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ARTICLE I.

NATIONAL SINS.—*A Fast-Day Sermon, preached in the Presbyterian Church, Columbia, Wednesday, November 21, 1860.*

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“And it came to pass, when King Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord.”—*Isaiah 37* : 1.

I have no design, in the selection of these words, to intimate that there is a parallel between Jerusalem and our own Commonwealth in relation to the Covenant of God. I am far from believing that we alone, of all the people of the earth, are possessed of the true religion, and far from encouraging the narrow and exclusive spirit which, with the ancient hypocrites denounced by the Prophet, can complacently exclaim, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are we. Such arrogance and bigotry are utterly inconsistent with the penitential confessions which this day has been set apart to evoke. We are here, not like the Pharisee, to boast of our own righteousness, and to thank

ARTICLE V.

PRESBYTERIAN AUTHORITIES ON THEORIES OF
THE ELDERSHIP.

Since the publication of our former article on this subject, a change, which is quite significant, has taken place in the attitude of our contemporary towards the discussion, and we, therefore, drop the title placed at the head of that article. Whatever the reviewer maintains we may no longer ascribe to the Review, for its editor now declares, peremptorily, that he will not be held responsible for his correspondent's views. This, we may venture to say, is a very unusual course on the part of the Repertory. "We expected one article of ordinary length," it says, but there were sent on "three much beyond the ordinary size." It intimates that "courtesy" alone prevented it from "cutting the matter short." The editor says certain things in the first number would not have appeared, had he seen it before it was printed, and that he "could not read the last one on account of the state of the manuscript." Then he publishes to the world the author's name, and says that he alone is to be held responsible for what he has written. The *courtesy* of this whole proceeding, it is not for us to comment upon; but we repeat, that we believe it a step unprecedented in the history of the Princeton Review, and that it has a significance which needs no explanation.

But can the Repertory escape altogether from responsibility to the Church, for the articles of its correspondent? It has given them currency by admitting them to its columns, and its half-way repudiation of them can now be no more satisfactory to the Church than to its correspondent himself. Such an organ as the Princeton Review ought to give no uncertain sound. The half-way repudiation of its

correspondent is, in the circumstances, either too much, or it is too little. The editor appears, himself, to think it too little. He seeks elsewhere (Bib. Rep., Oct., 1860, p. 770) to repudiate even the discussion itself, as some thing altogether "Southern" and not "Northern" at all. "So far as we know, no diversity of opinion on the subject has been avowed at the North, and almost every thing in our own pages on this subject, has been from a Southern source." Not only would the editor repudiate this particular discussion, but all discussions about Church government seem to be viewed by him with trembling apprehensions of bad consequences. "Our internal contests have been about doctrine. Now, as we are of one mind about doctrine, we are trying to fall out about forms." The doctrine of Church government, then, is a mere question about *forms*! Christ's right to rule His Church in His own way, is to be bowed out as a mere question of forms. "Since the organization of our Church (says the Repertory), there has scarcely been a word of controversy among Presbyterians about the principles of Presbyterianism." Then the Cumberland schism in the beginning of the century originated in no question respecting our principles about ordination! And the division of our Church in 1837, had nothing to do with any controversy about departure from Presbyterian polity, arising out of an unconstitutional plan of union with Congregationalists! And there was no controversy about Presbyterianism involved in the whole discussion of the rights and powers of ruling elders in the Assembly of 1843, and subsequently! And there has been no controversy about Presbyterianism in the whole discussion for so many years, about the right and duty of the Church to do her own Missionary work herself *first*, in distinction from *assisting* other bodies, viz: Congregational Boards, to do that work, and *secondly*, in distinction from *appointing* other bodies, viz: Presbyterian Boards, to do it! And there has been no controversy about Presbyterianism amongst us, in

all the discussion of the right of the Church, in her courts, to meddle with other matters than what are purely spiritual or ecclesiastical; as, for example, secular education, colonization, etc. To the contrary of what the Repertory asserts, we say that all along, from the beginning of our organization, there has been controversy in our Church upon Church questions. It has not generally been bitter or harsh, but it has been usually earnest, and it is now *only* earnest. We repel the charge, which is insinuated by the editor of the Repertory, that there is now a spirit of "denunciation" and "illiberality" amongst us. But let him not claim that there is "agreement amongst us in every thing pertaining to the authority, rights and functions of ruling elders, and the only difference is as to the method of proof," for it is not so. Witness his correspondents' articles, which he feels compelled to repudiate. Witness his own published views about the inherent powers of the clergy, as *clergy*; about the people's right, as the people, to a substantive part of the government; and about the *lay* character of ruling elders. The fact is beyond all doubt, that there are in our Church two kinds of Presbyterians—those who believe in their Church government, and those who do not believe in it. And amongst this latter class many of their brethren, and those very competent to pronounce, have long been compelled to rank both the late correspondent and the editor of the Repertory. It suits the latter to repudiate the former just now; but there is in this act no more justice than courtesy.

Having, in our last issue, reviewed the position of the Repertory's correspondent, so far as concerns the Scripture testimony on the subject of ruling elders, we propose now to examine some of the Presbyterian authorities by which it was attempted to fortify those positions.

But first, let it be considered what is the just and true value of any human authority in this argument.

Our standards declare that what they set forth is "the whole system of internal government of the Church, which Christ hath appointed, (Form of Government, Chap. I, Sect. III.); that Jesus Christ hath erected in this world a kingdom, which is his Church, (Chap. II., Sect. I.); hath appointed officers to preach and administer discipline, (Chap. I., Sect. III.); hath laid down, in Scripture, the character, qualifications and authority of these officers, (Chap. I., Sect. VI.); and that it is agreeable to Scripture that the Church be governed by congregational, presbyterial and synodical assemblies. (Chap. VIII., Sect. I.) And our Confession of Faith says: "The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hands of Church officers. (Chap. XXX., Sect. I.) Also, that the decrees and determinations (of synods, etc.,) if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission, not only for their agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made, as being an ordinance of God, appointed thereunto in his Word.—(Chap. XXXI., Sect. II.) It is, therefore, the doctrine of our Book, that Presbyterian Church government is *jure divino*; and the ultimate appeal for all who have accepted the standards of our Church, must be the Scriptures. "All synods, since the Apostles, may err, and many have erred."—(Conf. of Faith, Chap. XXXI., Sect. III.) The question about them all is, whether they be "consonant with the Word of God," (*Ibidem*, Sect. II.) "The Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners."—(Form of Govt., Chap. I., Sect. VIII.)

Now, then, amongst Presbyterians, human authorities can only be of weight in such a question as Church government, in so far as they consist with, or as they explain and enforce, the Scripture doctrine. It will not be denied by any of us that the true doctrine of Church government, by bodies of rulers chosen by the people, was early corrupted, and gave way, nearly all over the Church, to Prelacy first,

and then to Popery—the necessary development of Prelacy. Hidden amongst the Bohemian brethren during their long night of persecution, it was at length brought forth to the gaze of an awakened and reformed Church by John Calvin. But the recovery of this lost doctrine, by Calvin, and by the Church through him, was effected gradually. To appeal, therefore, to Calvin, or to the First Book of Discipline, or to the Second Book, or to the Westminster Assembly, or to the Church of Scotland at any subsequent period, is to appeal to authorities, in themselves, necessarily, all of them, fallible—and some of them, from their position, possessed of only limited weight. The doctrine was lost for ages, and in Calvin's day, was not perfectly recovered, nor, perhaps, was it perfectly recovered in the days of Knox; for the First Book of Discipline seems to have retained a modified Prelacy in the office of Superintendents. It has even been asserted by Dr. George Cook, in his History of the Church of Scotland, that John Knox held “the liberal and rational doctrine, that no particular form of Church government is exclusively prescribed by Scripture, and that it is a question of expediency what form should, under all the circumstances of any one country, be adopted.” This, we must suppose, is simply the slander of a Moderate, for Knox himself, in his preface to the First Book of Discipline, exhorts that nothing be admitted “quhilk ye be not abile to improve by Godde's written and revealed Word.” And Row, in his “Historie of the Kirk of Scotland,” says “they took not their pattern from any Kirk in the world, no, not fra Geneva itself, but, laying God's Word before them, made Reformation thereto, both in doctrine first, and then in discipline.”—(P. 12.) Andrew Melville, however, (says Cook,) “placed the matter upon a very different and most alarming foundation. His object was to support the innovations which he sought to introduce by the authority of the Sacred Word. In short, he introduced that doctrine of the Divine right of forms of

ecclesiastical polity, which exerted in Scotland the malignant influence which might have been anticipated from it."—(Cook's Ch. of Scotland, Vol. I., pp. 249, 250.) Andrew Melville, receiving from Beza, at Geneva, ten years after Calvin's death, the idea that the Scriptures were directly hostile to Prelacy, had no sooner returned to Scotland, than he set himself to work to rid the Church of it. The Second Book of Discipline was the work of men guided and directed by him.* That book, appearing in 1581, twenty years after the First Book, contains a full and masterly exhibition of the Presbyterian doctrine of Church government. Its leading principles rest on the express authority of the Word of God. Its subordinate arrangements are supported by the general rules of Scripture. It is to-day a standard of the Church of Scotland in respect of Government and Discipline. Yet it recounts abuses which still existed and required removal. These relics of Prelacy and Popery remained in the Church of Scotland, notwithstanding all the efforts of Melville and his coadjutors to comply with Beza's earnest exhortation and prediction, that if they did not "root out entirely the human episcopacy, the most enormous abuses would follow."

* The Assembly of 1576, appointed "for making an overture of the policy and jurisdiction of the Kirk, and uttering the plain and simple meaning of the Assembly therein, the brethren undernamed to take pains, reason, confer, and deliberate gravely and circumspectly upon the heads of the said policy, and to report their opinions advisedly to the next Assembly, viz: James the Bishop of Glasgow, Andrew Melville, Andrew Hay, James Gregg, Patrick Adamson, David Cuninghame," and a good many others. They met, we are told by Calderwood, and also by James Melville, "in Mr. David Cuninghame's house, then sub-Deane of Glasgow and Deane of Faculteis, a man of good accompt at that time. None was so franke in the caus as he. He moderat the reasoning, gatherit up the conclusiones, and putt all in writ and ordour to be reported to the Assemblie. But such was the sagacitie of Mr. Andrew Melville, that he deemed that neither he nor Mr. Patrick Adamson would prove freinds to the caus in the end. And so it proved indeed."—(Calderwood's Kirk of Scotland, Vol. III., pp. 363 and 368. Also, see Diary of James Melville, pp. 55 and 56.

King James, then a boy of fifteen, and his dissolute and avaricious favorites, Lennox and Arran, the former born and bred a Papist, the latter profane and vicious, and both hypocrites in their profession of the Presbyterian faith, favored the preservation of these prelatie elements in the Church. It gave them power to compel and bias its courts, and to secure to themselves the revenues of the larger benefices by those cringing sycophants, the *tulchan* bishops, so called in allusion to the Highland custom of placing a *tulchan*, or calf's skin stuffed with straw, before the cows, to make them give down their milk. "The *tulchan* bishop got the title, (says Calderwood,) but my Lord got the milk or commoditie." And what was the whole subsequent history of the Church of Scotland during all of James' reign, first in Scotland and then in England, but one continued struggle with royal knavery and prelatie treachery? Chiefly by means of men who had solemnly sworn to maintain Presbyterian Church government, were the five articles of Perth forcibly carried through the Assembly, by which the glaring innovations were perpetrated, of *kneeling at the communion*; *observance of holidays*; *Episcopal confirmation*; *private baptism*, and the *private dispensation of the Lord's supper*. Long was the 4th August, 1621, the day when these acts were ratified by the Lord High Commissioner, known in Scotland as THE BLACK SATURDAY; for at the moment when he rose to give the formal ratification, by touching the acts with the sceptre, a terrific storm of thunder and lightning, with hailstones of prodigious magnitude, and a perfect flood of rain, burst upon the city of Edinburgh, and imprisoned for an hour and a half the men who were committing treason against heaven's King, by subjecting His Church to a king on the earth. Calderwood says "the day was black with man's guilt, and with the frowns of heaven." Hetherington well observes that this whole transaction "shows that the greatest danger a Church has to encounter, is that arising from internal cor-

ruption. King James could not overthrow the Church of Scotland till he had gained some of its ministers and corrupted its courts ;” and that “in all the crafty despot’s measures, there was a strange tacit recognition of one of the leading principles which he sought to overthrow—the independent right of the Church to regulate its own procedure on its own authority—for every one of the distinctive acts by which Presbytery was overthrown and Prelacy introduced, was so contrived as to have its origin in some court or commission of the Church ; never first in a civil court.”

The same troubles, arising from the remains of Prelacy in the Church of Scotland, continued all through the reign of Charles I. The Church was allied to the State, and this gave opportunity and temptation to Scotch royalty—now transferred to the English throne—to seek the ecclesiastical assimilation of Scotland with England. The constant effort of Prelacy, all through Charles’ reign, was to conform the Scotch to the English Church government. Edinburgh itself was made a Bishoprict. Scotch prelates prepared the Book of Canons, with which Scotland was to be flooded, and which was subversive of the whole constitution of the Church of Scotland—and yet the claim was set up that all these Canons were taken from the acts of the General Assemblies held in former years. Then a Liturgy was prepared for the Presbyterians of Scotland, revised by Bishop Land’s own hand, and “letters of horning,” that is, of outlawry, were prepared against all ministers who should refuse to make use of it. By such measures as these was Presbyterian Scotland driven to renew her Covenant, and marshal her forces against her treacherous monarch. The great Assembly of that year, 1638, annuls all the corrupt Assemblies by which Prelacy had been introduced, viz: those of 1606, 1608, 1616, 1617, and 1618; condemns the five Articles of Perth, the Book of Canons, the Liturgy and Book of Ordination; and deposed the Prelates. This is well

called Scotland's SECOND REFORMATION—in which, as Hetherington says, not one principle was called into action that had not been either in active operation, or at least distinctly stated, in the first. The great principles of the Swiss Reformation had pierced into the very core of Scotland's heart, but their development had been obstructed by nobles and kings, who struggled, for selfish reasons, to substitute a totally uncongenial frame-work of government and discipline; or, rather, to revive again the old corrupt Church government, which, unfortunately, had never been altogether overthrown in the Scotch Church itself. Beza's predictions to Melville were being fulfilled.

If we pass over all the bloody and cruel efforts of persecuting Prelacy in the Church of Scotland to regain its power during the reign of Charles II., and come down to the Revolution of 1688, we shall see that, even under King William, there was supposed to be room to hope that the partial conformity in the Church of Scotland might be nursed into her consent, as a whole body, to receive a modified Episcopacy. Such a union between the two parts of his realm would have well suited William's State policy. Personally favorable to the Presbyterian polity, as well as a pious man, he yet did not regard any form of Church government of Divine authority, and so his idea was, that both Churches should abate somewhat of their distinctive peculiarities, and unite in some intermediate arrangement. He, therefore, delayed his recognition of Presbytery as the State religion of Scotland, and when he did consent to its establishment, it was, observes Hetherington, as being "agreeable to the Word of God," instead of "grounded upon the infallible truth of God's Word," the expression used by Knox at the first establishment of the Presbyterian Church. Thus did William pursue a course which both alienated and paralyzed his Presbyterian friends, to whom chiefly he owed the British crown. He had a Minister, Carstares, himself a Presbyterian, but one of that class who

do not understand the very essence of Presbyterian Church government, viz: "that Jesus Christ is the only Head and King of His Church." His Presbyterian light, like that of some of the great Doctors of Divinity in our own American Church, was but "cold reflected lunar light;" that of Knox Melville, Henderson, and the other leaders of the first and second Reformations, was "direct sunshine," for, as Hetherington draws the contrast, "he was a Presbyterian through education and by habit and for expediency, but they by the grace of God." Accordingly, the Restoration Settlement of the Church, under such a Minister of such a King, was defective. William's policy was Erastian. He was, also, earnest for the inclusion of the Prelatic clergy, as far as possible, in the Established Church of Scotland. He was, accordingly, most reluctant to consent to the abolition of patronage. The temporizing Carstares supported his master in this policy. Nor did the Church herself protest. The first, and several succeeding General Assemblies, complied with the King's policy, and received a considerable number of the Prelatic clergy into her bosom. Thus was sowed in the Church the seed out of which grew up Moderatism.

All parties now pursued a weak and temporizing policy, keeping back their ruling principles, but not abandoning them. One national Church of Scotland, including Prelatists and Presbyterians, was the aspiration and hope of all. The Cameronian Covenanters alone disdained all compromise of principle, and loudly censured the Church because she had accepted the revolution settlement without any recognition of the national covenants, and of the second Reformation, which those solemn bonds had so greatly aided to effect. William dies, and Queen Anne's reign witnesses the union of Scotland with England. The seat of Scottish government is removed to London. The Scotch nobility and gentry become familiar with the forms, ceremonies, want of discipline and Erastian subserviency of the Church of England. Early and persevering attempts are

made by the British legislature to alter the government of the Scotch Church, or at least reduce it to a state of complete political thralldom. Now is felt the damage done to that Church by the admission into her bosom of so many Prelatic curates, through weak compliance with William's pernicious policy. Cold friends without her bosom, and treacherous mercenaries within, were too much for the enfeebled Church. From this time forward, as her own Hetherington describes her, she is a declining and unfaithful Church. Patronage, which William had abolished, is now reimposed by Act of Parliament. The Moderates, under its influence, at once spring forward, as a dominant party. Erskine and his three friends make the first secession. Then follows the Relief secession, so called because the seceders declared they went out to get *relief* from the intolerable despotism of Patronage. The Moderates issue their manifesto, written by Principal Robertson, in which the ground is broadly taken that "the decisions of the General Assembly may neither be disputed nor disobeyed by inferior courts with impunity." They thus make Church power *lordly* and *magisterial*, instead of *ministerial*. The Evangelical party also put forth their manifesto, in which they declared the freedom of the individual conscience, and the right of Presbyteries to refuse to obey the Assembly, in the matter of settling a minister appointed by a patron not acceptable to the people.

The subsequent struggles of these conflicting views culminated in the exodus of the Free Church of Scotland. This has been well called THE THIRD REFORMATION of the Church of Scotland. She has asserted in that movement, faithfully and fully, the crown rights of the Redeemer. "Take from us the liberty of Assemblies, and take from us the Gospel," said John Knox. This is the principle for which the Church of Scotland had suffered so often, and suffered now again. But she never asserted faithfully that principle, but her sufferings were made to redound to her

benefit. In proportion as she has honored her king, He has always honored her. And in proportion as she has yielded that principle, has she always sunk into fatal spiritual lethargy. Of this, the long reign of Moderatism, with its fearful results to the Church and people of Scotland, and, on the contrary, the present prosperous condition of the Free Church, are eminent illustrations.

Now, if the lost doctrine of Church government was so long in being restored in Scotland, where it can not be said to be even yet perfectly restored now, since so large a portion of the Church there is still the creature of the State, is it not plain that testimony drawn from that source needs to be always carefully sifted? We want to know, when the appeal is made to the Church of Scotland, first, whether it is to the Free Church or to the Established Church; then, whether it is to this Established Church of Scotland in her good or bad times, that is, the times when she followed out the Scriptures, or the times when she did not. We may be expected to receive the judgment of her Assembly at one time, say in 1638, and to reject it at other times, say in 1606, 1608, 1616, 1617, 1618, or 1621. We may be expected to prefer her opinions when John Knox or Andrew Melville was her chief guide in obeying God's Word, rather than when she was guided by Carstares' temporising policy. As our private judgment of God's Word is what we go by, we must be expected to discriminate between different General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, as we do between those of our own Church; as, say between the Assemblies of 1836 and of 1837, or between the Assembly of 1843, as to the elder question, and that of 1845, as to the question of Romish baptism. In a word, the authority of the Church of Scotland, or any other Church, has no weight whatever, except in so far as our private judgment of the Scriptures finds it therein sustained.

We submit now to the reader of what has recently appeared in the *Repertory* on "Theories of the Eldership," that this is not the idea of that writer in his numerous appeals "to the Church of Scotland and all the branches of the Presbyterian Church affiliated with it throughout the world." We ask the reader if he does not appeal to them as to so many authorities which, *in themselves*, have weight to settle this question. Does he not appeal to them very much as the Papist appeals to some council that settled and determined some article of faith? Nay, does he not appear to set great value upon the mere number of such testimonies which he is able to accumulate, piling them up one upon another, and all of them upon the heads of his antagonists, as if fain to bury them alive under the huge mass? But when these testimonies, thus accumulated, are taken up one by one, and examined, some of them are found perfectly irrelevant; many others incorrectly, yes, *unfairly*, quoted; and of the remainder, some are such as deserve no respect from us, and, perhaps, would receive none, did we but know them intimately. For an example of this sort: Who was Principal Hill? His testimony is more than once introduced by the *Repertory's* correspondent, with a great flourish, as though, of course, his very name must carry overwhelming influence. And no doubt, being so quoted, it has influence with many who do not happen to know what his position is in this controversy. Now, who, we again ask, was Principal Hill? He was the successor of Principal Robertson in the leadership of the Moderates of the Church of Scotland, and he was, accordingly, a bold and decided supporter of patronage in that Church. He was a supporter of those views which the best Presbyterians of Scotland have always struggled against; a supporter of the very principles which drove out the Free Church. Did not the writer of these articles in the *Repertory*, himself, once publicly laud to the skies the leaders of the Free Church in that noble exodus? And now does he quote a Moderate

like Principal Hill, in a controversy about Presbyterianism? It is well for him that he was writing for American Presbyterians and not for those of Scotland, where every true-hearted Presbyterian knows that Moderatism is essentially anti-Presbyterian and anti-scriptural, and where every intelligent one knows how to estimate the Church principles of Dr. Hill. But, let us ask the Repertory's correspondent if he never read the account of Dr. Hill's uniting with the other Moderates of the Assembly of 1796, to defeat the effort of the Evangelical men that year to engage the Church of Scotland in the work of Foreign Missions? We marvel that his own zeal for the cause of Foreign Missions—that sacred cause which consumed, to so large an extent, the vigorous portion of his own earnest ministry, and which now, in the decline of that ministry, is still so cherished and so dear to his heart—we wonder that his zealous devotion to that sacred cause did not compel him to refrain from dragging Principal Hill into this argument. Let us tell the reader (we write for ruling elders as well as ministers) that one of those Moderates, on that occasion, Mr. George Hamilton, minister of Gladsmuir, said, that “to spread abroad the knowledge of the Gospel among barbarous and heathen nations, seems to be highly preposterous, in as far as it anticipates, nay, it even reverses, the order of nature. Men must be polished and refined before they can be properly enlightened in religious truths. Philosophy and learning must, in the nature of things, take the precedence.” Then followed a glowing eulogium upon the “simple virtues of the untutored Indian.” He said, again: “when they shall be told that man is *saved not by good works, but by faith*, what will be the consequence?” At length, directing his attention to the idea of *collections for the aid of missions* (here, surely, we touch the very heart of the Repertory's correspondent, to whose immortal honor let us make a record of it, that he has done more, by God's blessing, to bring up the Church to some measure

of her duty in the matter of collections for Foreign Missions and other good causes, than any man we know)—directing his attention to this matter, Mr. Hamilton exclaimed: “For such improper conduct censure is too small a mark of disapprobation; it would, I doubt not, be a legal subject of penal prosecution.” Another of the Moderate party, Dr. Carlyle, of Inveresk, who had been quite ready to spend time and money in theatrical amusements, rose and said: “I have, on various occasions, during a period of almost half a century, had the honor of being a member of the General Assembly, yet this is the first time I remember to have heard such a proposition made, and I can not help also thinking it the worst time.” He, therefore, seconded Mr. Hamilton’s motion, that the overtures be immediately dismissed. Dr. Hill, like a real and true Moderate, made a cautious, plausible speech, evading the main topic, and concluding with a more guarded motion, admitting generally the propriety of aiding in the propagation of the Gospel, and recommending the promotion of Christianity at home, but disapproving the collections. David Boyle, Esq., Advocate, indulged in a furious philippic against Missionary Societies, as all of a political character, and dangerous to the peace of the community. Finally, the motions of Mr. Hamilton and Dr. Hill were combined, and carried by a majority of fourteen, the vote being fifty-eight to forty-four. “So well satisfied were the Moderates with the conduct of Mr. Hamilton (says Hetherington, from whom we get this account), and with his brilliant victory, that they soon afterwards honored him with the title of Doctor in Divinity, and elevated him to the Moderator’s chair, as a reward for his anti-missionary exertions.” And this is the party to which we are to be sent, and by this writer, of all our brethren, for instruction in the doctrine of the government of His Church, who said: “Go, preach to every creature.” And these anti-missionary General Assemblies of the established Church

of Scotland it is, that, of all others, are to teach us, and through this particular brother of ours, the true nature and genius of Presbyterianism !

It will now be felt, we think, by every reader, that there is necessarily great danger in any careless appeal to past authorities about Church government—that, in fact, the doctrine is now better understood in Scotland, by the Free Church, than it ever was understood in Scotland at any previous period—that it is better understood, on some points, by American Presbyterians, than any where else in the world; and that whoever would look backwards for light on the subject, must, in the first place, *look all the way back* to the Scriptures; and secondly, in looking at any particular point of the development of the doctrine, after it was exhumed by Calvin, and began again to be received into the Church's experience, he must always be ready to compare the positions assumed directly with God's Word, according to the best light of his own private judgment, enlightened by God's Spirit.

Having said these things as to the true and just value of all human authorities, and especially of the true and just value of the Church of Scotland, in this argument, let us refer to one of the famous testimonies of that Church, wherein most undoubtedly she does deliver herself according to the Word of God. Let us distinguish broadly between the dishonest utterances of many of her insincere and unpresbyterian ministers and General Assemblies, on the one hand, and on the other, this glorious deliverance of her early days, when, guided chiefly by Andrew Melville, she took her doctrine right from the Bible. Let us take up that SECOND BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, which was engrossed in the acts of the Assembly of 1581, and is still acknowledged as the chief standard of the Scottish Church, to see what it teaches respecting the ruling eldership. Of this book, McCrie says, (in his life of Melville, pp. 124, 125,) "It has secured the cordial and lasting

attachment of the people of Scotland; whenever it has been wrested from them by arbitrary violence, they have uniformly embraced the first favorable opportunity of demanding its restoration; and the principal secessions which have been made from the National Church have been stated, not in the way of dissent from its constitution, as in England, but in opposition to departures, real or alleged, from its original and genuine principles." Now, this book is one of the authorities of the Church of Scotland, which is repeatedly referred to by the Repertory's correspondent as sustaining his views. Let the reader judge of the correctness of his statements by the following quotations, bearing in mind that it is alleged:

1. That "this fundamental constitution of the Church of Scotland confines the term *Presbyter*, to ministers."

2. That it "discards imposition of hands in the ordination of ruling elders," and also makes them "incapable of the imposition of their hands in the ordination of ministers."

3. That it makes ruling elders to be, "not of the same order with ministers," but "only of the same order as the people, and having only the power which the people themselves might exercise;" in other words, that it makes them "*laymen*," and not high spiritual functionaries. And, also, that it makes their presence in the courts of the Church, "not necessary, like the presence of ministers."—(See *Princeton Review* April, 1860, p. 203; July, 1860, pp. 459, 462.)

Now, speaking of the office-bearers of the Church in general, the Second Book says:

There are four ordinarie functionis or offices in the Kirk of God, the office of the pastor, minister, or bishop; the doctor; the presbyter or eldar; and the deacon.—(Chap. II., sect. 10.)

Speaking in particular of the doctor, it says:

7. Ane of the twa ordinar and perpetuall functionis that travell in the Word is the office of the doctor, quha also may be callit prophet,

bisshop, eldar, catechizar, that is teicher of the catechisme and rudiments of religion.—(Chap. V., sect. 1.)

5. The doctor being an elder, as said is, sould assist the pastor in the government of the Kirk and concurre with the elders, his brethren, in all assemblies; by reason the interpretation of the word, quhilk is onlie judge in ecclesiasticall matters, is committit to his charge.—(Chap. V., sects. 1 and 5.)

Speaking of the elders and their office, it says :

1. The word eldar, in the Scripture, sumetyne is the name of age, sumetyne of office.

2. When it is the name of ane office, sumetyne it is taken largely, comprehending, als weill the Pastors and Doctors as them who are callit seniors or elders.

3. In this, our division, we call those elders whom the Apostles call presidents or governours.

4. Their office, as it is ordinar, so it is perpetuall, and always necessar in the Kirk of God.

5. The eldership is a spirituall function, as is the ministrie.

6. Eldaris anis lawfully callit to the office, and having gifts of God, meit to exercise the same, may not leive it again.

9 It is not necessar that all elders be also teichars of the Word, albeit the chief aucht to be sic, and swa ar worthie of double honour.

17. Their principall office is to hold assemblies with the pastors and doctors, who are also of their number, for establishing of gude order and execution of discipline. Unto the quhilks assemblies all persones ar subject that remain within their bounds.—(Chap. VI., sects. 1–6, 9, 17.)

Speaking of the elderships (or Presbyteries) and other assemblies, it says :

1. Elderschips and assemblies are commonly constitute of Pastors, Doctors, and sic as we commonlie call elders, that labour not in the Word and doctrine, of quhom, and of whais severall power hes bene spokin.

18. It pertaines to the elderschip to take heid that the Word of God be purely preichit within their bounds, the sacraments rightly ministrat, the discipline rightly maintenit, and the ecclesiasticall gudes uncorruptlie distributit.—(Chap. VII., sects. 1, 18.)

Speaking of the way in which “persons that beir ecclesiasticall functions ar admitted to their office,” it says :

6. This ordinar and outward calling hes twa parts, election and ordinatione.

7. Election is the chusing out of a person or persons maist able to the office that vaikes (is vacant), by the judgment of the eldership

and consent of the congregation to whom the person or person beis appointed.

11. Ordinatione is the separatione and sanctifying of the persone appointit, to God and his Kirk, eftir he be weil tryit and fund qualifiet.

12. The ceremonies of ordinatione are fasting, earnest prayer, and imposition of the hands of the eldership.—(Chap. III., sects. 6, 7, 11, 12.)

Speaking again of the power of the elderships or Presbyteries, it says :

22. The power of election of them who beir ecclesiasticall charges perteines to this kynde of assemblie, within their awin bounds, being well erectit and constitute of many pastors and elders of sufficient abilitie.

23. By eldership is meant sic as are constitute of pastouris, doctouris, and sic as now ar callit eldaris.

24. By the like reason, their deposition, also, perteines to this kynde of assemblie, etc., etc.—(Chap. VII., sects. 22, 23, 24.)

We need not comment upon these extracts. They are a clear, as well as full and complete exhibition of the doctrine of the Second Book, upon the points in dispute between us and the Repertory's correspondent. The reader has only to compare carefully together these several articles, and he will plainly see in them that very theory of eldership now called "the new theory." The only difference is, that the Second Book makes a distinction in the office of teaching elder, between pastors and doctors, which is, perhaps, not borne out by the Scriptures, and accordingly may not now be accepted. But, with this exception, the Second Book of Discipline exactly presents to the reader what both the editor of the Repertory and his correspondent have had the temerity to denounce as "novel." There is held forth in this ancient document the Scripture doctrine of one order of elders, divided into two classes, of teaching and ruling elders. There is held forth here the Scripture doctrine that every Presbyter rules, while some Presbyters teach as well as rule; that the essence of the Presbyterate is the ruling function, while teaching is a superadded, and yet a more honorable one; that, accordingly, Presbyter does not

mean preacher, but strictly and properly sets forth the ruler; and that as a true scriptural and constitutional Presbyter, the ruling elder may take part in ordaining with the imposition of hands "all persons that beir ecclesiasticall functiones," precisely as it "pertaines to the eldership constitute of pastouris, doctouris, and sic as ar now callit eldaris, to depose them." The elder is the aboriginal Presbyter. All power of rule or discipline is in the hands of elderships. But the power of doctrine is in the hands of the individual teacher. Every ordained Preacher is also a Presbyter, but not every Presbyter is likewise a Preacher.

But, whilst we waive all extended comment upon these extracts, let the reader observe the curious use made of one portion of them by the Repertory's correspondent. That famous distinction, so much insisted on by him, between the *general*, the *large*, the *wide*, the *appellative*, sense of the title Presbyter, and its *official* application, is partly based on one portion of these extracts. The argument by which the distinction is proved to be there found, is a perfect gem of ratiocination. "When the word elder (says the Second Book) is the name of ane office, sumetyme it is taken largely, comprehending als weill the pastors and doctors as them who are callit seniors or elders;" that is to say, the term, strictly applied, refers to "them who are callit seniors," but it is "sumetyme largely taken as comprehending as weill the pastors and doctors." Thus speaks the Second Book. But the Repertory's correspondent, by a species of logic all his own, draws from this statement the following conclusion: "Thus plainly does this fundamental constitution of the Church of Scotland confine the term Presbyter (or elder, in its strict official sense) to ministers, and apply it only in its *large* sense to those representatives of the people, whose proper name is governor, or ruler."—(April, 1860, p. 203.) The Second Book says: "Presbyter, or elder, properly and strictly refers to the ruler, but largely it comprehends also the teacher." And the Repertory's correspondent con-

cludes that plainly the Book thus confines the term *Presbyter*, or *elder*, in its strict official sense, to ministers, and applies it only in its large sense to rulers! The *Repertory's* correspondent is from the *Emerald Isle*; he has a national right to the privilege of *blundering*, and we would not deny to him any of his rights. It is a serious thing, however, for a man to perpetrate a long series of blunders, through successive articles, when his own reputation, and that of the organ through which they are published, gives them so much currency all over the Church. In this aspect, we are grieved at the haste, the carelessness, the confusion, which characterize, in general, the statements of this correspondent of the *Princeton Review*. His readers are constantly liable to be misled by him. Individual opinions, and the standards of Churches, are not only appealed to as guides, oracles, having authority to settle the question; but they are also appealed to carelessly and blunderingly, and are frequently construed to prove, as in the instance just referred to, the very opposite of what they assert. We are well aware, of course, that all careful students must, sooner or later, make this discovery for themselves. No man, however great his influence, or exalted his position, can exhibit carelessness in stating, or partisan unscrupulousness in quoting, the opinions of others, without forfeiting, sooner or later, the confidence of his readers. We know how to be charitable to the faults of a writer's temperament. Yet it is due to our readers to declare the fact here referred to; it is due, also, to the truth we are defending, for that truth belongs not to us but to the Lord, who revealed it, and who has called us to its defence.

We have said nothing in this article respecting the just and true historical value of general references to the authority of the Church of Scotland, which is not admitted by the most distinguished Scotch Presbyterians now living. PRINCIPAL CUNNINGHAM, in a *Defence of the people's rights in the appointment of their ministers*, published in

1841, just two years before his views got their complete vindication in the exodus of the Free Church, said very much the same things. Indeed, he had a task very much like our own, though, alas! we have nothing like his ability to perform it. He was replying to "Observations on the Veto Act, by the Rev. James Robertson, minister of Ellon"—more recently, Dr. Robertson, Professor of Church History in Edinburgh University, and intelligence of whose decease on the 2d December, 1860, has just reached this country. This Dr. Robertson was, as early as 1841, one of the ablest leaders of the Moderate party, and wrote strongly in favor of patronage. Dr. Cunningham speaks of him as a "very voluminous writer, possessed of both talent and diligence." It was one of his "infirmities as a controversial writer, to be frequently boasting of the *demonstrative* character of the facts and arguments adduced by him." Nothing could be clearer or more conclusive than his heaped-up proofs—confidence and positiveness ran through all the superabundant mass. So full of boldness and hardihood was he in urging his opinions, that he scrupled not to allege in favor of intrusion, "the direct testimony of Andrew Melville himself," with "that, also, of Calvin and Beza." And he knew how, as well as any body our readers ever met with, "to introduce, with an extraordinary flourish of trumpets, his attempt to explain away the obvious and natural meaning of the Second Book of Discipline." "Fortunately (said he) for the complete and decisive resolution of the great constitutional principle of our ecclesiastical polity which the question at issue involves, the records of authentic history enable us to bring the testimony both of Andrew Melville and of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to bear directly and conclusively upon the point before us." Patiently and laboriously Dr. Cunningham wades through his proofs, so confidently alleged, as through all the other irrelevant mass accumulated by his antagonist, and proves that Dr. Robertson, with all his

boastings, had not produced a particle of evidence, or any thing like evidence, to support his allegation respecting Melville, or Calvin, or Beza. Then, as to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, he shows that Mr. Robertson "can produce only a shuffling and fraudulent declaration of an unfaithful Assembly, which was notoriously corrupted by royal influence." Then does Dr. Cunningham quote Calderwood's memorable words respecting the Assembly of 1596: "Here end the sincere General Assemblies of the Kirk of Scotland." He adds, that "the corruption was gradual, and did not always advance with uniform progression; but no sound Presbyterian receives with much deference the statements of any Assembly after that of 1596, down to the famous Assembly of 1638." The Assembly at Perth, to which we alluded above, met in March, 1597, and was followed in May, of the same year, by another at Dundee. Both were corrupt Assemblies. Yet, with great triumph, Dr. Robertson had produced one of the "explanations" put forth by the corrupt Assembly at Dundee, of the articles agreed to at the corrupt Assembly at Perth, as "most important and altogether decisive of the meaning of the expression 'the consent of the people,' as that expression occurs in the Second Book of Discipline." But Dr. C. holds that the articles agreed to at Perth, and the explanations of them put forth at Dundee, were "just an exhibition of base shuffling, by a body of dishonest men who retained some regard for decency, but none for principle, and are entitled to no more respect, from honest Presbyterians, than the proceedings of those Assemblies which were held during the darkest period of Moderate domination." He holds that "the deliverance of such an Assembly as that at Dundee, should have no weight whatever with honest Presbyterians, in determining what was the doctrine of the Church and the import of the Second Book of Discipline."

From the Assembly of 1638, which brought in the second Reformation, down to the time of the glorious revolution of 1688, we have a period of just half a century, filled with the most interesting and stirring movements. The Covenanters, the Westminster Assembly, the death of Charles I., the rule of Cromwell, the restoration of the Stuarts to power, persecutions, oppressions, martyrdoms, fill up the record. Of the first twenty years after the Revolution, Dr. Cunningham says :

Upon the whole, the Church was, during this period, in a most efficient condition, and conferred most important benefits upon the country. But, about the time of the Restoration of patronage (under the reign of Anne, in 1712) the elements of spiritual corruption and decay began to work and to show themselves. The old, faithful ministers, who had endured the persecution, had gone to their rest; the corrupting influence of the Episcopalian conformists, who had been received into the Church, was extending itself; men of ability and activity, but of unsound principles, and destitute, apparently, of personal religion, were made Principals of Universities and Professors of Divinity; and this, combined with the exercise of patronage, restored by a Popish and Jacobitical faction, and exercised generally by an irreligious and profligate aristocracy, spread the leaven of iniquity, and thus paved the way for the ascendancy of the Moderate party. Under their reign, during the latter half of the last century, the preaching of sound doctrine and the practice of serious religion were discountenanced by the whole weight of ecclesiastical authority; every thing that a Christian Church ought to aim at was disregarded; the Church courts did their utmost to protect those accused of heresy and crime, and manifested as much indifference about the interests of morality, which they pretended to respect, as about the doctrines of the Gospel, which they avowedly despised. It would be well if the men of our own day were better acquainted with the real character and the fearful consequences of Moderation; and it would be an important service to the cause of truth and righteousness, if any one competent to the task would give us a history of the rise and progress, the decline and fall, of that anti-Christian system.

Elsewhere, he names as "the two leading elements of Moderate policy, subserviency to secular influence, and a desire of clerical domination." Let this last statement be carefully considered by our readers. Let them, also, pay attention to the following warnings of Dr. Cunningham to his own Church, which she took, and went out from the

Establishment—warnings which apply to our Church also, inasmuch as the rights of ruling elders are denied them in ordination of ministers :

It is as much the duty of the Church to aim at having the whole subject of the appointment of ministers brought into conformity with every intimation of God's will regarding it, as it is the duty of men in general to attend upon the means of grace ; and the Church has no more right to expect that Christ will give her pastors after His own heart, when the arrangements connected with their election and admission are not in accordance with His will, than men have to expect the communications of Divine grace when they have neglected the ordinances which God has appointed. Our ancestors understood this principle, for we find that the Assembly of 1644, in a letter to their commissioners at the Westminster Assembly, used these memorable words, which ought to be engraven on the hearts, and ought to influence the conduct, of all the members of our Church : "When the ordination and entry of ministers shall be conformable to the ordinance of God, there is to be expected a richer blessing shall be poured out from above, both of furniture and assistance upon themselves, and of success upon their labors."

These are the words of truth and soberness. They proceed from one who justly recognizes the arrangements of Church government as matters about which the Head of the Church has a definite will, which He has made known to us in the Scriptures. It is true, the people's right to choose their own minister is one question, and the nature and authority of the ruling elder's office is another. But it is hard to say which of the two is the more important. Surely, to deny that the elder's office is a high spiritual function—to assert that he is only a layman—that he is not a Presbyter—that he is not a full or a necessary member of the Church courts, like the "clergyman"—that he has not the right to take part in every act of the Presbytery of which he is a member—that he has not the right to lay on his hands in the ordination of the "clergy"—that that act is not the act of the Presbytery, but only of the ministers of the body,—that only ministers can make a minister—surely these, and other statements like these, look strongly to *clerical domination*,

and are of the spirit of Moderation. And, surely, the Prelatic ideas and hierarchical expressions about "the clergy" and "the laity," which are so rife among some of the leaders of our Church, show that it would be well for us, as well as the men of the Free Church, to understand more about the history of that anti-Christian system. Would that some one of our own brethren may adopt Dr. C.'s suggestion, and study and write out the history of Moderatism in the Church of Scotland. Let him begin with the earliest dawn of the Reformation in that country, viewing that as the unburying of the lost doctrine and order of Christ's Church. Let him trace the incomplete resurrection of the truth, as set forth in 1560, in the First Book of Discipline;—its fuller development in 1581, in the Second Book;—its vigorous life and action till the Assembly of Perth, in 1597, when the old Prelatic government again recovered strength and sway;—its feebleness until 1638, when it once more arose in its Divine beauty and power;—its struggles and difficulties down to 1688;—then its efficient influence till the revival of patronage in 1712;—the submission of the Church to that unrighteousness, because she had lost the martyr spirit of Knox and Melville, through the admission of so many Prelatic incumbents into her bosom;—the temporizing policy now practiced by the Prelatic majority of the Assembly, and the tyranny of that majority, resulting in the first Secession of 1734, and then in the Relief Secession of 1761;—the culmination of Moderate power in 1784, when the old protest against patronage, long a mere form by the Moderate Assemblies, was finally dropped, and when the most active managers in ecclesiastical affairs could with difficulty be restrained (says McCrie) from bringing forward a motion to discard the Confession of Faith, and all tests of orthodoxy;—and then the overthrow of Moderation, by the passage of the act on Calls (since generally known as the Veto Act), in May, 1834, just one hundred years after the Erskines and other Fathers of the Secession

appealed, for their own justification, to "the first free and reforming Assembly." Seven years after the termination of the reign of Moderation in the Church, her conflict with the State came to its crisis, and the Free Church went out. Let the writer of this history there close his account of the Moderates of the Church of Scotland.

We have one more quotation to make from Dr. Cunningham's pamphlet, showing the true historical value of all general references to the testimony of our mother Church :

The truth is, (says he) that the Reformers of the Continent, just like the Reformers of our own country, did not succeed in getting their views about the appointment of ministers adopted and acted upon by the civil authorities ; and, therefore, we are not to look to the civil law, *or to the actual practice*, which must have been somewhat affected by the state of the law, in order to ascertain what the judgment of these Churches, and of their founders, was ; while, at the same time, it is manifest that it is only the mature and deliberate judgment of the great Reformers which should possess the slightest weight, either in influencing our opinions, or in assisting us to ascertain the views of the Reformers of our own country.

We put into italics the words *actual practice*, to attract to them the reader's attention. We are not to look, according to Dr. C., to its actual practice, to ascertain what is the judgment of any Church, but we must resort to the constitution and standards of that Church. Actual practice is only to be resorted to where the language of a constitution is ambiguous, and then it furnishes nothing better than presumptive evidence as to the meaning of the terms employed. This is a well-ascertained principle in all interpretation of legal documents ; even the decisions of courts have been overruled, when opposed to the plain meaning of the words used. Laws have actually been acquiesced in and obeyed for long periods, and yet afterwards decided to be unconstitutional and void. Take the case of patronage in the Church of Scotland : it was against the fundamental principles of her constitution, and yet for a long period ministers presented by patrons were obtruded on her con-

gregations. So the *plan of union*, abolished as unconstitutional, in 1837, by our own Church, was adopted when many of the framers of our Constitution were yet living, and received their sanction, and that of the whole Church, for many years. These illustrations show plainly that no argument drawn from actual practice is good against the plain meaning of a constitution; no, not even though many of the very men who helped to frame it should subsequently acquiesce in the contrary practice. Because it is to be considered that these persons may so acquiesce through ignorance or inadvertence, or even unfaithfulness to the constitution.

Now let us apply this principle to the argument of the Repertory's correspondent, drawn from the actual practice of the Church of Scotland, as to the not laying on of hands by elders, or upon elders, in ordination. He quotes Walter Steuart, of Purdivan, as laying down "the law" of the Scottish Kirk to this effect. But Steuart, himself, rightly proposed his work, "not as the deed of the Church of Scotland, or of any judicatory therein, only in so far as what is collected or observed in it shall be found supported by their acts or universal customs." The authority of that excellent work just answers to that of Dr. Baird's very useful and valuable digest of the acts of our own General Assembly. It is no more and no less than a digest made by one man. The Repertory's correspondent can produce no such law in either the First or the Second Book of Discipline, which were, we believe, the only authoritative formularies of the Church about government, from 1560 down to the 10th February, 1645, when that Church accepted the propositions of the Westminster Assembly concerning Kirk government. We repeat, he can find no such law in either of those books. And, even when he goes to Purdivan's collections, he reads:

In the Assemblies of the Church, ruling elders have a right to reason and vote in all matters coming before them, even as ministers

have. For, to General Assemblies, their commissions bear them to the same power with pastors. Howbeit, by the practice of our Church, the execution of some degrees of the Church doth belong to the pastors only, such as the imposition of hands, etc., etc.—(Title 7th, § 9.)

It is, therefore, Purdivan's testimony, that in the courts of the Church the law gives elders the same power as pastors—only the *actual practice* was for them not to lay hands upon ministers.

Now let us see what was "the law" of these two Books of Discipline. The First Book says simply as follows:

And so publiclie befor the people sould they be placeit in their Kirk and joint to their flock at the desire of the samin; other ceremonies except fasting with prayer, *sic as laying on of hands, we judge not necessair in the institution of ministerie.*

We print in italics the words to which we desire the reader to give special heed. The First Book simply declared imposition of hands *not necessary* in any ordination at all, *whether of the minister or the elder*. The reaction against the superstitions of Rome was driving them to a simplicity more than scriptural. It is to be concluded, of course, that no ordination was with imposition of hands from 1560 down to the period of the Second Book.

Now, what was "the law," according to the Second Book? Let the reader refer above to pages 828, 829, and he will see that it declared the eldership to be a spiritual function, just as the ministry is; that a lawful call consisted of election and ordination; that the ceremonies of ordination are fasting, prayer and the imposition of the hands of the eldership; that the eldership or Presbytery was constituted of pastors and elders; that in that body was the power of election and deposing both ministers and elders, and that the election, ordination, and deposition of the ministers and of the elders were identical. The one was, just as much as the other, a high spiritual officer. Both were to be called and set apart in the same way, and with the same cere-

monies, and both had the same part to act in the calling, ordaining, and deposing of other persons.

Such, then, was "the law" of the Kirk, after the first twenty years of its history. Imposition of hands is no longer dreaded as superstitious, or declared to be not necessary. It is the right rule of ordination to all ecclesiastical offices. But how did it happen that, when restored by our forefathers to its true scriptural authority, it should after that be confined to ministers, not, indeed, in the law, but in the *practice*, of the Church? Our venerable and beloved preceptor in Church government, Dr. Miller, who advocates earnestly and unanswerably, in his work on the Ruling Elder, "the return of our Church to the scriptural example and the primitive usage" of the imposition of hands upon and by elders in ordination, but whose position on this point has been grievously misrepresented by the Repertory's correspondent, (see Repertory for July, 1860, pp. 457-459, and compare with Miller on the Ruling Elder, Chap. XIII.,) suggests, by way of explanation, that one mistake made by them led to another. They began by considering the office temporary—the First Book made it annual. Annually elected, it perhaps seemed incongruous that they should be ordained in the same way as the more permanent teachers. But the objection to this theory is, that the Second Book made elders perpetual, just as ministers, and yet the latter were under it ordained with imposition, and the former were not. Our own impression is, that there is no great difficulty in accounting for this discrepancy between the law and the actual practice of the Church. It is always difficult to change the practice of a people. The Church of Scotland began the use of the office by discouraging imposition of hands in all ordinations alike; afterwards, when they changed their law, it was difficult to get the practice altered conformably. Calderwood declares, in his *Altare Damascenum*, page 689, (and he lived from 1575 to 1650, including the whole period of the Second Book,) that

“many ministers amongst us are held to be lawful ministers, who yet have never received imposition of hands.” His original words will be found quoted in the note below. Now, this language seems to indicate that it was not easy to get even all ministerial ordinations made conformably to the new law, and what wonder is it that the elders were not generally ordained in the right and scriptural way?

But, speaking of CALDERWOOD, we are reminded that he, too, is one of the Presbyterian authorities which have been misquoted by the Repertory's correspondent, against the rights of the ruling elder. Yes, Calderwood, stout old David Calderwood, the author of “*Altare Damascenum, seu Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Politia Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ obtrusa—The Altare of Damascus, or the Polity of the English Church obtruded on the Church of Scotland*”—that great storehouse of anti-Prelatic arguments, which never have been answered; the fearless and uncompromising Calderwood, the hater of Prelacy in all its forms, is made to favor these Prelatic notions of the Repertory's correspondent! And how is this done? It is done by misquoting and misrepresenting him. We can not believe this misrepresentation to be intentional. We rather choose to ascribe it to a native impetuosity of mind, which pauses not to scruple about the means of carrying the point at issue—a zeal for opinions which can see nothing unfavorable any where—a strength of will in debate, which forces every authority into its own service, even if violence has to be employed. Let the reader compare the quotation alleged to be from Calderwood, on page 459, Repertory for July, 1860, with what we here translate from his work, the original being placed below in the note. He will see, first, that words are forced into Calderwood's mouth which he did not use, and secondly, that a mere hypothetical passage is employed as if it were a positive statement, all the preceding language being suppressed in the quotation, which would have set forth the true opinions of Calderwood:

Similarly may be answered that which Tilenus says, that "there is no place for our Presbyters in that Presbytery which Paul speaks of in 1 Tim. 4 : 14, because we do not hold that the right of laying on hands can belong to lay elders; and that no one can assume this office without imposition of hands; right and the laws permit no layman to impose hands." That no one without the imposition of hands can take this office, is false. With us, many are legitimate ministers on whom hands were never imposed. Imposition of hands was held amongst us, from the beginning of the Reformation, to be a thing indifferent, as formerly Tilenus, himself, said.—(See p. 175.) Those who have invaded the Episcopates, urge this rite as necessary, because this is almost the only difference between the Bishop and the Presbyter, as says Bilson. It is false, likewise, that lay elders can not impose hands upon those who are to be ordained. "Right and the laws do not permit it," he says. By what right are they excluded? They are, thou sayest, *laymen*. Are they laymen because elected from the people? Then the Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons will be laymen, because they all are chosen from the people, or may be chosen; or are they laymen because they handle lay affairs in their ministry? This is false. They handle the affairs of God and of the Church. If the Formalists put Deacons into the category of Clergy, who are only the ministers of tables and of widows, how much more may Seniors, chosen from the people, and called with a legitimate calling, be put by us into the number of ecclesiastical administrators? As to the word *clergy*, in that sense, we do not employ it. The administration of the Seniors is sacred, and it is numbered amongst those administrations, or ministries, which God has established in the Church. But what if even *laymen*, as thou speakest, that is, private believers in the Church, can impose hands? In the dedication of the Levites, the children of Israel leaned with their hands upon the Levites themselves, (Numbers, viii : 10.) That was a familiar rite of the Hebrews in their inaugurations, which the Apostles adopted as a custom but did not transmute into a sacrament. See several things about the rite above, page 158, and the following pages, where we have proved that it was a simple familiar gesture of prayer with the Hebrews, a sign indicating a person not signifying or exhibiting grace; and so was not a sacrament. Moreover, the Formalists distinguish between the imposition of the hands of a teaching Presbyter and of a Bishop; and they say, which, nevertheless, is false, that the consecrating, and, therefore, creating imposition of hands belongs to the Bishop, but that the Presbyters impose hands only to signify consent. "In the Presbyters, imposition of hands is a sign of their good wishes, but in the Bishop, it is a sign of his ordaining," says Saravia.—(See above, p. 166). More correctly, we say the sign of imposing hands is common to teaching and ruling elders; and that, for the sake of signifying consent, the Seniors may likewise impose hands, if it shall seem necessary, but to dedicate and consecrate with prayers, is solely of the minister. They wish the Bishop to pronounce the benediction,

together with the imposition of hands, not the Presbyter; although, at the same time, he does lay on hands to signify consent and assistance in the prayers. I concede that only that imposition of hands is reserved to the pastor or teaching Presbyter, which is conjoined with prayers and benediction. In sign, nevertheless, of consent and assistance, the ruling Presbyters may also impose hands. They do not impose hands, because it is not necessary. Neither do all the co-Presbyters of one Presbytery impose, but several of them, or very few of them, in the name of the others. One, even, might do it in the name of all. Finally, if we should grant that it is a sacrament, and that of this sacrament the Pastor-Presbyters are the administrators, nevertheless, elders would not be excluded from the Presbytery of 1 Tim. iv: 14, on the ground that imposition of hands does not belong to them. For the imposition of hands might be called the imposition of the hands of the Presbytery, although not all and singular of the Presbytery should have the power of imposing hands. It suffices that the chief part of the Presbytery have this power. As the tribe of Levi were said to apply the perfume, when, nevertheless, that was permitted only to the priests. Nothing can Tilenus elicit against the function of ruling Presbyters from those three passages: Acts xx.; Titus i: 7; 1 Tim. iv: 14; nor by any interpretation drive us from the three places: 1 Tim. v: 17; Rom. vii: 7; and 1 Cor. ii; adduced for their establishment.—(*Altare Damascenum*, pp., 691, 692.)*

* Similiter respondetur ad illud, quod ait Tilenus, nullum locum esse Presbyteris nostris in Presbyterio cujus meminit Paulus, I. Timoth. 4: 14, quid Laicis Senioribus *χειροθεσίας* jus communicandum non censemus. Et ut nemo munus hoc suscipere potest absque manuum impositione; neminem laicum eas cuique imponere fas et jura sinunt. Neminem absque impositione manuum munus hoc posse suscipere, falsum. Multi apud nos ministri sunt legitimi, quibus nunquam impositæ manus. Habita fuit impositio manuum apud nos à prima reformatione res adiaphora, sicut olim ipse Tilenus, vide page 175. Qui Episcopatus invaserunt, hunc ritum urgent ut necessarium, quid hæc unica pene differentia inter Episcopum et Presbyterum, ut ait Bilsonus. Falsum etiam, non posse Seniores Laicos manus imponere ordinandis. Fas et jura non sinunt, ait. Quo jure excluduntur? Sunt, inquis, Laici. An Laici quia ex populo delecti? Sic Episcopi, Presbyteri, Diaconi, erunt Laici; quia omnes ex populo delecti sunt, vel deligi possunt. An quia tractant laica in ministeris suo? Hoc falsum. Nam tractant negotia Jehovæ, et Ecclesiæ. Si Diaconos in Clericorum numerum referunt tui Formalistæ, qui mensarum et viduarum ministri tantum sunt; quanto magis nos Seniores ex plebe delectos et ordine legitimo vocatos in Administrationum Ecclesiasticorum numero recensebimus? Quod ad Cleri vocem, eo sensu non agnoscimus. Seniorum administratio est sacra, et numeratur inter administrationes seu Diaconias illas, quas in Ecclesia constituit Deus. Sed quid si Laici etiam, ut vocas, id est fideles et privati in Ecclesia manus

GEORGE GILLESPIE is another of the Presbyterian authorities to whom we may apply for a true commentary on both the law and the practice of the Church of Scotland, under the Second Book of Discipline, being one of her four commissioners to the Westminster Assembly, and a youth of extraordinary genius and learning. The Repertory's correspondent forces testimony to his views, even out of Gillespie's works. From his treatise entitled "Assertion of

imponere possunt. In dedicandis Levitis nitebantur filii Israelis manibus suis super Levitas ipsos.—(Numer. 8 : 10.) Familiaris fuit Hebræis iste ritus in inaugurationibus, quem usurparunt etiam Apostoli ex more, non mutarunt in sacramentum. Vide plura de hoc ritu supra (pag. 158 et seqq.) ubi probavimus fuisse simplicem gestum orantis Hebræis familiarem, signum indicans personam, non significans aut exhibens gratiam : et proinde non fuisse sacramentum. Præterea, distinguunt Formalistæ inter Impositionem Manuum Presbyteri docentis et Episcopi, et dicunt, quod tamen falsum, Episcopo competere impositionem manuum consecrationis et creationis ergo, Presbyteros imponere manus tantum ad consensum significandum. In Presbyteris impositio manuum est bene precantium signum, quod est in Episcopo ordinantis, inquit Saravia, vide supra, pag. 166. Rectius nos, signum impositionis manuum commune esse Presbyteris docentibus et gubernantibus ; et consensus significandi gratia posse Seniores etiam manus imponere, si necessarium videbitur : precibus verò dedicare et consecrare esse solius Ministri. Illi volunt Episcopum proferre benedictionem una cum impositione manuum, non Presbyterum etiamsi simul imponat manus ad significandum consensum et assistentiam in precibus. Ego Pastori seu Presbytero docenti illam tantum impositionem manuum reservatam concedo, quæ conjuncta est cum precibus et benedictione. In signum tamen consensus et assistentiæ possunt imponere manus etiam Presbyteri Gubernantes. Non imponunt, quia non est necessarium. Nec imponunt simul omnes unius Classis Sympresbyteri, sed plures aut pauciores aliorum nomine. Potest etiam unus nomine omnium. Denique, etsi daremus esse Sacramentum, et hujus sacramenti ministros esse Pastores Presbyteros, non tamen excludentur à Presbyterio, 1 Tim. 4 : 14, quia iis non convenit impositio manuum. Nam impositio manuum dici potest impositio manuum Presbyterii, etsi non omnes et singuli ex Presbyterio habent potestatem imponendi manus. Sufficit quod pars præcipua Presbyterii hanc potestatem habeat. Sicut Toribus Levi dicitur apponere suffitum, cum tamen solis Sacerdotibus id permissum fuerit. Nihil ex his tribus locis, Acts 20, Tit. 1 : 7 ; 1 Tim. 4 : 14 ; elicere potest Tilenus contra functionem Presbyterorum Gubernantium, nec ullo interpretamento a tribus locis adductis, 1 Tim. 5 : 17 ; Rom. 12 : 7 ; 1 Cor. 2 ; pro eorum prostasia nos depellere.—(Att. Dam., pp. 691, 692.)

the Government of the Church of Scotland," written expressly to explain and defend "the office of ruling elders, and the authority of Presbyters and Synods," (see Preface to the same,) the Repertory's correspondent endeavors to bring proof of the lay character of the elder. He culls out from two different chapters, Chap. IV. and Chap. XIII., some passages where, contending against the misrepresentations of Rome, Gillespie refers to ruling elders as "whom they call laics," and as held by the Protestants of Germany to be the peculiar "representatives of the people." Let the reader compare these passages in their true and proper connection, (they will be found without difficulty in Gillespie's short chapters,) with the quotations in the Repertory for July, 1860, pages 465, 466, and observe how Gillespie's testimony is thus tortured and twisted for the purpose of proving actually that "the lay character of ruling elders is fundamental to the Presbyterian system." Gillespie is thus *made to give* the great weight of his name to a *distinction he abhorred*. That he did abhor it, no person knows better than the writer, who thus unfairly quotes Gillespie against his own most cherished opinions. What good can ever come of controversy, if we may thus abuse the writings of the best and greatest men, long since lying in their graves, to the misguiding of inquirers and the misleading of the Church? On the very first page of the treatise in question, Gillespie says:

Before we come to speak particularly of those elders, of which our purpose is to treat, it is fit we should know them by their right name, lest we nickname and miscall them. Some reproachfully, others ignorantly, call them lay elders. But the distinction of the *clergy* and *laity* is Popish and anti-Christian, and they who have narrowly considered the records of ancient times, have noted this distinction as one of the grounds whence the mystery of iniquity had the beginning of it.

We take from Chap. XII. of this treatise, Gillespie's statement of the doctrine and practice of the Church in his time, respecting the ordination of elders:

Touching the first of these, it can not be denied but as election to the office, so ordination to the exercise thereof, is a thing common, both to preaching and ruling elders. Howbeit, in Scotland, imposition of hands is not used in the ordination of ruling elders, as it is in the ordination of preaching elders; yet this is not to be thought a defect in their ordination; for imposition of hands is not an act, but a sign of ordination, neither is it a necessary sign, but is left free; it is not, therefore, without reason that Calvin, Chemnitius, Gerhard, Bucanus, Junius, Bucer, and many other of our learned writers, yea, the Archbishop of Spalato, do all make a distinction betwixt the essential act of ordination and the external rite thereof, holding that ordination may be full, valid and complete, not only without the unction used in the Roman Church, but even without the laying on of hands used in the Reformed Churches. After the election of ruling elders, with the notice and consent of the whole Church, there followeth with us a public designation of the persons so elected, and an authoritative or protestative mission, ordination, or deputation of them unto their Presbyterial functions, together with public exhortation unto them, and prayer in the Church for them, which we conceive to be all that belongeth either to the essence or integrity of ordination. I mean not to condemn imposition of hands, nor any other convenient sign in the ordination of ruling elders, only I intend to justify our own form as sufficient.

RUTHERFORD'S authority is also pleaded by the Repository's correspondent, against the presbyterial rights of the ruling elder. No quotation is made from his writings, but his "Peaceable Plea," page 57, is referred to. There is nothing on that page which relates to the question. In the latter part of the volume we have the author's commentary on the doctrine and practice of the Church in his and Gillespie's time:

Ques. 5. How is it that your ruling elders doe not give imposition of hands, and blesse Pastors, when they are ordained, and so the lesser should blesse the greater? So the author of Survay. So D. Field.

Ans. 1. If they judicially consent to imposition of hands, it is sufficient.

2. There is no inconvenience that a ruling elder, as a part of the Presbytery, blesse one who is not yet a pastor, but to be ordained a pastor. For the ordainer, as he is such, is greater than the ordained.—(Peaceable Plea, p. 290.)

And for this cause one pastor of a single congregation not being able to ordaine a pastor (because it wanteth example in the Word of God) therefore a *colledge of Presbyters*, or a *Presbytery of pastors and elders*, who have power larger than a Session, even to excommunicate

and ordaine pastors, is necessary in the Church which ordaineth Timothy to be a pastor, and so may deprive and excommunicate him.—(*Ibid.* p. 321.)

The Presbytery and people meeting, some pastor, as Acts 1: 15, preacheth for the purpose in hand, as Peter doth here, v. 17, 18, 19. After sermon the pastor calleth him up before the congregation, and demandeth if he be willing to accept the charge, and he must testifie his consent, as Isaiah.—(Isa. 6: 8; Jer. 6: 7, 8; Acts 9: 20.) Then the pastor asketh the people's consent, which they testifie by their *χειροτονία*, the *lifting up of their hands*, as Acts 14: 23, and the man must please the whole multitude, as Acts 6: v. 5; Acts 1: 26. This being done, the pastor cometh downe out of the pulpit, and he, with the Presbytery, layeth their hands on his head and prayeth that God would blesse him, as the Apostles did, Acts 6: 6. The Apostles prayed and laid their hands on them, Acts 13: 3. They prayed and laid their hands on them, 1 Tim. 4: 14; 1 Tim. 5: 22. All being done, the eldership of the congregation give him the right hand of fellowship, as Gal. 2: 9. The action is closed with thanksgiving, as all grave actions should be, 1 Thess. 5: 18.

Let us pass to another Presbyterian authority, whom Rutherford and Gillespie both characterize as “the LEARNED VOETIUS.” He will give us the views of the Dutch Church during the period of the Second Book, for he was born in 1593, was Minister in Leyden till 1634, then became Professor of Divinity at Utrecht, and died in 1677. One of his two great works is his *Politica Ecclesiastica*, in four volumes, quarto.

The student of this controversy may find in that work (Vol. III., pp. 439–445,) a full discussion of all the difficulties, objections and glosses urged so earnestly and pertinaciously by the Repertory's correspondent against the testimony to the ruling elder's office, and authority drawn from 1 Tim. 5: 17—nay, the student will find several of them traced by Voetius up to the Papists and to the Socinian and Arminian Remonstrants, whom they better become than an orthodox Presbyterian divine, that takes Scripture submissively for his rule of faith.

The student will also find in Voetius (Vol. IV., p. 194,) a discussion of the objection that elders are laymen, which he ascribes to “Papists and some recent hierarchs in Eng-

land;" also (in Vol. III., p. 438,) an account of the good reason why Papists denied and denounced this order: "No wonder, for this order is out-and-out hostile to the Papal monarchy and the tyranny of Antichrist. This is the reason why every where they so violently rail at and make sport of it. *Ordinem hunc cane pejus et angue oderunt et fastidiunt*—they hate this order and loathe it more than a dog or a serpent." Further, he will find (in Vol. III., pp. 466 and 472,) how the author defends the office of the ruling elder against the jibes and sneers of the Remonstrants, with Grotius at their head—jibes and sneers at these rulers as "idiots, simpletons, ignorant," "men of low condition," "of the dregs of the people," as "useless;" as "usurping authority even over the ministers, so making a worse tyranny than that of Popes and Bishops;" as "causing anarchy and confusion every where in the Church;" as "mere annuals, or biennials, or triennials;" as "laic rustics wearing the seniors' cloke."

Voetius discusses, at great length, (Vol. I., pp. 461–466, and elsewhere) the question of the imposition of hands in ordinations. He quotes largely from many and various quarters, to the effect that it was not of the essence of ordination at all, but was a mere matter of indifference. With respect to this rite in ordination *by* and *of* elders, he says:

As to the imposition of hands, it is a rite plainly indifferent (as is elsewhere expressly taught against Papists) and consequently neither confers nor takes away any ministerial rank. Furthermore, by no jot or tittle of a letter of the Scripture can it be proved that it is wrong if elders, in the ordination of a minister, should join in the imposition of hands. We know that in the Papacy, also, it is held to be a great wickedness if a pastor or prebend, who is not a Bishop, or one man alone, should impose hands, with the Bishop, on the persons to be ordained, in the first place, because the order with them is a sacrament. But these are mere straws and human traditions. If any one wishes to observe this rite properly, it may be performed by one minister of the Word, alone; or by many ministers of the Word; or by ministers and elders; nevertheless, with this distinction, that the minister must act as the leader and administrator in the Word, and the prayers by which he dedicates and consecrates the person to be ordained; the

other ministers and elders for the testifying of consent and assistance in the prayers. Let them explain to me what was the laying on of hands of all Israel, in Numbers, viii: 10. But this whole thing, whatever it is, is a mere matter of indifference.—(Vol. III., p. 452.)*

Example 2. Presbyters are ordained by imposition of hands, but your elders are not so ordained.

Ans. 1. That rite plainly is of the nature of an accident; it may be present or absent. In many reformed Churches it is not adhered to in the ordination of ministers. But in the Churches of the Belgic exiles, or “of the dispersion,” elders are accustomed to be ordained with this rite, as may be seen in the ecclesiastical constitution of the London-Belgic Church, edited by Mieron, Chap. VI.—(Vol. III., p. 466.)†

Let this last statement be taken notice of by the Repertory’s correspondent, who seeks to make capital out of Dr. Miller’s acknowledgment, (inadvertently made whilst exploring this unscriptural omission,) that the Reformers “unanimously discarded imposition in the ordination of elders.” We say Dr. Miller inadvertently used the term *unanimously*, for he himself, not four pages further on in

* *Quod ad impositionem manuum, est ritus plane indifferens (ut alibi contra Pontificios ex professo docetur:) et consequenter, nec ponit, nec tollit gradum aliquem ministerii. Vide de eo supra part. I. lib. 2. tr. I. cap. 8. Deinde, nullo scripturæ apice probabitur, nefas esse, si seniores in confirmatione ministri una manus imponant. Scimus in Papatu etiam grande nefas haberi, si pastor seu parochus, qui non sit Episcopus, aut solus una cum Episcopo manus ordinandis imponat; imprimis quia ordo ipsis est sacramentum. Sed hæc meræ sunt stipulæ, et traditiones humanæ. Si hunc ritum observare quis velit, potest ab uno solo verbi ministro fieri; aut à pluribus verbi ministris; aut à ministris et senioribus: hac tamen cum distinctione, ut minister faciat tanquam antecedens et ministrans in verbo et precibus, quibus ordinandum dedicat et consecrat; reliqui ministri et seniores, ad testandum consensum et assistentiam in precibus. Explicent mihi, quæ fuerit χειροθεσία totius Israelis, Numeri 8: 10. Sed totum hic quidquid est merè est adia phorum.*

† *Instant. 2. Presbyteri ordinantur per impositionem manuum: at vestri seniores sic non ordinantur.*

Resp. I. Ritus ille plane accidentarius est; potest addesse aut abesse. In multis ecclesiis reformatis non adhibetur in confirmatione ministri. Vide infra lib. 3. tr. de vocatione ministrorum. Quin et seniores in ecclesiis Belgicis exulantibus seu εν τῇ διάσπορᾷ, solent hoc ritu confirmari: ut videre est in Constitut. ecclesiastic. Ecclesiæ Londino-Belgicæ à Microne editis c. 6.

the same treatise, (see *Ruling Elder*, p. 287,) referred to this very fact which Voetius mentions about the Belgic Churches in London. And here we will just take occasion to remark, that the *Repertory's* correspondent has run over a great deal of ground in his investigations of this question, but he would now profit, we are sure, by reviewing his studies. And amongst other things, which he certainly can not have understood, is this discussion of Dr. Miller, (*Ruling Elder*, pp. 282-293,) respecting the perfect right of the elder to be ordained just like the minister, with imposition of hands. Either the correspondent of the *Princeton Review* can not have understood Dr. Miller, or else he wilfully misrepresents his old instructor. We think the more charitable supposition is the former. And, therefore, we hope he will take no offence if we thus call his attention to this discussion, and recommend him carefully to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the same.

There are just two more passages from this great Presbyterian authority, VOETIUS, which we must quote for the edification of the *Repertory's* correspondent, and of all others who, like him, hold Prelatic ideas about ordination.

The first passage defines ordination to be

A public declaration and testification by the ecclesiastical, or by the scholastic college, that the person is fit.—(Vol. III., p. 575.)

The second passage treats of the elder's authority in the courts.

Question 3d. Whether may the elders, with equal authority and number of votes with ministers, contribute and hold Presbyteries and Synods, and determine all things therein proposed, as our Ecclesiastical Constitutions have decreed? We answer affirmatively, nor can any reason be produced to the contrary; and we think that this operates strongly to prevent and avert far from us the pride, the oligarchy, the primacy, the tyranny of teachers, which, before now, has so miserably destroyed the Church.—(III., p. 475.)

What says the *Princeton Review* and its correspondent, to this view of the Reformed Church in Holland, as to the nature of ordination, the authority of ruling elders, and

especially as to their use for holding in check the pride and arrogance of "*the clergy?*"

We have thus considered the law of the Church of Scotland, from 1560 down to 1645, as set forth in her standards during that period, and we have compared it with her practice during the same time, as set forth in the writings of the men who were foremost actors in her history. We have seen that the practice did not correspond with the law, and we have seen that this is to be explained partly by the difficulty there always is found in changing the practice of any people, and partly by the prevalence of the idea that the whole matter was a matter of indifference. Comparing this law and this practice of the Church, both of them with the Bible, as we must do, we say, of course, that the law corresponded to the Scriptures, and the practice contradicted the Scriptures. For the Scriptures teach us that ministers, elders, and even deacons, were all ordained with the imposition of hands. Calvin understood this matter better than all the writers we have now been consulting, for he said (Inst., Lib. IV., Cap. III., § 16,) that "if the Spirit of God has not instituted any thing in the Church in vain, this ceremony of His appointment we shall not feel to be useless, provided it be not superstitiously abused." Our Scotch fathers, after the days of Melville, however, and with them Voetius, seem to have thought that they might neglect the rite. But this is the full extent to which they could go. The rights of the elder to complete equality with ministers in the courts; his right to full and complete ordination, himself; his right to do every thing in ordination, which any member of the court, as such, might do; these things they never once thought of denying. Now comes the Princeton Review, and through both its editor and its correspondent, pleads these Scotch Presbyterian authorities against the elder's rights. Those good old Presbyterians said the ceremony might be omitted; elders need not have hands laid on them, nor lay on their hands. But our new-

fashioned Presbyterian authorities say the elders must not and shall not have any part in this ceremony, for it belongs, every whit of it, to "the clergy." Let Presbyterians notice this, and remember the warning of Gillespie, about the beginnings of the mystery of iniquity.—(See above, p. 845.)

Let us now pass to the period of **THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY**, and, in connection with this same question of the law and practice of the Scotch Church, let us examine the use made of this authority by the Repertory's correspondent.

Every body knows, and we have already in this article referred to it, that before the calling of the Westminster Assembly, the idea, in various forms, had begun to be extensively entertained, both by King and Parliament, and by Scotch Presbyterians, also, of uniting the three kingdoms together in a religious uniformity. It is also well known that in the struggle that was going on continually between the English Parliament and Charles I., the former was looking for the support of the Scotch army, should things proceed to an open rupture. As early as 1642, the Parliament signified to the Commission of the Assembly, immediately after the rising of the latter body, that they intended to call an Assembly of Divines, to deliberate upon the formation of such a Confession of Faith, Catechism, and Directory, as might lead to the desired uniformity, and requesting Commissioners to be appointed to that Assembly, on the part of the Scottish Church. The Westminster Assembly, however, did not meet till the next year. Meanwhile, circumstances of great public danger and alarm to the Protestants, both of England and Scotland, induced the General Assembly, in August, 1643, to frame that well-known bond of union between the two countries, called the **SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT**, written by Alexander Henderson, approved in the Assembly, and then sent to London, and there signed by the Parliament and by the

English Divines, already assembled at Westminster. The Scotch Church then also commissioned five ministers and three elders to go and assist their deliberations.

Three great parties existed in that Assembly: first, the Erastians, and secondly, the Independents; both of these small but able bodies of men, active, vehement, and the Independents especially, very pertinacious in maintaining their opinions. The third party was the largest—the English Presbyterians described by Hetherington as indifferently acquainted with the Presbyterian polity, having been accustomed always to the Prelatic form of Church government, so that the task of explaining and defending Presbytery devolved chiefly on the Scottish divines. The Assembly being divided between these three parties, what was the attitude of the body towards Prelacy? A number of strong Episcopalians had been summoned to attend, and several did appear, but they soon all left the body, one excepted, who afterwards gave offence, and was expelled. But all the English ministers in the body had been Episcopally ordained, and the Presbyterian portion of them, were at first not opposed to Episcopacy in all its forms. Their first object was not to overthrow the hierarchy, nor to set aside the thirty-nine articles, but to alter and improve both. In Church government they had no idea of going any further back for their principles of reform than to the *primitive* Church.

It is obvious that a body constituted of such materials must have been liable to severe inward struggles; and yet the struggle was not about points of theology, but only matters of Church government. It is said there was not one Arminian nor one Antinomian, in the Assembly, much less one Pelagian or Unitarian. Accordingly, they agreed, without much difficulty, upon their doctrinal standards. But as to Church government, it was, of course, to be expected that they would have great difficulty, and that, indeed, there could be no agreement, except by the utmost

moderation of opinions and of terms. A single point often occupied weeks of debate, chiefly between the Independents and Presbyterians. The subject of ordination was up for a whole year, and was frequently and warmly debated. The ruling elder occupied them, at one time, from the 22d November to the 8th December. "This order of Church officers (says Hetherington) was almost a novelty in England."—(Hist. Westm. Ass., p. 141.) Some of the leading Presbyterians, under their Episcopal prejudices, held that "there was no ruling Presbyter distinct from the preaching one."—(Lightfoot, p. 74.) The proposition that "ordination is only in the hands of the preaching Presbyters," was debated very warmly, but in conclusion, was laid aside for the present.—(P. 116.) Afterwards, it was voted that the preaching Presbyters, orderly associated, are those to whom the imposition of hands doth belong.—(P. 234.) This proposition was then objected to, as "excluding lay elders from imposition." "At last it was passed over, and the proof of it was fallen upon again, and cost a great deal of time and debate, and at last it was put to the question whether it should pass or no, and it came to a vote so dubitable, that we were put to our votes by standing up, and it was carried affirmatively."—(P. 239.) Reasons for this proposition, excluding elders from imposition, were called for. This one was offered: "That preaching Presbyters are to ordain, for that we find no ordination but by preaching Presbyters." Upon this reason, the debate "held long," but after "tugging," it was "voted negatively."—(P. 239.) On the same occasion, it was voted that "the power of ordering the whole work of ordination is in the whole Presbytery."—(P. 238.) And, also, afterwards it was passed that "A Presbytery consisteth of ministers of the Word, and such public officers as are agreeable to, and warranted by, the Word of God, to be Church governors, to join with ministers in the government of the Church."—(P. 243.) It was

voted to call these governors "Such as in the Reformed Churches are commonly called elders." Mr. Gillespie moved that "they be called ruling elders, but this prevailed not."—(P. 330.)

Now, the General Assembly of Scotland, in 1645, "being most desirous and solicitous of uniformity in Kirk government between these kingdoms, and considering that, as in former times there did, so hereafter there may arise, through the nearness of contagion, manifold mischiefs to this Kirk, from a corrupt form of government in the Kirk of England," did "agree to and approve the propositions of the Westminster Assembly touching Kirk government and ordination," and did "authorize the commissioners of the Assembly, who are to meet at Edinburgh, to agree to and conclude an uniformity between the Kirks," etc.—(See Acts of Gen. Ass. Ch. Scotland, Sess. 16, Feb. 10, 1645, post meridiem.)

Now, we submit, that in view of all the circumstances of this history, far too much is made by the Repertory's correspondent of the negative action of the Westminster Assembly respecting imposition of hands by elders, and then the approval of their propositions by the Church of Scotland. We have seen above how Gillespie, Rutherford, and other Scottish Presbyterians generally, of that time, regarded imposition as not of the essence of ordination. Hence, neither they nor their Church of Scotland, cared to insist upon it. They had got "other Church governors joined with ministers in constituting the Presbytery, and to this Presbytery given all the power of ordination;" and this they viewed as the whole substance. And they had weighty reasons of Church and State policy to reconcile them to any minor imperfections in the propositions of this English Assembly that was to unite England with their own country in one form of government substantially. The state of the question was, therefore, quite different as presented to them and as presented to us. Now, the ground

taken is, that this claim for elders to unite in imposition is a new thing; nay, never heard of before; that both the law and the uniform practice of the Church has always been for ministers alone to impose hands; that like begets like, only ministers can make a minister—ordination is above the elder's power; and, moreover, that they are mere laymen, their presence not necessary in a Church court, and their title to the very name of elder perfectly unsettled. And for a good deal of this miserable Prelatic stuff the authority of such a body as the Westminster Assembly, great and good, and thoroughly enlightened as to doctrinal theology, but not so enlightened nor orthodox as to Church government, is to be thrust upon us, to the over-riding the authority of Andrew Melville's Second Book of Discipline, that great Presbyterian platform of the Church, adopted in her purest and best days, when urged by no temptations of carnal wisdom or suggestions of State policy—nay, the authority of that mixed and doubtful Assembly is to be thrust upon us to the over-riding even of the Holy Scriptures themselves.

But there is yet another Presbyterian authority to which we must advert, in closing this article. We refer to the CONSTITUTION OF OUR OWN CHURCH, in what was lately the United States of America. That authority defines the Presbytery to consist of "all the ministers and one ruling elder from each congregation, in a certain district."—(Form of Gov't, Chap. X., § 2.) It declares this Presbytery has "power to ordain, install and judge ministers."—(Chap. X., § 8.) According to this Book, the presiding minister ordains "with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery."—(Chap. XV., § 12.) It is not said here, as in the Westminster Form, "the preaching Presbyters," but "the Presbytery." The First Book of Discipline said, ordination was to be with "fasting and prayer," and imposition was "not necessary." The Second Book said: "fasting, earnest prayer and imposition of hands of the eldership,"

and it said this eldership was constituted of "ministers and elders." The Westminster Form changed this, and said: "by imposition of hands and prayer, with fasting, by those preaching Presbyters to whom it doth belong." But our own Form changed this again, and says: "by prayer and with laying on of the hands of *the Presbytery*," and this Presbytery is the ministers of a district and one elder from each Church in the same. After the ordination, it says: "the minister who presides shall first, and afterwards, all the members of the Presbytery, in their order, take him by the right hand, saying in words to this purpose: 'We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part of this ministry with us.'"—(Chap. XV., § 14.) Here, again, is a change of the Form used in Scotland; the provision, "all the *ministers* of the Presbytery," is changed for "all the *members* of the Presbytery."

All these changes are marked and significant. This is the judgment of the framers of our Constitution, with the various formularies adopted by the mother Church in Scotland, all before their eyes. The departure of the Westminster formulary from the principle of the Second Book, is, in its turn, departed from by our Constitution. Deliberately forsaking the Westminster standard, it goes back to the ground maintained in the Second Book. We say this is significant. But, against it all, here is an effort to bring in upon us the modified Church government of a formulary adopted by the mother Church at a time of great necessity, in the hope and expectation of great public advantages from a general uniformity to be established; and, still further, adopted when the question was in such a position as that it did not appear to concern any vital principle—adopted when it was distinctly understood as not affecting the full and complete Presbyterian authority and power of the ruling elder. Very different is the state of the question now, when those who appeal to the adoption of these standards by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, do it

distinctly and expressly to establish their anti-Presbyterian notion, that the elder is only a layman, and not entitled even to the name, Presbyter.

But, clear and distinct as our standards are for the full rights of the elder in the ordination of ministers, they, themselves, are not altogether conformable to Scripture upon the other part of the elder's rights. They ought to require, as the Second Book requires, his own ordination to be by the parochial Presbytery, called the Session, and with imposition of their hands, according to the Apostolic rule and practice. We have seen that, in 1832, Dr. Miller published that he had long "deplored this omission."—(Ruling Elder, p. 282.) The Book, however, does not forbid the imposition of hands upon elders and deacons, although it does not require it. How could it have forbidden it, when the Apostles practiced it in both? The high Presbyterian authority of the Second Book would give sanction to any minister and session who should choose so to ordain the ruling elder. The high Presbyterian authority of Calderwood, Gillespie, Rutherford, Voetius, Samuel Miller, Robert J. Breckinridge, unite to authorize it, as, at the least, a thing indifferent and innocent; nay, more, as suitable and proper. The established practice of many, very many, of our sessions, is in favor of it. What is more than all, however, it has the sanction of the Word. But, while all this is certainly true, and is quite sufficient to justify (as against the negative testimony of our own Form) the elder's use, in all ordinations, of this power and this distinction, conferred by the Master on his office, it is denied by the Repertory's correspondent, and those who side with him, that he has any right to any share of this sacred ceremony! It has some sort of a sacramental virtue, and it belongs, all of it, to "*the clergy!*" Now it is this denial, and this ground of it, which gives the question so much importance, inasmuch as it constitutes a denial of the true nature of the eldership; degrades the ruler from the position of a

high spiritual functionary; makes him a mere stepping-stone for the exaltation of "the clergy;" a mere human expedient for purposes not consonant with the genius of Presbyterianism.

We had designed to examine the just and true historical value of Calvin's authority on this question. The exhausted condition of the reader's patience and of our space, unite to forbid. If the present discussion be received with favor by our readers, we may take up the subject in a future number of this journal.

The point we have sought to establish is, that any and all human authorities are of value upon theories of the eldership, only as they are sustained by the Word of God; and that Church government is of interest and importance, chiefly in the aspect of its being *jure divino*. We are not to hang our faith in this matter upon Princeton, nor Westminster; upon the General Assembly of our own Church, nor on that of the Kirk of Scotland; upon Melville, nor Knox, nor even John Calvin himself, but only on the Apostles. The only authoritative appeal to the past in this question, is the appeal which goes back to the very beginning, and cites the authority of the Church's sole Head and King.