endued with any zeal, we should long since have abominated and destroyed." To show Bullinger that they were "not merely disputing about a cap or a surplice," "we send you (they say) some straws and chips of the Popish religion"—that is, Popish rites and usages

which still prevailed in the Church of England and the abolition of which they were labouring to effect. They specify under this head, "a kind of Popish superstition" in the public services; the sign of the cross in baptism, the practice of licensing women to administer baptism, the imposition of "Popish habits," the absence of discipline, the restrictions upon "the free liberty of preaching," trafficking in benefices and ecclesiastical dispensations, and various other things.

The practices here specified were offensive to the friends of the Reformation generally, whether among the Bishops or the inferior clergy. In 1562, a petition was presented to the lower house of Convocation, signed by thirty-two members, most of whom had been exiles, and the best men in the kingdom, praying for alterations similar to those proposed by Sampson and Humphreys. They ask that kneeling at the communion may be left discretionary with each Bishop, and that saints' days may be abolished, or kept only for public worship, with the privilege of ordinary labour afterwards. Respecting the habits, they pray "that copes and surplices should be disused, and the ministers made to wear some comely and decent garment, [such as the Geneva gown, which all the early Puritans wore,] and that the ministers of the word and sacrament be not compelled to wear such gowns and caps as the enemies of Christ's gospel have chosen to be the special array of their priesthood."<sup>1</sup> For this petition they substituted another, specifying the most exceptionable ceremonies, and praying for their abrogation. After much debate the

<sup>1</sup> The clerical "habits" of that day were much *gayer* than those worn now.

vote was taken, and the Convocation decided by a vote of forty-three to thirty-five in favour of granting their petition; but when the *proxies* came to be counted, the vote stood fifty-eight for and fifty-nine against the petition. The ceremonies were therefore *retained* in the Church of England by a majority of *one* vote, and *that* the vote of an *absent member* who was not present to hear the question discussed.<sup>1</sup>

The facts that have been adduced, show how much the English Reformers were bent upon a further reformation of their Church. They could make no progress, however, against the Queen. The Puseyites gratefully acknowledge the firmness of Elizabeth in resisting and baffling their exertions. "Queen Elizabeth," says one of them, "with her prejudices in favour of the old religion, [*i. e.* Popery,] was doubtless an instrument in the hand of God for *stopping the progress of the Reformation.*"<sup>2</sup> That Church, it has often been said, only exchanged one Pope for another. As it was originally created and fashioned by the civil power, so it is to this day,

<sup>1</sup> Gualter opposed the doctrine that the English Reformers ought to submit to the habits and ceremonies temporarily, in the expectation that a more favourable time would soon occur for getting rid of them. In a letter dated Jan. 16, 1559, he prophetically warns those who suffered abuses to remain and strengthen themselves in England, that "afterwards they would scarcely be able to eradicate them by all their efforts and struggles."

The historian, Fuller, says in his usual quaint way, that the English Reformers "permitted ignorant people to retain some fond customs, that they might remove the most dangerous and destructive superstitions; as mothers, to get children to part with *knives*, are content to let them play with *rattles*." "Very good, (adds Dr. McCrie,) but if children are suffered to play too long with rattles, they are in great danger of not parting with them all their days."

<sup>2</sup> Brit. Crit. for October, 1842, p. 333.



*enslaved to the crown.* The clergy are obliged to acknowledge the sovereign as clothed with supreme ecclesiastical authority. The Queen is the *Head of the Church.* And by the thirty-sixth canon, agreed upon in 1603, no person can become a minister in that Church, without subscribing this article, to wit: that “the king’s majesty under God is the only supreme governor of this realm, and of all other his Highnesses’ dominions and countries, as well in *all spiritual or ecclesiastical things, or causes*, as temporal.” The clergy cannot meet in convocation without the Queen’s leave. Having met, they can enact nothing without her consent. And what is enacted they cannot publish without her authority.<sup>1</sup> “If any alteration takes place, it is not by the power of the clergy, but of the parliament and the king. If a single occasional and temporary collect be wanted, on a fast or thanksgiving day, for the use of the parish priests, the college of Archbishops and Bishops have not a right to make it without an order from the king. The impotence of both houses of convocation, when formerly allowed to meet and to act, was such that they could not even censure, with effect, the erroneous opinions of a member of their own body. A woman, who then sat on the throne, was of a different opinion from all the clergy of the land, and her opinion prevailed. They thought Whiston [the Arian] a heretic: good queen Anne, of blessed memory, was of a different judgment; and Whiston remained unrebuked.—The alteration of anything which may be considered as a standing rule, requires still more of the civil authority: there must be the concurrence of the lords

<sup>1</sup> For the authorities, see “Plea of Presbytery,” Second Edit. (Belfast) p. 175.



and commons, as well as the approbation of the king or queen. Various changes have been made of late in the frame of the Church respecting the residence of the clergy, the power of the Bishops, and the appointment of curates. But by whom have they been made? By the clergy in convocation? No such thing: but by his majesty and the lords and commons in parliament assembled. By them all is done. They are the sole reformers: and without their permission and authority, the clergy cannot wear a garment of a different shape or colour in their ministrations. So entirely is the civil authority the head of the Church, that her thousands of clergy, dignified and subordinate, cannot alter a single question in the catechism, nor wear a *blue* surplice instead of a *white* one, were they so inclined. Here, then is a *parliamentary Church*, as to its origin, a Church wholly *made by laymen*, and *alterable by laymen* according to their sovereign's pleasure. It has been attempted to represent the Church as the *ally* of the state; but the state is the head: the Church one of the inferior members. The Church of England is the creature of the state, as much as the army, the navy, the courts of justice, or the boards of custom and excise."<sup>1</sup>

The case is even worse than this. Not only does the civil magistrate "enact the creed" of the Church, "frame its prayers," and "prescribe the number and form of the sacraments" to be administered; but "the parish priest has no authority to exclude the most profligate sinner from communion; the lordliest Prelate or Primate cannot [without subjecting himself to an action for damages] excommunicate the most

<sup>1</sup> Bogue and Bennett's Hist. of Dissenters, I. 103, 4.

abandoned sinner, or suspend the most immoral ecclesiastic from his functions; and should either the Priest or the Prelate attempt to exercise the discipline prescribed by the Lord Jesus in his house, he will speedily be made to understand, by the terrors of a *præmunire*, or the experience of a prison, that he is not appointed in the Church of England to administer the laws of Christ, but the statutes of the imperial parliament, or the injunctions of the crown.”<sup>1</sup>

Most persons will be apt to think, after reading these testimonies, that the Church of England is the last one of the Protestant Churches that should be heard boasting of its polity. Erastianized, enslaved, “*in chains*,” (as the Puseyites themselves say,) what right has *she* to glory over the free Churches of the Reformation? A proper sense of her vassalage would at least keep her silent. Silence becomes her—and humiliation. She is really entitled to the compassion of her sister-churches; and would have it, if her deportment was at all suited to her circumstances. Even with all the unseemly airs her leaders are forcing her to assume, they can but pity while they rebuke her—as one would pity a galley-slave who should go about in his fetters and manacles prating of his *freedom* and trying to make other people put on irons like his own.

“But the disabilities of that Church,” it will be said, “arise from her connection with the state, and ought not to be urged as an objection to her polity.”

<sup>1</sup> Presbyterian Review, *ut supra*. The article here referred to, on the “Anglican Reformation,” is replete with valuable historical information, and will well repay perusal. The Presbyterian Board of Publication have prefixed it to their recent edition of Dr. Brown’s interesting work on “Puseyite Episcopacy.”

I answer—the very thing we except to is that her *polity* was *framed by the state*. She has been from her origin a STATE-CHURCH. By this I mean, not simply that she has been an established Church, but that she was in the first instance fashioned by the State, and has been ever since subject to such modifications as the State might choose to make in her constitution, faith, or worship. I have proved this already. And if further proof were wanting, it is to be found in a fact of recent occurrence that occasioned no small excitement in the hierarchy;—I refer to the consolidation of several of the Irish dioceses by act of Parliament. The Tractarians say of this matter: “The Legislature has lately *taken upon itself* to remodel the dioceses of Ireland; a proceeding which involves the appointment of certain Bishops over certain clergy, and of certain clergy under certain Bishops, *without the Church being consulted in the matter.*” (Tract No. 2.) A prominent and zealous minister<sup>1</sup> of the Establishment, declares this act to be “the annihilation of her Episcopal offices by a set of laymen;” and says, “If we submit to this bill, let us call ourselves a religious club, instituted by the House of Commons, *durante bene placito*; but as to an Apostolical Church, with Apostolical office and authority, let us preserve enough of Christian honesty and truth no longer to usurp the title.”<sup>2</sup> The State, however, in adopting measures of this kind, is only carrying out the policy with which Henry VIII. and Elizabeth commenced. They constructed a frame-work for the Church to suit themselves, and then *forced* it upon her. In this frame-work were included Prelacy, and the rites and ceremonies commented on

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. R. McGhee.

<sup>2</sup> Plea for Presbytery, p. 176.

so freely by the Reformers in the letters that have been quoted. I have not cited those letters to show that the habits and ceremonies they condemn are wrong in themselves. I enter not at all into that question. My sole object has been to show what the *English Reformers* thought about the system of government and worship entailed upon their Church by the crown. I felt it due to my argument to state the FACT that in arranging that system, the State and the Church were arrayed against each other—that the civil power approved of it, and the spiritual power disapproved of it—that the Reformers would have carried the reform much further, but the crown would not let them—and that they finally acquiesced, in the hope that the times might become more auspicious for assimilating the order and worship of their Church more nearly to the standard of the other Protestant churches. I bring forward this *fact* as aggravating in no small degree the INTOLERANCE of the High-Church party. The scheme in behalf of which this intolerance is displayed, is one for which they are indebted to two despotic and semi-papistical English sovereigns. I do not say that if those sovereigns had been thorough Protestants, and allowed the Reformers to have their own way, Prelacy might not afterwards have sprung up amidst some of the convulsions of the British empire, and been transmitted to this country. We are not concerned now with what might have been, but with what has been. The scheme was fabricated by the state, not drawn from the Bible by the Church. And that this scheme should have become, with any set of men, the test of a true Church—that they should even go to the length of *unchurching* all Christian denominations that have by the good providence and grace.

of God been preserved from adopting it—of consigning to “uncovenanted mercy” all who in flying out of Sodom were so fortunate as to reach the mountain, and were not, like themselves, arrested by an iron hand when only mid-way of the plain,—this, surely, is an instance of assurance of which the world has seldom seen a parallel.

A second consideration which aggravates the intolerance of this party, is, that the sect for which they challenge a monopoly of Christian ordinances and privileges, is *one of the smallest of the Protestant communions*. Truth of doctrine may, it is granted, be the heritage of the few, while the multitude are given up to error. But whenever true religion has been restricted to a small body of believers, as, for example, in the Apostolic age, it has carried with it incontestable evidence that such was the case. If Prelatic Churches could give equally decisive evidence that they alone possess a genuine Christianity, it would be the duty of every one to seek a union with them. But when a Prelatic Church asserts the claim without the evidence essential to substantiate it—without, in other words, exhibiting a purer or more effective practical Christianity than other Churches—it is natural to inquire, whether its pretensions derive any countenance from its superior extent and numbers, as compared with other denominations. Now it is a well-known historical fact that *all* the Reformed Churches discarded the *jure divino* doctrine of Prelacy, at the period of the Reformation. The Church of England forms no exception; for I have shown that although she retained Prelacy, she did it on very different grounds from that of its being of divine right. The Swedish and Danish Churches also re-



tained the Episcopal form of government; but only as a matter of expediency.<sup>1</sup> All the other Reformed Churches, notwithstanding the predilection the learned and able men who directed their affairs might naturally have for the polity to which they had been accustomed, repudiated Prelacy. Diocesan Episcopacy, then, probably does not embrace among its supporters *a twentieth part* of the population of Protestant Christendom.<sup>2</sup> And yet this mere fraction of the Protestant world arrogates to itself, or rather a portion of the body arrogates for it, the exclusive possession of Gospel-rites and promises, and presumes to declare the other nineteen-twentieths of the Protestants of the globe, "out of the pale of God's covenant." This view is still more striking when confined to our own country. According to the latest returns, the whole number of ministers connected with the various evangelical Churches in the United States, is seventeen thousand and seventy-three, and of communicants, two millions five hundred and forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. Of this number, there are connected with the Protestant Episcopal Church, one thousand two hundred and twenty-two ministers and seventy-five thousand communicants;—in other words, of the evangelical ministers in the Union, one out of every fourteen, and of the communicants, one out of every thirty-four, is an Episcopalian. Now the High-Church doctrine assumes, according to these data, that thirteen out of every fourteen evangelical ministers in this country, are men who have intruded into the sacred office,

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Miller's Letters, 8vo. edit. 386-8.

<sup>2</sup> I have seen it stated that in England, out of a population of thirteen millions, about four millions belong to the Established Church.



whose commissions are a nullity, whose ordinances are invalid, and who are themselves in danger of sharing in the doom of Korah, Dathan and Abiram: while of the professing Christians in these Churches, thirty-three out of thirty-four have no portion in the promises, and cannot reasonably suppose themselves to be in the way of salvation! And all this, not because they do not exhibit as much of the power of Christianity *in their lives* as their Episcopal neighbours, but because they refuse to conform to that Church or some other, say the *Romish*, that pretends to have an unbroken prelatical succession in its ministry! Surely, the men who bring forward such a scheme as this, must count largely upon the credulity of their fellow-citizens, and their ignorance of the scriptural marks of Christian character, if they expect it to be received.

It is another aggravation of this intolerance, that *it is directed only against matters of form and organization*. If the High-Church party were rigorous in enforcing doctrinal uniformity and great strictness of life and manners within their communion, their intolerance of other forms of government would at least have the merit of consistency. But on both these points they are more latitudinarian than perhaps any other evangelical body of Christians in Great Britain or America. The theology of the Church of England has, it is well known, undergone an entire change (allowing of course for individual exceptions) since her Articles were framed. Her Reformers and early divines were decided Calvinists, and the broad, healthful stamp of Calvinism is upon her Articles. But the theology of her ministers has been varied and fluctuating ever since the restoration of Charles II. when

looseness of doctrine and of morals came into the Church together. The British Critic (for Oct. 1842,) distinctly admits the change in the divinity of the Church, and maintains that the change ought still to *go on*—as it bids fair to do. “The Laudian school was as clearly a *new development* of the Church, in its day, as history can show it. And be it well noted, it was a *successful* development—it *established* itself. Laud and his party were ‘innovators’ in their day; but how are they regarded now? As our greatest doctors, the highest standards and brightest ornaments of the Church. . . . The truth is, these divines, by a dint of immense effort, by a great and strong heave, lifted the Church above the levels of Calvinism to a higher ground, and that ground has remained our *terra firma* to this day. . . . The present orthodox divinity of our Church is a development since the Reformation and a reaction upon it.” Again: “Calvin and his school were the master-spirits of the Reformation; they gave the impulse, and they left a stamp upon the movement which cannot be mistaken: let history for once be allowed to speak. The full development of Calvinism was stopped indeed, but only because *the Reformation itself was stopped*; and its peculiar doctrines remained the theology of our Church *till Laud upset them.*” “And can it be denied, that *as the Church threw off her Calvinism, she also began to incline to a union with Rome, i. e.* if we are to take, as we must do, the Laudian school as the then representatives? But we will only proceed at present on the fact that she did throw it off—that there has been a change in our theology since the Reformation. For if the precedent has been set, *why may it not, with prudence and moderation, be followed?*”

It is easy to see to what this theory of *progressive development* tends, and to what, if it is sanctioned, it must soon bring the faith and *frame-work* of the English Church. I have cited the passage only to show the shifting character of her theology. Toplady, one of her able divines, in describing her corrupt condition in his day, just before the American Revolution, winds up a pungent paragraph (quoted in a previous chapter) with asking this question; "*Is there a single heresy, that ever annoyed the Christian world, which has not its present partizans among those who profess conformity to the Church of England?*" Whether there are *now*, as he distinctly intimates there were then, Arians and Socinians among her ministers, is a question not easy to decide. That there are *Pelagians* and an abundance of *Semi-Papists* will not be denied. Yet they are all tolerated. There are scores of volumes published every year by ministers in her communion, which are so replete with Popish heresies that any one of them would insure the deposition or suspension of its author in any other Church in Great Britain or this country, pretending to be orthodox. But in her bosom they are safe from molestation. She reserves her anathemas for those who cannot see that the Divine Author of Christianity has suspended salvation upon submission to a Prelate—for those who have the temerity to believe that a man may obtain absolution from Christ before obtaining it from a priest. Differences of faith she will compromise on liberal terms, but as to order, the only alternative is, "*Prelacy or uncovenanted mercy.*"

No less liberal are the High-Church party as regards *the regulation of the conduct*. They do indeed recommend monkish austerities and applaud

the Popish contrivances for mortifying the flesh ; but they are careful to have it understood that the Church is a gentle mother who will humour the caprices of her children even if they should lie in another direction. They are familiar with the text, "Be not conformed to this world;" but they remember also that the wise man has said, "There is nothing better for a man than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour;" and they cannot think that, according to the analogy of faith, it was designed by the former injunction to cut people off from worldly amusements if they felt a disposition to participate in them. A man may in their-view be a good churchman, and do many things which in some churches would subject him to discipline. But he must not attend upon the ministrations of a preacher who cannot trace his ecclesiastical pedigree through a line of Prelates to the Apostles. This will incontestably prove him to be out of the pale of the covenant. Conformity to the world will be tolerated, almost to the practical obliteration of all distinction between professing Christians and non-professors—error in doctrine will be tolerated, even to the verge of downright Popery,—but wo be to the man who rejects the figment of an unbroken chain of Diocesan Bishops for eighteen centuries.

I have not yet done with the intolerance and bigotry of this system. It was a saying of Robert Hall's, "*He that is good enough for Christ, is good enough for me.*" The High-Church theory in many instances reverses this maxim. It rejects, as destitute of any covenanted hope of salvation, many whom Christ has manifestly received; it receives many whom He has as yet manifestly rejected. Such men as Watts and Henry,

Owen and Baxter, the Erskines and Chalmers, Claude and Saurin, Davies and Witherspoon, and a host of others, living and dead—men of whom the world was not worthy—are branded as “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,” and usurpers of the sacred office; while the Popes Vigilius, Alexander VI., Cæsar Borgia, John IX., John XIII., and many others, monsters in wickedness, are not simply owned as members of the Church Catholic, but revered as “representatives of Christ and successors of the Apostles.” The troops of fox-hunting, horse-racing ministers, that abound in the Church of England, with the formalists who receive the ordinances at their hands, are all partakers of the blessings of God’s covenant: while the thousands of faithful and godly pastors in the Methodist, Baptist, Independent, and Presbyterian Churches in Europe and America, with the multitudes of humble and exemplary Christians who attend upon their ministrations, are guilty of schism, and in imminent danger of perdition. Plain readers of the Bible have been accustomed to think that it made a man’s *faith* and *practice* of primary importance in deciding upon his Christian character, that is, upon his interest in the covenant of grace. The High-Churchman has a different standard of piety. He does not, it is true, pretend to deny the validity of these tests, but he has another which takes precedence of them. The fundamental question with him, is, not whether a man cordially receives the doctrines of the Gospel, and evinces the reality and power of his faith by a corresponding practice; but whether he is connected with a Prelatical church. If he is not in a Prelatical church, no matter what his apparent regard for evangelical doctrine, his humility, benevolence, and activity



in doing good, he is to be left to “uncovenanted mercy;” while if he *is* in such a Church, he is to be recognized as having a covenant-interest in the promises, though he believes in transubstantiation, purgatory, the invocation of saints, prayers for the dead, and all the errors and superstitions with which the “man of sin” has overloaded the simple faith of the Gospel. The fair inference from this, is, that High-churchmen consider the indications of piety which are so common among Non-Episcopalians, as *deceptive*. They affirm that the influences of the Spirit are promised only to the ministrations of persons prelatially ordained. They must, then, either admit that these influences are bestowed where they are not promised, and that in as ample measure as where they are promised; or maintain that the faith and love, the Christian zeal and holy living, which are found in non-prelatical denominations, are not *real*. One or the other of these alternatives is forced upon them. If they take the former, it will involve this consequence, viz. that *the world*, to which the Spirit is not promised, has just the same reason to expect its influences, as the Church to which it *is* promised. If they take the latter, it will follow, in the first place, that our Saviour’s rule, that the views and principles of men are to be judged by their “fruits,” is of no avail; 2dly, that we have a right to pronounce men to be at enmity with God and exposed to his wrath and curse, when they profess a hearty belief in his word and *appear* to live with an habitual regard to his authority and glory; and, 3dly, that all Non-Episcopalians are, and, remaining such, must continue to be, in a state of condemnation and misery.

Leaving them to choose between these alternatives,



the first of which is subversive of their system, while the last exhibits in a strong light their arrogance and bigotry, it is proper to add that the intolerance of the system is seen no less in its treatment of churches and nations, than of individuals.<sup>1</sup> It affords a beautiful illustration of the practical application of their principles and of the enlightened charity that pervades them, that Italy, Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Brazil, and the South American Republics, are, in their view, blessed with an Apostolic ministry, and enjoy, throughout all their borders, the genuine ordinances of the Church of Christ, while from two-thirds to three-fourths of the inhabitants of Great Britain, and the whole population of the United States except the few thousands of Episcopalians and Romanists amongst us, are without the means of grace, and have their abode in that murky region which "*lies between the Church and heathenism.*"<sup>2</sup> The ignorant and degraded Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians, of the Turkish Empire, to whom the pure Gospel had not been preached for centuries, until they were visited by the American (Non-Episcopal) missionaries a few years since, and who require to be instructed almost in the very alphabet of Christianity, these people have a regular ministry, and a place in the Church Catholic, while the "Free Church of Scotland" which has lately borne so illustrious a testimony to the truth and power of Christianity and sacrificed all its earthly emoluments and honours, to maintain the "CROWN RIGHTS OF THE REDEEMER," is a "schismatical organization," in a posture of rebellion against the Bishops, the lawful governors of the Church, and, therefore, against Christ himself. In other words, High-Church charity is a

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter V.

<sup>2</sup> Tract, No. 47.

charity that concerns itself primarily, not about questions of faith and holiness, but about "endless genealogies" and pedigrees. It can look with stoical apathy upon a conflict like that which has recently shaken Scotland to its centre; but it is put into ecstasies when a corrupt Church draws forth from its archives a musty and spurious catalogue of Bishops reaching back to the Apostles. It can spurn the intelligent and virtuous yeomanry of New England, while it embraces, as genuine children of the Church, the Lazzaroni of Italy. Where the Apostolical Succession is concerned, it sticks at no common obstacles. It treats even bulls of excommunication like straws—be they ever so "Apostolical." It does not scruple—so comprehensive and fervent a charity is it—to acknowledge both the Latin and Greek Churches as Churches, though each of them has excommunicated the other, and one of them has excommunicated the Church of England, and, of course, the Episcopal Church in this country. In all cases where it can catch a glimpse of the genuine "succession," it dilates and glows with an ardour worthy of that charity that "believeth all things," and puts up with rebuffs which, it would seem, must extinguish it if it were not in truth the charity that "*beareth* all things." It is only when it turns towards a schismatical, Non-Prelatical body that it begins to shrink and shrivel, like the leaves of the sensitive plant when they are touched, or like the brilliant apples of Sodom, which, on being compressed, are transmuted into a handful of ashes. This is the only test it cannot bear. And the effect that follows the application of it, shows that, in principle, there is little to choose between High-Church "charity" and that "charity" whose exploits com-

pose so large a part of the annals of Papal Rome. Its ready tolerance of error, its undisguised affinity for some of the worst features of Popery, and its fierce denunciations of the Protestant Churches, give presage of what might be expected from the system if it once obtained the power to *enforce* its arrogant pretensions.



## CHAPTER XII.

### THE SCHISMATICAL TENDENCY OF THE SYSTEM.

HIGH-CHURCHMEN have been wont to talk with a great deal of complacency, about the *unity and peace* of their own Church, as compared with the various "sects" around them. To cite authorities on this point would be superfluous: for the sort of *cant* here alluded to pervades the whole tone of their ministrations and writings, and gives a colouring even to their social habits. It would be very easy to show, and indeed has been, in part, shown in this volume, that notwithstanding their horror of "sectarianism," the very essence of sectarianism impregnates their principles; and that while they glory in being "*the Church*," their scheme tends to the subversion of the true Church of Christ. Without undertaking to discuss these topics in form, they will be incidentally illustrated in the remarks I design to make on the alleged CONSERVATIVE AND HARMONIZING TENDENCY of the Prelatical system.

It is an unpalatable truth to Prelatists, but their

unseemly boastings have made it necessary to state it, that *Prelacy has been eminently the parent of schisms and divisions*. Jerome informs us that the scheme was set up originally as a *remedy* for schism. It turned out, however, in this case, as it usually has where man has undertaken to improve a divine institution, that the remedy was worse than the disease. The history of the visible Church from the fourth century to the sixteenth, is, as I have had occasion to observe before, very much a history of the quarrels and crimes of the Bishops. Since that period several secessions have taken place from the Church of England. Whether all of these have been justifiable or not, it is not material to inquire. The principal of them were made necessary by the tyranny of her rulers. "She has, indeed, created separation to a greater extent, and in more varied forms, than any other Protestant Church in Christendom. . . . By her despotic constitution and her unwarrantable ceremonies, she has driven from her pale thousands and tens of thousands of the most pious and enlightened of British Protestants. When the Act of Uniformity was passed, it was not without weighty reasons that in a single day two thousand of the most learned and godly ministers that ever adorned a Christian Church, resigned their livings and retired from her communion."<sup>1</sup> This memorable event took place on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24th, 1662. The sole ground on which this large body of faithful and pious men were ejected from their livings, was, their refusal to assent to every thing contained in the Book of Common Prayer. In many parts of the kingdom they could not procure the Book in time to examine it;

<sup>1</sup> *Plca for Presbytery*, 2d ed. p. 65.

“so that in their farewell sermons they told their flocks that they were obliged to leave them, for not declaring their assent to a book which they had not been able to see. But this was no obstacle to the ruling party, who wished for the most costly sacrifices at the shrine of absolute obedience, and longed to rid themselves of men who were troubled with a conscience.”<sup>1</sup> I forbear to dwell on an event the record of which constitutes one of the darkest of the many dark pages in the history of the English government and its hierarchy. Nor is it necessary to repeat here the arguments by which the Dissenters of that country have vindicated themselves from the charge of schism, and shown that the Establishment is responsible for alienating from her at different periods so many of the best of her children. I will give only a sample of their language on this subject. “We are accused of schism—schism denotes a separation in heart and affections, from those who are walking according to the institutions of Christ. But wherein are we guilty of this offence? If we denied Christ to be the only Head of the Church, and separated from such as owned him Head, it would be schism; but we assert his sole authority in his Church. If we assumed the right to alter, to add to, or to take away from, what he established, it would be schism; but we plead for the integrity of Christ’s constitution and associate with those who do. Show us that we separate from a Church of which Christ is the Head, whose doctrines are the pure and simple doctrines of the Gospel; whose worship is that which Christ prescribes; which maintains a godly discipline by restraining transgressors from her communion, and admitting only such as

<sup>1</sup> Bogue and Bennett, I. 78.



appear to be his true disciples; which displays kind forbearance and gentle condescension to weak and tender consciences, and from these marks demonstrates itself to be the Church of Christ. Show us that we separate from such a Church, and we will confess our iniquity and own ourselves guilty of schism. But, if we separate from a mere *Parliamentary Church*, which was formed into shape out of the chaos of Popery, by acts of the English legislature, and had no existence before the year 1560—a Church, which in none of its features bears a resemblance to any thing earlier than the ecclesiastical constitution of the fourth or fifth century, and, in some, to what did not appear till the ninth or tenth—a Church which has so many things to be complained of in its constitution, its head, its doctrines, its worship, its services, its sacraments, its discipline,—to call this schism, and charge us as schismatics, because we are not of her communion, and cannot conscientiously declare our unfeigned assent and consent to all her multifarious code:—to call this schism! Surely it is full time that the word were dropped, and that the accusation ceased. Those who would impose such inventions on the disciples of Christ, instead of his institutions, are the schismatics, not those who separate from them for conscience' sake.”<sup>1</sup>

The same spirit which has driven so many enlightened and conscientious Christians into the Dissenting Churches in England, is displaying itself now in the warfare the High-Church party is waging against other denominations. That party are not satisfied with the peaceful exercise of their own rights and privileges. One might suppose that if they really

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. pp. 149—51.



believed their heritage to be the paradise they represent it, they would be content to enjoy it: or, if they must needs make aggressive movements in any direction, that they would bend their efforts to the subversion of the idolatry and superstition which still hold so large a portion of the race in bondage.

“The world is all before them where to choose”—a world, two-thirds or three-fourths of which is enslaved to false and oppressive systems of religion. If they are smitten with so fervent a zeal for the honour of Christ and the glory of his CHURCH, here surely is a field wide enough to give their benevolent sympathies full play. It is a field, too, which needs their sympathy. It is filled with the miserable and the lost, the dead and the dying—with millions who must perish unless they speedily obtain that bread of life, which these Prelatists tell us has been entrusted to them *alone* for distribution. Yet instead of responding to this appeal and sending forth an army of missionaries to redeem these interminable moral wastes, *they are laying out their main strength in a united and furious attack upon the PROTESTANT CHURCHES.* The annihilation of these Churches seems to be, at present, the leading object of their ambition. They cannot brook the idea that there should be a Church on earth which is not governed by Prelates; or that any man who has received no better ordination than Timothy had, viz. “by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery,” should be recognized as a Christian minister. Judging from their conduct, they regard the existence of such Churches and ministers as the chief hinderance to the spread of Christianity, and deem it an end worthy of their first and best exertions, to put them out of the way.

Nor is this the whole of the picture. Not only are they neglecting the work of missions, to carry on this contest against other churches; but their principles, should Providence permit them to be enforced, must seriously embarrass, if not, in some instances, actually defeat, the efforts of those churches for the diffusion of the Gospel. I have in view, in this remark, the High-Church theory of the Church and its dioceses, so often mentioned in this work. According to that theory, the Romish, Greek, Armenian, and Syrian Churches, are all parts of the true Church, while the Non-Episcopal Protestant Churches are no Churches. Any attempt to interfere with the existing arrangement of the former Churches, is a sin. To organize a church within their limits, as missionaries are accustomed to do in heathen lands, would be schismatical. Nay, Non-Prelatical churches are not to be allowed, if there be any way of preventing it, to send missionaries to these countries. *They* cannot give them *Christianity*. The Oriental Christians are in the true Church now, and all that Protestant "sectaries" could do would be to allure them out of the Church into the world—to wrest from them the Christianity they have, without supplying them with any thing as good in place of it. It is on this ground that the leading High-Church organ<sup>1</sup> in this country, has charged the missionaries of the American Board, with spreading "PESTILENTIAL AND SEDITIOUS DOCTRINES among the Christians of the East," and with making COMMON CAUSE WITH THE TURKS against the Eastern Church." If these are the honest convictions of that party, they cannot but do every thing in their power to thwart the missionary operations of

<sup>1</sup> See the "Churchman" of November 25th, 1843.

our churches. If they cannot cripple our resources at home, they must, if possible, prevent our missionaries from gaining a footing within the domain of the Church Catholic abroad. The vast empire over which the Pope sways his sceptre, and the rival empire of the Greek Hierarchy, with their several dependencies, are to be guarded from the intrusion of such men as Mills and Brainerd, and Carey and Williams, lest they should infect them with "disorganizing and anti-Christian errors."<sup>1</sup> Even the Episcopal churches are not to attempt the renovation of those withered branches, except in subordination to their respective rulers. They have no right (such is the theory) to send a missionary into any foreign diocese without permission from its ecclesiastical head. Wherever any church has established a diocese, its jurisdiction is to be respected. If the Romish Church, for example, should erect dioceses in the Island of Borneo, and supply them with Bishops and other clergy, this would secure to her the spiritual control of that Island, and the Episcopal Church could not establish a mission there or employ any means to evangelize the natives, without her permission.<sup>2</sup>

It is easy to see how injurious this whole scheme must be to the propagation of pure Christianity. "What immense continents must thus be preserved in their idolatry and superstition unbroken, and what stumbling-blocks must be raised up to the reception of the truth, in those quarters where the advocates of the new views feel themselves at liberty to attempt any missionary undertaking! What must the opening mind of a heathen inquirer think to see professed evangelical Christians cordially welcoming the de-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 134, 5.

graded, idolatrous Papist as a Christian brother, and turning away with disdain from Protestants who give evidence of the faith and love, the disinterestedness and zeal—in short, all the graces of the Christian character—as if they were heathens, and all because they do not observe the same external rites in the same form? Though there had been nothing else, this necessary want of harmony of feeling and effort for the evangelization of the world, would be an omen most adverse to the claims of the Anglican School. It would show that they preferred outward forms and order to the glory of God in the conversion of souls; but when taken in connection with the various considerations which have been suggested, it proclaims that the system as a whole, whatever may be the irreproachable and even amiable character of some who hold it, and whether men generally are aware of it or not, is decidedly anti-Christian, fitted to retard instead of advancing the kingdom of the Redeemer.”<sup>1</sup>

Facts like these illustrate the pretended *conservative and harmonizing influence* of High-Church principles. If history is to be trusted, those principles are eminently SCHISMATICAL in their tendency; and the system to which they belong can only be regarded “as a fire-brand in the household of faith.”<sup>2</sup>—It will be claimed, however, or would have been until recently, that Prelacy *has secured to the Churches which have adopted it*, a much larger measure of *peace and unity* than are enjoyed in other communions. This point may, like the other, be safely referred to the arbitration of history, or left to each one’s observation. But it is proper to note that when

<sup>1</sup> Lorimer’s *Manual of Presbytery*, p. 277. Glasgow edition.

<sup>2</sup> Oxford Divinity.

Prelatists boast of the *unity* of their Churches, they do not mean what the sacred writers mean by this term. When *they* speak of unity, it is of “the unity of *faith*,” of the “unity of the *Spirit*,” of Christians being “baptized by one Spirit into one body,” and of their being made “one in Christ Jesus.” On unity of this kind, the Bible sets a high value. But the unity of Prelatical Churches is of a different sort. I do not mean that there is no oneness of faith and spirit among their members—for no one can doubt that they embrace, within their various communions, a large number of truly pious and devoted Christians who are one in Christ, and therefore one with each other,—but I mean that this is not *required* even in those who minister at their altars. The unity they insist upon is an external, as distinguished from a spiritual unity—a unity of order, as distinguished from a unity of doctrine—a unity the test of which is submission to Prelatical authority, as distinguished from a unity the test of which is the cordial adoption and faithful maintenance of a specific and scriptural system of faith. Whether this is a wise arrangement or not, is a question on which there will be a difference of opinion. Prelatists usually contend that it *is*. They are accustomed to urge it as a proof of the superiority of their organization to those of other Churches, that they allow this latitude of theological opinions among their clergy. Of the fact there can be no doubt. Witness the theology of the Romish and Eastern Churches. That of the Church of England is probably still more heterogeneous. “The religion of the Church of England,” says Mr. Macaulay, in an article already quoted, “is, in fact, a bundle of religious systems without number.



It comprises the religious system of Bishop Tomline, and the religious system of John Newton, and all the religious systems which lie between them. It comprises the religious system of Mr. Newman, and the religious system of the Archbishop of Dublin, and all the religious systems which lie between them. All these different opinions are held, avowed, preached, printed, within the pale of the Church, by men of unquestioned integrity and understanding.”<sup>1</sup> The same diversity of faith is seen among the Episcopal Bishops and clergy in this country. The theological pendulum vibrates through a larger arc within that single Church, than it does within all the other evangelical churches combined. For there are tied together there the system of John Calvin and the system of Tract No. 90,<sup>2</sup> and “all the systems that lie between them.” To talk of the *unity* of such a Church, can do no harm provided it be understood that nothing more is meant by it than that all the diversified sects and schools which enter into its composition have united in adopting its forms of government and worship, and agreed to live together. But it seems puerile to parade this fact as a proof of the efficacy of Prelacy in producing unity. It is no great achievement for *any* scheme of polity to produce such unity as this. Few of the Reformed Churches have thought it worth seeking: most of them have shunned it as fraught with peril to their peace and orthodoxy. The Church of Rome prizes it, and has attained it to at least an equal degree with any Churches under Diocesan Episcopacy. And any Church may have it *for a time*, which will lay more stress upon forms than substance, and make

<sup>1</sup> Miscell. III. 306.

<sup>2</sup> See the Carey ordination.



its clergy dependent, for promotion, upon their ecclesiastical superiors. Permanent peace and substantial union, however, can never be obtained in this way in a *Protestant* Episcopal Church. Protestantism will not abide such a conglomeration of views on fundamental points of faith. The whole history of the Church of England proves this. That Church has not been without her periods of repose, but these have uniformly been succeeded by great convulsions. She is now rocking to and fro like a city in an earthquake,—and from a similar cause. The hostile elements she has always carried in her breast, have been gathering strength for the last quarter of a century, and now that the match has been applied, the explosion is terrific. I do not ask it tauntingly, but I cannot forbear asking the question, could any thing less have been expected? When conflicting systems of faith have been brought together in other churches, a similar result has followed: why should it not be so in the Episcopal Church? A church with a tessellated theology may be a very pretty sight to a politician or an amateur philanthropist; but churches of this kind require to be kept, like other rarities, in a cabinet. They are to be looked at, not handled—for show, not for use. Before they can be used effectively for any length of time, the mosaic work must be taken out. Judaism was unwilling to go out of the Church, when Christianity came in: “the son of the bond-woman” insisted upon being “heir with the son of the free woman.” This led to strife. The Apostle was applied to for a remedy. His prescription was one which some of his “successors” would have been very slow to give:—“*Cast out the bond-woman and her son.*” So it has been with the Church of England. Her

Reformers, as I have shown, tried to have "the bond-woman cast out," but *another* woman on the throne befriended her, and she was not ejected. Ample room was provided for sound doctrine and evangelical piety; but, unhappily, Queen Elizabeth's passion for "the old religion," secured a corner for *that* too. As a natural consequence, whenever there has been vitality enough in the body to call its slumbering energies into play, there has been a conflict. Sometimes, for a long period together, there has been no conflict, because there has been no life. The dead are always quiet. If the Church of England enjoyed a dignified repose during a considerable part of the last century, it is sufficiently accounted for in the fact stated by Mr. Romaine, that "of her ten thousand clergy, *there were not seven that preached the Gospel.*" Evangelical religion revived at length, and "the old religion" revived too; for when "the sons of God come to present themselves before the Lord, Satan" will "come with them"—if he can. Hence the present struggle. It is a struggle between true spiritual religion and Popery—two things which the Church of England system has made tenants in common, under a belief that the strong arm of Prelacy would be able to keep the peace between them. But Prelacy, strong as it is, is not strong enough for this. It cannot, with impunity, join together two things which God has put so far asunder. They may, perhaps, compromise their present differences, and go on again together for a time; but it will be only a *truce*. There can be no permanent peace—no genuine, scriptural unity—in the body, until one or the other is "cast out." This is not said by way of *advice*. No Non-Episcopalian would presume to tender

advice in a case like this. I say it, as a Non-Episcopalian, in *self-defence*. High-churchmen glory over us on the ground of their pretended unity and the efficiency of their system as a conservator of the peace. My answer is, not merely that their churches are now rent (as others have been before) with dissensions; but that the elements of strife are so interwoven in their system, that as long as it remains what it is, lasting unity and tranquillity are out of the question. When they do enjoy peace, it is not the kind of peace which we value most; and it rests on so precarious a basis, that to boast of it, is like a man with the ague boasting of health, in the intervals between his chills. *All* churches have been taught—the Episcopal with the rest—that creeds and forms are not of themselves adequate to keep out error and strife. They are undoubtedly useful, when framed agreeably to the Scriptures, in promoting this end; but the main reliance of Churches, as well for this as every other blessing, must be upon the power and grace of Him whom the venerable Apostle saw “walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks and holding the seven stars in his right hand.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ASPECT OF THE SYSTEM TOWARDS INQUIRING SINNERS.

## CONCLUSION.

I HAVE dwelt long upon the CHARACTERISTICS AND TENDENCIES OF THE HIGH-CHURCH SYSTEM, but there is one of its phases not yet distinctly presented, which is too important to be wholly overlooked. The system claims to hold out to men the only way in which they can be saved—to be the only system which can guide them into the path that leads to heaven. It is, therefore, due to its advocates and to the cause of truth, to notice, before closing this work, THE ASPECT WHICH IT WEARS TOWARDS AN HONEST INQUIRER AFTER THE WAY OF SALVATION. The jailer's question, "What must I do to be saved?" must be, with any individual, the most solemn of all questions. Wrung as it commonly is from a heart oppressed with a sense of sin and trembling under the apprehension of Divine wrath, it requires to be met with a kind, prompt, and explicit answer. Such was the answer the jailer received: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.) Very different is the answer that must be given to this question by a consistent High-Churchman—an answer eminently fitted to increase the inquirer's perplexity and distress. I do not say that a consistent High-Churchman would not direct him to believe in Christ as the only Saviour; but

fidelity to his principles would require him to state further, that he could not come to Christ except *through the Church*, and that in order to exercise faith in Him, he must be *baptized by a minister who could trace his lineage to the Apostles, through an unbroken Prelatical succession*. Failing of this, (he would be bound to inform him,) there would be no hope of salvation for him except in God's "uncovenanted mercies."<sup>1</sup> To the class of Prelatists whom I have in view, this answer doubtless appears lucid and satisfactory; because their minds are made up as to where the Church and the successors of the Apostles are. But it might be otherwise with the inquirer. It is no extravagant supposition, that with him these might still be open questions. And if so, the tender of baptism, say by his own Rector, would not meet his case. According to the instructions given him, *the turning point of his salvation* lies in his receiving baptism from a minister in the line of the Apostolical Succession. The mere assertion of his Rector that he is in this line, only shows that he himself thinks so. The man demands *proof* of the fact. And unless he is willing in a matter of infinite moment to himself, to go forward without knowing whether he is in the broad or the narrow way, he must sit down—anxious, heavy-laden, alarmed, as he is—to study the questions, whether the Church in which Providence has placed him, is a true Church, and whether his pastor has really received the gift of the Holy Ghost by regular transmission from the Apostles. Those who have read the previous chapters of this work, will be able to form some idea of the difficulties he must encounter in prosecuting these inquiries. If, on the

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters I. and II.

one hand, he finds a large number of ingenious and learned writers advocating the claims of his Church (supposing him to be an Episcopalian) to the genuine succession; he will, on the other, find at least as many more, of equal learning and piety, who either deny the necessity of any such succession, or deny that the Episcopal Church has any claim to it. Of these last, not a few will be individuals who have carefully investigated the whole subject, analyzed the pretended catalogues of Bishops, and sifted the entire evidence on which the theory rests. In addition to this, his embarrassment will be increased by the fact that the Church of Rome, which is admitted by a large portion of his own Church to be a true Church, pronounces the Episcopal Church to be *no* Church, and ridicules the notion that she has the Apostolical Succession. It would be of no avail to say to a man in these circumstances, "Hear the Church." You would have to convince him, in the first place, of his *obligation* to "hear the Church;" and when this was accomplished, he would tell you that the very object he was labouring at, was to *find* the Church. On the principle that the Church could be known only by the possession of an uninterrupted chain of Prelates, the further he pushed his researches and the more he read and reflected on the subject, the more his doubts and perplexities would be multiplied. Such a man might, through the merciful interposition of the Spirit of God, at length discover the true foundation and rest upon it; but the probabilities are quite as great that he would land in the gloom of infidelity.

The practical working of the system in this particular, will be even more strikingly exhibited if the



case of an inquirer be supposed in some country where there are only Romish or Greek, and Non-Pre-latical Protestant Churches or ministers. Take, for example, the Sandwich Islands. The American Missionaries have been instrumental, through God's blessing, in redeeming those islands, to a great extent, from the most debasing idolatry, and conferring upon them Christianity and civilization. The French government has, at the cannon's mouth, forced the helpless natives to receive Roman Catholic priests among them, who are zealously propagating their superstitions. According to the High-Church theory, a Sandwich Islander who should be led to serious reflection about his spiritual concerns, would be more likely to learn the way of salvation from one of those priests than from any of the Protestant Missionaries. Nay, by going to the priests and receiving baptism he would be regenerated and brought into a covenant relation with God; while by listening to the Protestant ministers, he would be giving heed to men who had *usurped* the sacred office and whose counsels he could not follow without jeopardizing his salvation.— So as to an inquirer in Syria or Constantinople. It would be the duty of such a man to apply for direction to one of the ignorant and deluded priests of the Greek, Syrian, or Armenian Churches, in preference to any of the educated and excellent Non-Episcopal ministers who, under the care of the American Board, have been for many years trying to rekindle the almost expired flame of Christianity in those benighted regions. Those priests could *put* him into the way of salvation; but our missionaries could not guide him to the Lamb of God!

This is no fanciful or exaggerated representation; but a candid exhibition of the adaptation of the High-Church system to the case of inquiring sinners. It is, indeed, one of its very worst features, that it is fitted to perplex, and where it does not perplex, to delude all who, in the critical circumstances of an awakened soul, are not prepared to follow blindly the dictates of men who assure them that they can trace their spiritual paternity to the Apostles, and that, therefore, to be baptized by them will secure to them regenerating grace. The contrast between this scheme, in its treatment of this interesting class of persons, and the glorious Gospel of Christ, must be apparent to every one who is even superficially acquainted with the New Testament. I dismiss the topic, therefore, without entering into any minute elucidation of it.

My subject is not exhausted, but I feel that it is time to bring this volume to a close. I have given in Chapter I., my reasons for entering upon this investigation, by exhibiting, from their own writings, the exclusive and arrogant pretensions of the High-Church party. In Chapter II. to VI. inclusive, I have brought the dogma of an unbroken prelatical succession to the test of Scripture, of History, and of admitted facts—exposed the fallacy of its principles, and contrasted it with the true doctrine of succession. In the second part of the work, on the characteristics and tendencies of the system, I have endeavoured to show that it proposes an unauthorized and delusive rule of faith—that it puts the Church in Christ's place—that it is at variance with the whole scope and tenor of the New

Testament—that it tends to aggrandize the prelatical clergy and to substitute a mere ritual religion for true Christianity—that it is essentially intolerant and schismatical—and that in its practical working it is adapted to harrass and delude those who are honestly inquiring for the way of salvation.

In taking my leave of the subject, I repeat the remark with which I set out, that on the part of Non-Episcopalians this controversy is a work of SELF-DEFENCE. We have been forced into it. We claim to have a chartered right,

“Purchased and seal'd with blood divine,”

to a participation in the privileges and blessings of the Christian Church. If we claimed the *whole* Church, we should give just ground of offence to prelatical sects. But we put forward no such' pretensions. Notwithstanding the manifold defects which we see in its organization, we recognize the Episcopal denomination as entitled, with ourselves, to a share in the blessings of God's covenant. High-Churchmen, however, are not satisfied with this. They come into our churches and say, “You are no churches, and you never *can* be until you assimilate your polity and worship to ours, and your ministers place themselves under the rule of our Bishops.” *This* is the ground of the controversy. As long as this demand is pressed, there must be controversy. Much as we value peace and desire to cultivate it, we cheerfully forego the advantages of it, if they are to be purchased only by surrendering our churches to the domination of Prelacy. Those who like that system, are welcome to enjoy it. But we can find noth-

ing in its history, from its origin in the third or fourth century to the present day, to inspire *us* with a passion for it. And when the attempt is made to force it upon us, we shall not fail to use all suitable means for averting so serious a calamity, and preserving inviolate the freedom wherewith Christ hath made us free.

While, however, this is the immediate ground of the present controversy, I have not concealed the fact in this volume, that there is another which has great weight with Non-Episcopalians. The Word of God, as understood by most commentators, predicts that a great *revival of Popery* will take place about this period of the world. When Bunyan wrote his immortal allegory, two hundred years ago, GIANT POPE in consequence of "the many shrewd brushes he had met with in his younger days, was grown so crazy and stiff in his joints, that he could do little more than sit in his cave's mouth, grinning at Pilgrims as they went by, and biting his nails because he could not come at them." The Papacy continued in this infirm state until down to the close of the last century: and people began to doubt whether the torpid mass could ever be revived. This skepticism has passed away. That Church has, within the last twenty-five years, been waking from its lethargy, until now new life is infused into every part of it. The "man of sin" is evidently preparing for his last and fiercest onset upon "the saints of the Most High God." The secret of this transformation is to be found in the revival of the *Order of the Jesuits*, the most insidious and effective agency which even the Church of Rome has ever had for opposing true Christianity.

Simultaneously with this extraordinary and ominous change in the internal condition of the hierarchy, a movement still more portentous occurs without its limits. There springs up in the bosom of a Protestant Church, a party, small at first, but soon comprising a very large number of its most learned, able, and influential divines, who set about "UNPROTESTANTIZING" their own Church, and reducing it to its former bondage. Not satisfied with bringing back into their own communion the heresies and mummeries which their fathers cast off at the Reformation, they re-assert the authority over other Churches which the Pope has always claimed, and employ all their resources to carry their arrogant pretensions into effect, and to disseminate their pernicious doctrines.

*Protestants* cannot look upon these movements with indifference. I say these "movements," but they are properly parts of the same movement. Of the two, we have more to dread from the Oxford Popery than from the Roman Popery—especially in this country. It is more refined, more gentle, and recommended by *more agreeable associations*, both civil and social. The inexperienced and unwary are, therefore, more liable to be captivated and ensnared by it: and souls are more likely to be ruined. Both, however, are tending to one ultimate result, the substitution of an external for a spiritual religion—the setting up of a kingdom of meats and drinks, in place of that kingdom which is "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." In these circumstances, it behoves even the humblest of those who are concerned for the "peace of Jerusalem," and the honour

of Christ, to aid in counteracting the efforts of Romanists and their "Anglo-Catholic" allies. We may not, if we *would*, suppress our testimony against their subtle and destructive errors. It is with this feeling, and under this strong conviction of duty, that this volume has been written. It is my unworthy and inadequate response to what I believe to have been a call of Providence as imperative as it certainly was unexpected. To His blessing I now commend it—praying that He may make it instrumental, in some humble measure, in arresting the progress of error and superstition, and promoting the cause of "pure and undefiled religion."



## APPENDIX.

## NOTE TO PAGE 201.

THE treatise from which this passage is taken, "On the Necessity of Reforming the Church," has hitherto been inaccessible to the mere English reader. A translation of it has recently appeared in London, and is already reprinted in this country. The public will now have an opportunity of seeing for themselves with how much *ingenuousness* Calvin has been treated by various Prelatical writers, in reference to a sentence which occurs in this work. This sentence has been quoted times without number, for the purpose of producing the impression that Calvin thought Episcopacy the scriptural form of government, and that he was extremely anxious to have the Continental Churches organized upon that plan. Thus, Bishop Hobart makes the following representation, (Apology, p. 91.) "Calvin, in his book concerning 'the necessity of Reforming the Church,' makes a declaration which has frequently been adduced: 'If they would give us such an hierarchy, in which the Bishops should so excel, as that they did not refuse to be subject to Christ,' &c., 'then I will confess that they are worthy of all anathemas, if any such shall be found who will not reverence it, and submit themselves to it with the utmost obedience.' What strong language is this! He could not get an Episcopacy, but what was subject to the Pope of Rome. 'But,' says he, 'if they would give us an hierarchy subject to Christ alone,' he not only professed a willingness to receive it, but denounces an anathema against all who should reject it. Nay, so firm appears his conviction that such an Episcopacy was scriptural and primitive, that he expresses a doubt whether 'any such should be found.'"

The impression this passage is adapted to make, is, that Calvin, in penning the sentence in question, was writing

on the subject of *organizing the Continental Churches*. Bishop Hobart's avowed object in quoting it, is to show that this great Reformer "approved in the strongest language of a primitive Episcopacy, *such as the Church of England* possessed." He subsequently appeals to it again and again, to show that Calvin regarded an Episcopacy like that of the Church of England, as the true Scripture model, and that his heart was set upon having the other Reformed Churches assimilated to it. He makes Calvin say, "If they would *give* us such an hierarchy," &c.; whereas he simply says, let them *show* us (*exhibeant*) such an hierarchy. And in his paraphrase of the sentence he says, "He (Calvin) *could not get* an Episcopacy," &c.

This whole representation is stamped with gross unfairness. Calvin's remark has no *reference whatever* to the organization of the Reformed Churches. He is repelling the charge brought against them by the Papists, that they, the Reformers, *had made a schism* in the Church. This he does, by showing that the unity of the Church consists not in any mere outward organization, but in oneness of faith and union with Christ. Pastors, he says, "are invested with the government of the Church on no other terms than that of being ministers and witnesses of the truth of God." He denounces an anathema against all who would violate the unity of the Church, "as Paul describes it." The Papal See, however, had usurped a primacy to which it had no just claims, and pronounced all those schismatics who refused submission to its authority. This, he shows from Cyprian, is setting up a false test for "ascertaining the true communion of the Church." And to illustrate his own idea of schism, he thus proceeds:—"Heresies and schisms, therefore, arise when a return is not made to the origin of truth, when neither the head is regarded, nor the doctrine of the heavenly Master preserved. Let them show us a hierarchy in which the Bishops are distinguished, but not for refusing to be subject to Christ, in which they depend upon him as the only Head, and act solely with reference to Him, in which they cultivate brotherly fellowship with each other, bound together by no tie but his truth; then, indeed, I will confess that there is no anathema too strong for those who do not regard them with reverence, and yield them the fullest obedience. But is there any thing like this in that false mask of hierarchy on which they plume themselves?"

The Roman Pontiff alone as Christ's Vicar, is in the ascendant, and domineers without law."

Every candid reader must perceive that there is no allusion here—not the slightest—to the polity of the continental Churches—no intimation of a wish to have them Episcopally organized—no hint of a preference for Prelacy over Presbytery. The passage relates entirely to the charge of schism urged against them for quitting the Romish Church. The whole amount of it, is, "If the Church of Rome were a pure Church, united in the profession and maintenance of Christ's *truth*, and provided with faithful and godly Bishops and Pastors, in that case separation from it would be *schismatical*, and I would anathematize him who should be guilty of it." In other words, Calvin was not so hostile to Prelacy (which he and all the Reformers regarded as a *human* institution) but that he considered it as the duty of those whose lot Providence had cast in a Prelatic church, to remain there as long as it had the truth, enjoyed the labours of pious Bishops, and maintained a pure worship and scriptural discipline. This is the fair import of that famous testimony for EPISCOPACY, which is to be found paraded under Calvin's name in all the modern High-Church polemical works, from octavos down to three-penny pamphlets.

One other circumstance must be mentioned, which gives an air of absolute ludicrousness to the grave attempt of Episcopal writers to make out that Calvin, in the passage above quoted, was sighing for an Episcopacy *like that of the English Church*, as the best blessing that could be desired for the continental churches. The Letter in which this passage occurs, was written in 1544. This was only *nine years after the Papal supremacy was abolished in England*. The Reformation there was, indeed, hardly begun. Popery was still the religion of the court and the people. It was still (says Bishop Short, in speaking of the state of things at the close of Henry VIII.'s reign, 1547) a capital offence to deny the corporal presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper; the cup was still denied to the laity; an unnecessary and compulsory restraint was imposed on the marriage of the clergy; . . . the use of private masses was continued; the necessity of auricular confession was still sanctioned; and the Latin language still used in the mass." To crown all, the licentious and despotic Henry had put himself into the Pope's place. He was the acknowledged

“Head of the Church.” The Bishops took out their commissions in his name, and held them during his pleasure. So that the Church had only exchanged one tyrant for another. And this was the MODEL CHURCH to which CALVIN longed to assimilate the churches of the continent! This was the “EPISCOPACY” which no Church could voluntarily decline without incurring his “anathema!”

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NOTE TO CHAPTER XII.

Episcopal writers are in the habit of lauding Prelacy as the only *guardian of the truth*. They are fond of preparing and exhibiting catalogues of the “sects,” large and small, of all countries, and their several modes of belief, for the purpose of showing that the communion of the “Church Catholic” affords the only preservative against heresy. These documents, in so far as the leading Protestant denominations are concerned, are usually mere caricatures. And if it were otherwise—if Protestantism were really the mother of heresy, that they pretend it is—with what decency could *they* repeat the charge? Where Protestantism has led one individual into error, Prelacy has led five. Look, for example, at the Church of Rome. In the creed of Pius IV., the authorized summary of the Papal faith, are enumerated, tradition, the seven sacraments, the Tridentine doctrine of justification, transubstantiation, and the sacrifice of the mass, purgatory, invocation of saints, indulgences, veneration of images, and, finally, “all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons, and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent.” “Out of this faith,” it is added, “none can be saved.” Such is the creed of a PRELATIC CHURCH—a true branch of the Church Catholic, according to High-Churchmen—which embraces, as estimated by Malte-Brun, 116,000,000 of members.

Take, again, the other great division of the Church Catholic—the Greek Church. This Church retains the seven sacraments, claims, like Rome, the power of working miracles, holds to the intercession of saints, clerical celibacy, transubstantiation, pilgrimages, prayers for the dead, and, in a word, to nearly all the Popish superstitions. A late writer cited by Mr. Bickersteth in his “Divine Warning,” in intro-

ducing an epitome of the faith and religious observances of that body, says, its members may, with few exceptions, "be classed into infidels or unbelievers, formalists, and bigots." This Church numbers, according to Malte-Brun, about 70,000,000 of members.

It will be time enough for High-Churchmen to talk of "the development of modern systems," and to upbraid Protestantism with a tendency to generate heresies, when they can show that it has *authoritatively imposed* such abominable corruptions, both of doctrine and worship, as those of the Latin and Greek Churches, upon one hundred and eighty-six millions of people.

The comparison might be brought nearer home. Those who boast of Prelacy as the only conservator of orthodoxy, would do well to consider the present state of the Church of England. It is amazing with what assurance they can talk about the alleged errors of the Protestant denominations, when Popery (*i. e.* "Popery without a Pope," as the present Pontiff has aptly defined Puseyism) is spreading like wildfire through their own Church, and already includes, as is confidently asserted, several thousand of its clergy among its supporters. In this system, tradition is associated with the Bible as the rule of faith; "the Church usurps the place of the Saviour, and is made an idol;"<sup>1</sup> baptismal regeneration and justification are taught; preaching is depreciated; the doctrine of the atonement is brought forward "with reserve;" "voluntary austerities are magnified;" "forms of prayer are idolized;" and "much is made of external things, such as bowings and dresses, and turnings of the body, and mere outward services." "We are told, in this school, that there is a true and proper sacrifice for remission of sins made in the Lord's Supper by the minister, in a strictly sacerdotal character; that sin after baptism has no promise of pardon; that departed saints are to be invoked; prayers made for the dead; Catholic councils are infallible; the clergy may, by authority of the Church, be obliged to celibacy; the primacy of St. Peter is maintained, and the strong testimony of revelation against the Apostacy is softened into a description of it, as our *sister* and *mother*."<sup>2</sup> "Here," to quote the language of the excellent Episcopal author of the work from which this passage is taken, "is distinctly the defiling and polluting breath of the false prophet. The

<sup>1</sup> Bickersteth.

<sup>2</sup> See "Divine Warning," pp. 58-75.



doctrines of the Gospel are removed, and the souls of men are starved with the once cast away husks of the man of sin. . . . Men are again tricking themselves out in the tinselled dresses of the harlot of Babylon, and renouncing the golden faith and godly love of our holy, heavenly, and martyred Reformers." And none of these men, he might have added, are *disciplined* for their deadly errors. Behold here, then, the potent efficacy of PRELACY as the infallible safeguard against heresy!—Most apposite to *this* "development," are Dr. Wainwright's observations on what is styled "the development of modern systems." "No one," he says, "who believes in the existence of a visible Church of Christ on earth, can doubt that it was designed to be the teacher and protector of evangelical truth, as well as the depository of holy ordinances. If, then, it can be made clearly manifest, that in any system of ecclesiastical discipline, professing to be the Church, *holy doctrines* which have 'every where and at all times' been considered as fundamental parts of gospel truth, *have gradually been obscured, corrupted, or exploded*, or that *opinions unknown to the Gospel—opinions extravagant, contradictory, irreconcilable with Scripture—have been bred and fostered*, is it not right, is it not the part of true charity, to solicit those who yet adhere to this system, to examine once more the spiritual house they inhabit, to ascertain if it is indeed 'built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone?' " Let Prelatists take the friendly warning, and examine, with the Bible in their hands, the foundations of the Churches in which the errors above specified are preached, printed, and circulated, without let or molestation from those to whom "Christ has transferred his Headship."

THE END.