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I.

THE MINISTRY.

TO one who reads the New Testament carefully, with a view to ascertain what it teaches in regard to the organization of the Church, it is obvious that apart altogether from the ordinary members there were official members, known by such names as deacons, elders, bishops, pastors, teachers, and ministers. Seven men were on one occasion appointed to serve tables and to provide for widows in the daily ministrations. Elders were appointed by Paul and Barnabas in the newly formed churches of Lycaonia. In the church at Antioch we find prophets and teachers, and in the church at Philippi bishops and deacons. The Thessalonians had those who labored among them and were over them in the Lord, while the Hebrew Christians had some who ruled over them and watched for their souls. Churches were not permitted to remain for any long time without such officers, and till they were supplied there was something "wanting."

Between these and the private members of the Church, the Scriptures draw a marked line of distinction. These officers have names peculiar to themselves. They are set apart to their work with the laying on of hands. They have distinctive duties to perform. They are promised, in case of being diligent and faithful, a special reward. Not only so, but there are special duties which the ordinary church-members are enjoined to perform to these officers: they are to acknowledge, to esteem, to remember, to obey, and to support them. All these considerations show that at a time when the Church was under the guidance of the living apostles of Christ, there was a clear line of demarcation between teachers and taught, the rulers and the ruled.

V.

ORDINATION TO THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

THE visible Church of Christ is not an ideal aggregation of individuals, but a community in covenant relations with God, an organized society, separated from the world, bound together by common obligations, and subject to the government of divinely appointed teachers and rulers. This is the doctrine of all the Reformed Confessions, and especially of the Westminster standards. "The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel, consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children, and is *the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation*" (Conf. of Faith, 25. 2). This definition must be taken as a whole; and in any argument based upon it the second clause, which is explanatory of the first, cannot be fairly omitted. The profession which conditions membership in the visible Church is not a private and individual transaction; it must be adjudged credible and sealed by baptism. It is the doctrine of all the Reformed churches that neither sacrament may be dispensed by any but "a minister of the Word lawfully ordained" (Conf. of Faith, ch. 27. 4). The notion that one private Christian may baptize another is an "Anabaptistical phrensie." Jesus Christ has erected in this world a kingdom which is his Church; and *to this catholic, visible Church* he has given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting the saints, in this life, to the end of the world (Form of Gov., 2. 1; Conf. of Faith, 25. 3). An unorganized kingdom, a disjointed house, an ungoverned family, are phrases in which the adjective nullifies the noun. Christ said "on this rock I will *build my Church*" (Matt. xvi. 18). A building is not a scattered mass of stones and timber, but an orderly structure, with a unity of plan and a subordination of parts. That the Church he proposed to build is his visible kingdom in the world is evident from the universal precept he immediately after gives for the regulation of Christian conduct. "Tell it to *the*

Church, and if he hear not *the Church*, let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican" (Matt. xviii. 17).

To confirm and complete these instructions the Saviour proceeds to confer upon the officers of the visible Church the power of the keys (Matt. xviii. 18, xvi. 19). Whatever interpretation of these passages we may adopt, short of that which divests them of all meaning, whether we make the keys signify doctrine or discipline, or both, they certainly recognize a government in the Church in the hands of living men authorized to administer it; they clearly mark the distinction between teacher and taught, ruler and ruled; and so lay the foundation for a multitude of other precepts for the regulation of the Christian life and the edifying of the body of Christ.* The perpetuity of such a government necessarily involves a regular succession of authorized Church officers. And this succession must be in some sense *apostolical*, because, as a matter of fact, the apostles were the first of the sacred order; because, in the exercise of their plenary authority, they organized under its New Testament form the Church to which the Lord "added such as should be saved;" because the apostles appointed others to preach the Gospel, to administer the sacraments, and to bear rule in the kingdom of God; and because their commission to go and preach the Gospel to every creature was accompanied with the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." It was not possible for this promise to be fulfilled in the experience of the apostles and first preachers of the Gospel. The gates of hell—*i.e.*, of hades or death—did prevail against them as individuals. But their death did not annul the promise, because it did not destroy the order of men they represent, nor interrupt the exercise of the official functions they began; the visible Church of Christ built through their agency continues, and Christ is with them in the person of their successors "alway, even unto the end of the world." Is this High Churchism? Then were all the Reformers High Churchmen. So also were the early Puritans, of both the Presbyterian and the Congregational stripe. Even the older Congregationalism of New England insisted upon a regular succession of ministers from the apostles.

* "The Lord Jesus Christ, as King and Head of his Church, hath therein appointed a government *in the hands of Church officers*, distinct from the civil magistrate. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the word and censures, and to open it unto penitent sinners by the ministry of the Gospel and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require" (Conf. of Faith, 30. 1-2). "Almighty God hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins" (Episcopal Prayer Book).

Dr. Samuel Hopkins says that the promise of Christ, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," is a sufficient positive proof that such a succession does, in fact, take place, that the apostolic commission has been transmitted from one to another from Christ's day till now, that there has been no interruption, and will not be till the end of time.* He cuts the knot presented by the imaginary case of Christians cast upon a desolate island where they cannot obtain regularly ordained ministers, by declaring that the supposition "is a begging of the question and a contradiction of Christ's promise." He affirms that while the promise stands such an instance cannot occur.†

In reply to the objection that an uninterrupted succession of ministers from the apostles must come through the Church of Rome, he declares that "the ministers of that Church were visible ministers of Christ, and their visible acts, their ordinations, etc., were valid, notwithstanding they were themselves very corrupt and wicked." In this he is in full accord with all the Reformers and with all the Protestant theologians since the Reformation.

Next to the supreme headship of Christ, the grand feature of his Church and kingdom, whether visible or invisible, is its corporate unity. While the visible Church in its present state is not to be accounted identical with the invisible, as though membership in the one were the sole and certain condition of membership in the other, which is the root of Romanism; neither, on the other hand, are they to be regarded as distinct in their divine purpose, in their chief constituent elements, nor in their ultimate destiny. The invisible Church being spiritually united to Christ, the visible Church is externally united to him for the sake of the other. The two are even now largely coextensive, and they will perfectly coincide when "the Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather

* Hopkins's System of Divinity, vol. ii., p. 272.

† We think a better answer to this popular objection would be to admit the possibility of such an instance, and insist that the case would be *extraordinary*. Such persons would be excluded by divine providence from the ministry and sacraments of the visible Church. What then? Would they be excluded from the kingdom of heaven? By no means. To make the visible Church of Christ identical in this world with the invisible, or to insist upon any outward ministry, sacrament, or ordinance as essential to salvation, is the essence of Romanism. True Protestantism, while it insists that "out of the visible Church there is no *ordinary* possibility of salvation," recognizes Christ himself as the only door, and believes that many besides the penitent thief will be with him in Paradise without the benefit of clergy. But, on the other hand, to infer from this that the visible Church is not a divine and perpetual institution, or that the ministry and the sacraments are not essential to the visible Church, or that any one may wilfully neglect the Church, the ministry, and the sacraments without peril to his soul's salvation, is neither genuine Protestantism nor good logic.

out of his kingdom all things which offend and them which do iniquity" (Matt. xiii. 41). It is his field and his kingdom even while the tares are growing in it. And therefore the evil which, according to Christ's prophecy and permission, will exist to the end of time in his visible Church, does not warrant us to withdraw from it, nor justify us in the attempt to set up a little Church of our own.

No clearer illustration of the Scripture doctrine on this subject can be found than the parable of the vine and its branches, which all commentators agree is the symbol of the visible Church. The non-fruit-bearing branches, while they mar the beauty, do not destroy the visible unity of the vine. Whatever does destroy that unity is of human invention, and contrary to the whole design of the Church. The divisions among those who profess the true religion, the consolidation of opinions into sects, and of sects into denominations, are a great evil in their practical workings, and constitute one chief hindrance to the final triumph of the Gospel. The alleged necessity for such divisions is of human and not of divine creation. Such necessity is nowhere recognized in the New Testament. It is not true that the Reformers separated themselves from the visible, historic Church of Christ. It would have been better every way if they could have accomplished the work of reformation in the Church without any schism. And this was their desire and their purpose. But they were not permitted to do so. They were forcibly expelled, anathematized and persecuted for appealing from the Pope to Christ, from the commandments of men to the Word of God. Before God the Romanists and not the Protestants stand guilty of the schism of the Reformation. But are not our mouths stopped from pleading this against them by our own voluntary and multiplied divisions? Are these divisions justified by the assertion that every Christian Church, or union, or association of particular churches is entitled to declare the terms of admission into *its* communion, and the qualifications of *its* ministers and members? Or are they justified by the fact that exclusion from our Church does not shut any one out from the kingdom of heaven? Such reasoning is in the teeth of our own definition of the Church, and of our own doctrine as to its design, which is the edification of all Christ's followers, and not merely of a chosen few whom we may select. It is the degradation of the Church from a divine to a human institution, the substitution of a voluntary and limited union or association for the holy catholic communion which Christ established. He has declared the terms of church membership, and they are simply the terms of salvation. To hedge up the door of admission, and to fence his table in such a way

as to exclude any whom we hope to meet in heaven, is to fortify presumption by false reasoning. Are our divisions justified by ethnical, national, or social distinctions among men? The very design of the Gospel and of the Church is to override all such distinctions, and to make out of all kindreds and conditions one chosen generation, one royal priesthood, one peculiar people. On their practical side our divisions are a waste of strength. The zeal they stimulate is a false fire on God's altar. The attitude in which they present us before the heathen world is a stumbling-block and a reproach. They paralyze the power of our protest against the usurpations of Rome. The day for eulogizing denominationalism as in itself a blessing has gone by. We trust that the time for tolerating it without a protest and an effort for a better state of things will soon be gone. The pressing obligation of our times is to search for the roots of our divisions, not with a view to revive old controversies, but to discover the grounds of peace. The political complications of past centuries, which identified questions of Church government and modes of worship with the conflicts between civil liberty and tyranny, have passed away, and their traditional animosities are dying out for lack of fuel. There is no reason for perpetuating in the land of equal religious freedom the old disputes between Cavalier and Roundhead, between the fierce and bloody intolerance of Laud and the Stuarts on the one hand, and the no less fierce resistance of the Solemn League and Covenant on the other. Thanks to Puritan and Covenanter, that contest has ended in the triumph of liberty for us. The banners of that great war are rotting away in ecclesiastical museums, and it is time for its battle-cries to die out in the Church.

The two great obstacles to visible unity among Protestants are the mode of baptism and the mode of ordination to the ministry. There is a more profound agreement in doctrinal belief among evangelical denominations, than some of them seem willing to admit. For ourselves, we could accept the Thirty-nine Articles of the Episcopal Church as a summary of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms. Aside from their views on church government and immersion, the Baptist Confessions are equally sound in the faith, according to our standard. And, whatever we may think of their omissions, we have nothing to object to the positive teaching of the Methodist Articles of Religion. We cannot think it a chimerical hope that all who accept the Gospel as a supernatural revelation, and believe the great facts of the fall of man, the incarnation of the Son of God, and the redemption that is in him, could agree in a statement of these

essential truths, which, with a conceded liberty as to their philosophy and the interpretation of it, would become the symbol and the banner of a united church. But how can this be done, and of what practical use would it be if it were done, while one denomination denies the visible church membership of all others and their right to participate in the Lord's Supper, upon the ground that they have not been baptized; and another denomination practically treats the ministry of all others as usurpers of the sacred office, and the sacraments they administer as null and void, upon the ground that they are not lawfully ordained? We say, therefore, that the mode of baptism and the mode of ordination are the great obstacles to the unity of Protestant Christendom. And they are real, not imaginary obstacles. The charity which ignores them, or treats them with indifference or contempt, as matters of mere form, is most uncharitable. The conscientious convictions of great and good men, and of large bodies of Christians, are not to be brushed aside with a sentimental sneer.

We propose with the utmost frankness, and yet with entire respect and fairness toward those with whom we differ, to discuss the question of the mode of ordination. Our contention is about its *mode*, and not about its Scripture authority and obligation. If we leave out of view the small and ephemeral sects, and the eccentric individuals who have denied that the Christian ministry as an order of men divinely called and set apart to their work is a perpetual institution in the Church, we shall leave intact the great body of those who profess the true religion. All the great Protestant denominations—Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians—declare in their Confessions and insist in their polity that the Christian ministry is of divine appointment and essential to the existence of the visible Church. And the great body of their adherents regard the ministry, not as a profession or business co-ordinate with worldly callings, but as a sacred office whose functions are performed in some sense by divine authority, of which authority ordination is the symbol and seal. There is not a local church in any of these denominations which would receive as its pastor a man who would declare that he is not called of God to his work, and there are few, if any, who would acknowledge as their minister one whose call of God has not been ratified in some formal way by the Church. Here, then, is common ground. The agreement is generic, and wrought into the conscious life of the Church. Under the unifying influences and blessed hope of this agreement let us discuss our specific differences in an irenic spirit. What is ordination? What are the scriptural forms under which it is to be

administered? Who have the right to administer these forms? These three questions cover the whole ground.*

I. Ordination is "the public solemn attestation of the judgment of the Church that the candidate is called of God to the ministry of reconciliation, which attestation authorizes his entrance upon the public discharge of his duties" (Hodge's Polity of the Church, p. 144). This definition is broad and simple, and, though it is not as comprehensive as some would desire, we think it will be accepted, so far as it goes, by all who believe that ordination to the ministry is a divine ordinance.

All Christians who believe that the ministry is a divine institution believe also that men are called of God individually to fill the sacred office by methods above and beyond the ordinary providential arrangements which lead us into other occupations of life. This call is the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. It must precede and is the divine warrant for the investiture of the man with his office. Ordination does not constitute the call nor confer the essential qualifications for the office; it assumes and ratifies both. In this all Protestants agree. It is taught with special emphasis in the Episcopal ordinal. The candidate must declare, before the hands of the bishop can be laid upon him, that he thinks and trusts that he is "truly called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him this office." "The Church at all times," says Haddan, "and our branch of the Church in terms so strong that men sometimes demur to them, has required the inward call as well as the outward appointment" (Haddan on Apostolic Succession, p. 52).

Now, this inward divine call to the ministry is given to men in

* We propose to answer them out of the Scriptures. But we disavow at the outset all sympathy with that mode of argument which professes to find in the Word of God *an express warrant* for all the details of Church government and worship. The New Testament is neither a formal confession of faith nor a code of ecclesiastical law, nor a formulary for divine worship. In regard to ordination and all other questions of Church polity and order we are to be guided, not only by the express words of Scripture, but by "good and necessary inference from them." In drawing these inferences we are to be guided by apostolic example, and by precedents in the primitive Church while under inspired direction and control. Nor is the light of nature and the varying needs of human society to be excluded from due influence in the application of Scripture principles and examples to the varying conditions of the Church. The life of the Church, as to its outward form, is not cast in an iron mould. There are certain things, doubtless, in the government of the Church which are *jure divino*, and therefore not to be changed by men; but the discretion Christ has given to his Church, and the liberty wherewith he has made us free, are also *jure divino*. To discriminate between the two is no easy task, and the difficulty may well make us charitable toward those with whom we differ. The arrogance that claims infallibility is more hateful in a Protestant than in a Papist.

two ways, the one immediate, miraculous and extraordinary, the other mediate, gracious and ordinary. The immediate and miraculous call attests itself in the heart of the recipient, and is attested to others by supernatural signs. In such cases there is no need of any formal ordination. The mode of the call and the infallible proofs which accompany its announcement leave nothing to be submitted to the judgment of the Church. To those who present such evidences of their commission it need only be said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles which thou doest except God be with him." Hence the apostles were not ordained in the technical sense of the word. They were *appointed* to office and miraculously endowed by Christ himself. They were commissioned to organize the Church under its New Testament form, and it was neither necessary nor practicable to submit their claims to its judgment. The case of Paul is an apparent, but only an apparent, exception to this remark, as we shall show hereafter. We desire now to emphasize the observation that *the apostles were not ordained*. Where it is said in the Authorized Version "He *ordained* twelve whom he called apostles" (Mark iii. 14), the word in the original is *εποίησεν*, which the Revised Version correctly renders "*He appointed*." Ordination, in the technical sense, is appropriate only to those whose call to the ministry is through the ordinary operations of the Holy Spirit, unaccompanied by any direct revelation, and unattested by any miraculous signs. In such cases a man is not competent to judge for himself, nor can he enforce his judgment upon others. He believes and professes that he is called of God, but the credibility of that profession is to be submitted to the impartial judgment of others, just as a private person's profession of faith in Christ is to be examined and approved before he can be recognized as a member of the visible Church. And just as "baptism is the sign and seal of our regeneration and engrafting into Christ, and that even to infants," so also ordination is the sign and seal of a man's divine call to the ministry. It is not the divine call, but the *ratification* of it. It does not confer the essential qualifications and the divine authority of the office; this is the Romish doctrine, which all Protestant confessions repudiate, and none more explicitly than the Episcopal ordinal. If the man has not the natural ability and the human learning necessary for his work, and, above all, if he has not the call of the Holy Spirit in his heart, the hands of the ordainers can no more confer these things upon him than the sprinkling of consecrated water on the person of the baptized can regenerate the soul. But, then, it does not follow from this that the mere formal authority to enter

upon his work is all that one who is called of God receives in his ordination. All divine ordinances include in the words and the fact of their institution a promise of special divine blessings to those who rightly use them. Ordination is not a sacrament according to our definition of the word. Nevertheless, as the sacraments become "effectual means of salvation by the blessing of Christ and the working of the Holy Spirit in them that by faith receive them," so we believe that ordination is in the same way an effectual means of preparing the minister of Christ for the work to which he is called.* God honors his own ordinance; in the very act of ordination, in answer to prayer, and with the laying on of hands, he bestows not only the formal investiture of the office, but the inward and spiritual grace needful for the performance of its duties. What is there unreasonable, unscriptural, or contrary to Christian experience in this belief? To denounce it as a superstition, to reject it with a sneer at the alleged impossibility of divine grace coming to us through the laying on of hands by sinful men like ourselves, is the very essence of rationalism in the evil sense of the word. It limits the Almighty to methods which we think we can understand and explain; it empties the sacraments of all divine efficacy, and in its logical conclusions shuts out everything supernatural from the economy of divine grace. In regard to what is conferred in ordination the case of Timothy is not exceptional, but typical. Paul exhorts him not to "neglect the gift that is in thee which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (I. Tim. iv. 14). And again, "that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (II. Tim. i. 6). What is the *χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ* which was bestowed upon Timothy in his ordination? We must believe that it was something more and better than the external authority for entering upon his office, something in addition to and confirmatory of his prophetic appointment to the ministry; for it was *in him* as a personal possession and experience. Moreover, it was something to be *stirred up* and increased by use. He could not stir up his divine call nor his official authority; these were fixed facts, incapable of increase or diminution. The only thing to which the apostle's words can be applied without doing violence to the laws of language is the special grace of God for the

* We are constrained to differ on this point from many Presbyterian writers, who in their zeal for orthodoxy lean backward. Thus Dr. Smythe, in his *PRESBYTERY and PRELACY*, p. 171, says: "Ordination is nothing more than induction to the sacred office. It is not the medium of any communicated character, official authority, or actual grace. No such meaning or interpretation is sanctioned by the Word of God, and it is therefore superstitious." This is good dogmatism, but poor exegesis.

performance of his official duties given to him in the act of ordination. Is it going beyond the recorded facts to call this charism "the grace of orders," in the same sense that the benefits received in baptism and the Lord's Supper may be called "sacramental grace"? While we avoid the popish error which links God's spiritual gifts mechanically with the mere performance of outward ceremonies, we should be equally careful to avoid the greater because the more unbelieving heresy, which makes the performance of his appointed ordinances a mere outward form, and divorces them from his efficacious blessing upon those who rightly use them.

Into the question whether any one who believes himself to be called to and qualified for the work of the ministry may enter upon it without being ordained, we will not enter at length. The doctrine which sanctions such irregularities is new in the Presbyterian Church, and even among Congregationalists. It belongs rather to the Brownists, Anabaptists and Separatists, against whose opinions the whole history of Puritanism is a standing protest. The passage we have quoted from Samuel Hopkins fairly represents the views of the New England Fathers. Lay evangelism has no standing in our Presbyterian system. The Westminster standards expressly declare that every minister of the Word must be "lawfully ordained." The history of the Church is against it, and we fail to see any warrant for it in Scripture, or in the present needs of the Church and the world. If a man claims to have a direct and extraordinary call from God to preach or to administer the sacraments, let him show his credentials, as prophets and apostles did, by miraculous signs. If he cannot do this let him submit his claims and qualifications to the judgment of his brethren. The refusal to do so is a mark, not of superior piety, but of extraordinary presumption. For a full discussion of this subject, and a complete answer to the arguments in favor of lay evangelism as they are used in our day, we refer our readers to the "*Jus Divinum Evangelici Ministerii*," a treatise published by the Provincial Synod of London in 1654. The learned authors of this remarkable book declare, and we fully endorse the declaration, the opinion that men who suppose themselves called and qualified may enter upon the work of the ministry on their own responsibility, is "a highway to all disorder and confusion," an "inlet to errors and heresies," and is "insufferable in a well-ordered Christian community." These are the views of the men who framed our Presbyterian standards and fought the battle for evangelical truth and Christian liberty against formalism and spiritual tyranny. The movements of our time, by which such views are repudiated and denounced, have no right to the exclusive title

of "evangelistic." So far as they produce any permanent results, their tendency and effect are to educate the masses away from the house of God and from His ordinances, and to aggravate the evils they are zealously but not wisely intended to cure.

II. In regard to the outward form of ordination there is much confusion in the minds of ordinary readers of the New Testament, owing to the fact that our translators have rendered several Greek words of various signification by the one English word *ordain*. The Revised Version does not entirely correct this infelicity. We cannot enter into a critical discussion of all the Scripture passages which bear upon our subject, nor can we review the conflicting theories founded upon them. It will be sufficient to state our conclusions. The essential elements of the act of ordination are *prayer and the laying on of hands, with the avowed intention of setting apart the candidate to the work of the ministry as one who, after due examination, is believed to be called of God to that office*. Fasting is no part of the ceremony. It may or may not precede or follow, in the same way that a sermon may or may not be preached on the occasion. As a part of the ordaining act the fast would necessarily be a very brief one, and hardly worthy of the name. To construe the one passage where fasting is mentioned as having preceded the praying and laying on of hands (Acts xiii. 2, 3) into the theory that fasting is an essential part of ordination, is to generalize upon a very small induction of facts. In this case the fasting was begun before there was any intention to ordain any one. Moreover, it is doubtful whether this was a case of ordination to the ministry at all, while in other cases in regard to which there is no question fasting is not mentioned.

Though prayer and the laying on of hands are essential parts of the ordaining act, it does not follow that every ceremony in which one or both of them is employed is an ordination to the ministry. This is sufficiently obvious in regard to prayer; why should it not be equally obvious in regard to the other? The laying on of hands was used in the primitive church on various occasions and for various purposes. It was often no more than an expressive gesture accompanying a benediction. When Christ laid his hands on the children and blessed them he certainly did not ordain them to the ministry. Neither did the apostles ordain every one on whom they laid hands. The significant act was in many cases the outward sign of conferring the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. In others it was the external form under which a miracle was wrought. Why, then, should it be hastily inferred that when Ananias laid his hands on Saul (Acts ix. 17) it had anything to do with his appointment to the apostle-

ship? It is not called an ordination, and the record does not warrant our connecting it with anything but the restoration of the apostle's sight. The passage in Acts xiii. 1-5 to which we have just referred is more difficult. If, as many think, it describes Paul's ordination to the apostleship, his case was exceptional; he is the only apostle who was formally ordained. And the exception can be accounted for only on the ground that his former attitude toward the Church required a special authentication of his call to himself and others. But it is not easy to see what additional force his own open vision of the risen Saviour, his direct appointment as a chosen vessel to carry Christ's name to the Gentiles, and his power to work miracles, could derive from the laying on of the hands of prophets and teachers. We prefer the interpretation which makes this setting apart of Paul and Barnabas not an ordination to the apostleship, or to any office in the Church, but their consecration to a missionary work, which was so important in itself, and marked such a distinct epoch in the history of Christianity, as to warrant the use of the form of ordination. This is the view adopted by Haddan and other High Church Episcopal writers.

Election by the people of a particular church to the pastoral office is no part of ordination to the Christian ministry; still less is ordination a mere adjunct following and consummating such an election. At this point there is a vital distinction between the Presbyterian and the Independent theory, growing, necessarily, out of the two views as to the constitution of the visible Church.*

According to our theory, men are not ordained to the pastoral office in a particular congregation, nor to the ministry of any denomination of Christians, but to the ministry of the Word and sacraments in the visible, catholic Church. Election to the pastoral office is simply one of the evidences by which a man's fitness for the work of the ministry is certified; it is no more a part of his ordina-

* According to the independent theory, "besides particular churches, there is not instituted by Christ any church more extensive and catholic, entrusted with power for the administration of his ordinances, or the execution of any authority in his name." From which it follows that "the essence of the call of a pastor, teacher, or elder into office consists in the election of the Church, together with his acceptance of it and separation by fasting and prayer, and those who are so chosen, though not set apart by imposition of hands, are rightly constituted ministers of Christ, in whose name and authority they exercise the ministry to them so committed." (See Savoy Declaration, Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii., pp. 371, 375; also John Owens's Nature of a Gospel Church, Works, vol. xvi.) The Westminster Confession, on the other hand, declares that "*the visible Church* is also catholic or universal under the Gospel," and that "*to this catholic, visible Church* Christ hath given the ministry, oracles and ordinances of God for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life unto the end of the world" (Conf. of Faith, ch. 25, 2. 3).

tion than his examination in Greek or Hebrew. It is one thing to make a gold ring, and another thing to appropriate it to a bride's finger. It is one thing to make a man a minister in the Church of Christ, and another to instal him pastor over a particular flock.*

Scripture examples do not sustain the position that election by the people is any part of ordination. All that the one hundred and twenty disciples did in Acts i. was to appoint two and set them before the Lord. Indeed, it is by no means certain the people did this. *They* in verse 24 most naturally refers to the apostles. But it was God who chose Matthias by means of the lot. There was no ordination in his case. "The lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." In the case of the deacons in Acts vi. the people looked out seven men of honest report, and the apostles "prayed and laid their hands on them," thus ordaining them to their office. Nor is there in any other Scripture example the least intimation that popular election is either of the essence or any part of the form of ordination. If the theory of independency could be sustained it would logically follow that a man ordained to the ministry is a minister only in that particular charge to which he is chosen, and is not authorized to exercise his office in any other place or among any other people, and that he would cease to be a minister at all as soon as the people's call and his own acceptance of it were reversed by the dissolution of his pastoral relation. But this is contrary to all Scriptures, as well as to all Christian usage. God has *set* ministers in the same church with apostles and prophets (I. Cor. xlii. 28). They are called "ministers of God," "ministers of Christ," "ministers of the New Testament," "ambassadors of Christ." To make either their investiture or their tenure of office dependent upon the changing preferences and whims of a particular congregation is utterly to destroy their relation to Christ and to his universal Church. And, besides all this, the theory that election by the people is essential either to the calling or ordination of a minister, if consistently carried out, would prevent the extension of the Church to heathen lands. The whole work of missions, from the days of Paul and Barnabas till now, is a standing protest against it. The practice of our Independent brethren is in this respect better

* "Presbyters are not by ordination confined unto places, but unto functions. They who theoretically hold the contrary do not act out their own doctrine. They do not ordain a man over again every time he changes his pastoral charge. They change their location many times without being reordained. All this, I presume, they would not do if their persuasion were as strict as their words pretend" (Hooker, Ecc. Polity, Book V., 80).

than their creed. They ordain home and foreign missionaries without popular election.

III. We come now to the vexed question, Who have a right to ordain ?

We need spend little time to show that this right does not belong to private church members, individually or collectively. No local congregation of believers is authorized to ordain its own minister. We admit, of course, as do the highest of High Churchmen, that all Church power is conferred upon and resides in the whole body of the Church. We do not believe in any hierarchy aside from the royal priesthood of believers. But it does not follow from this that Church power is to be exercised by the people indiscriminately.*

Both the examples and the precepts of the Scriptures teach plainly that ministers are to be ordained by men already in the sacred office. All the instructions on the subject in the New Testament are contained in the Pastoral Epistles, which are addressed, not to churches, but to their office-bearers. The common sense of mankind as shown in civil affairs is against the reasoning which infers the right of the people to ordain from the admitted fact that all Church power resides in the body of the Church. According to the American theory of government all political power resides in the people, and is to be exercised for their benefit ; and this is virtually the theory of the British Constitution as illustrated in its history since the expulsion of the Stuarts. But it does not follow that every citizen, or every society, or assembly of citizens, can take on themselves at pleasure the administration of the government, or even the inauguration of one whom they have chosen to office. The citizens of a New England town have no right to administer the oath of office to the town constable.

Assuming that ordination to the ministry is to be performed by those already in office, and its obvious corollary that it belongs not to temporary but to permanent officers of the Church, it remains to decide what permanent officers possess this right. On this question the whole Protestant world is divided, the Episcopal denomination standing on one side, and all other denominations on the other. The question is one of vital importance. It underlies the integrity of the visible Church, the validity of its sacraments, and the divine authority of its ministers. It comes home to the conscience of every

* The powers to bind and to loose, to preach the Word and administer the sacraments, reside in the whole body and are to be exercised for the benefit of the whole body ; but they are delegated to Christian ministers as the organs and representatives of the body, for which reason, though the powers belong essentially to them, it does not follow that all have a right to exercise them" (Goulburn's Holy Catholic Church, p. 151).

one who claims to be a minister of Christ and a steward of the mysteries of God. It behooves him to know whether he is an usurper of the sacred office, or whether he is lawfully ordained to it according to the design and ordinance of the supreme head of the Church. Let us endeavor distinctly to understand the issue—to strip it of all extraneous questions, and consider it in its naked simplicity. So far as Presbyterians are concerned, if we may take our standards as a fair expression of our views, there is no dispute with our Episcopal brethren : (1) In regard to the existence of the visible Church as a divine and perpetual institution in the world ; nor as to its design as the representative of the unity of the mystical body of Christ ; nor as to the duty of all Christians to labor and pray for that visible unity ; nor as to the sin of schism or unnecessary divisions ; nor as to the ultimate destiny of the visible Church to be conformed to and identical with the invisible. We are as genuine “Churchmen” as they are, and we respectfully challenge their exclusive right to the title. (2) Neither is there any dispute between us about the infallible inspiration and plenary authority of the apostles as Christ’s agents in the organization and establishment of the Church to be the pillar and ground of the truth to the end of time ; nor about the fact that in fulfilment of Christ’s promise there has been an unbroken succession from the apostles of an order of men called and authorized to rule the Church, preach the Word, and administer the sacraments ; nor about the necessity of ordination by prayer and the laying on of hands as the formal conference and seal of ministerial authority. (3) Neither do we differ in regard to the nature and efficacy of the sacraments, to be administered only by ministers of the Word lawfully ordained, as the outward signs, seals, and conveyance of inward and spiritual grace. Doubtless there are many in the Presbyterian Church who hold the mere remembrance theory of the Lord’s Supper, and regard baptism as only an outward form of consecration. And so also there are in the Episcopal Church all shades of opinion, from the baldest Zwinglianism to the *opus operatum* and mechanical theory of Romanism. But the Presbyterian and Episcopal standards are at one on this subject. There is just as much of the doctrine of sacramental grace in the one as in the other. They both teach that the sacraments are “effectual means of salvation,” that the Lord’s Supper is “the communion of the body and blood of Christ,” and that baptism is “the sign and seal of regeneration and engrafting into Christ, and that even to infants.”

(4) Nor do we differ as to the authority of the Church in the exercise of a wise discretion, and in conformity to the circumstances of

different times and countries, to decree rites and ceremonies, provided nothing be done contrary to Scripture, and nothing aside from Scripture is insisted upon as necessary to salvation ;* nor as to the right of the Church upon the same conditions to confer special functions upon her office-bearers as human expedients for her better government, such as the duties assigned to synodical missionaries, missionary superintendents, moderators of ecclesiastical assemblies, whether permanent or temporary, and overseers of large districts or dioceses of the Church including more than one local congregation.

What, then, is the contention between us? Simply this: they maintain that diocesan bishops are, according to Scripture, a distinct order of Church rulers, superior in authority to presbyters; that they are, in an exclusive sense, the official successors of the apostles, and that to them belongs the sole right to ordain men to the ministry of the Word and the sacraments. Against which we maintain that a regular succession of ministers *from* the apostles does not involve in any sense the perpetuity of the apostolic office; that there is no official distinction in the New Testament between a presbyter and a bishop, and that the right to ordain men to the ministry is not vested by divine authority in any order of church officers distinct from or superior to presbyters.†

In the discussion of these points let us guard ourselves against "the fatal imposture and force of words," which so often runs through and confuses this controversy. Writers on both sides use terms in a double sense. This is the case with the phrase "apostolic succession," which may mean a succession *of* apostles or a succession of ministers *from* the apostles. In the former sense we reject, but in the latter sense we sincerely believe the doctrine of apostolic succession. The same is true of the word bishop. We would have no difficulty in accepting Cyprian's favorite saying, "*Ecclesia est in episcopo*," because at the same time we believe that other famous saying of Jerome, "*Idem ergo Presbyter qui episcopus*," presbyter and bishop being the generic and synonymous terms by which the Scripture describes the authority Christ has established in his Church for its edification and oversight. In the same way we

* "Those who refuse to use the light of nature in the circumstantials of religion, and restrict Presbyterian order and worship and life to the express words of Scripture, have abandoned Presbyterian principles and gone over to the side of the separating Anabaptists and Brownists of the seventeenth century" (Briggs's *American Presbyterianism*, ch. I, p. II.)

† "The main and essential distinction between Episcopalians and Presbyterians relates to the order of bishops as separate from and superior to both elders and deacons, vested with peculiar power and authority not belonging to either of them" (Bannerman's *Church of Christ*, vol. ii., p. 211).

could adopt such statements as these : * “ that the ministry is derived from Christ, and is perpetuated through *episcopal* ordination ; ” that “ the apostles ordained a *bishop* over each newly-erected church ; ” that “ the order of bishops is essential to the outward being of the Church. ” It would not be fair, however, for us to make such statements without qualification, because we use the word bishop in its Scripture sense of overseer, and as synonymous with presbyter, whereas our Episcopal friends use the same word under the imposed and non-scriptural sense of *diocesan* bishop, as descriptive of an order of officers entirely distinct from presbyters. There are some statements skilfully dovetailed into those above quoted which we cannot accept in any sense. We admit, of course, that the apostles were bishops, because the greater includes the less, and the exercise of all Church power was vested in them. Peter and John expressly call themselves presbyters, elders, or bishops—in the Scripture sense of the words. But we deny that “ the apostolate was in *substance* an episcopate ; ” the episcopal functions of the apostles were a very small part of their office. We deny that “ their miraculous powers belonged to their persons and were separable from their office ; ” the powers to work miracles were part of their endowments for their official work, as their commission expressly declares ; they were, as Paul calls them, “ the *signs* of an apostle. ”

The apostolic office was extraordinary and temporary. The argument for a succession in that office, derived from the fact that others besides the original twelve and Paul are sometimes called apostles in Scripture, is hardly worthy of serious attention. When both Paul and Barnabas are called apostles in Acts xiv. 14 the title of the principal person may be given to his companion simply by way of courteous accommodation, which is confirmed by the fact that Barnabas, though often mentioned, is never called an apostle by himself. Or the title may be applied to both, not in its technical and distinctive sense, but in the primary and wider sense of *missionaries*, as it is often used in other places. But suppose we admit, in the absence of all Scripture proof, that Barnabas had been appointed to the apostleship to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of James, as Matthias was chosen to fill the vacancy caused by the apostasy of Judas ; this does not prove that the apostleship was to be perpetuated in the Church ; it simply proves that the apostolic college was kept full during the time, and in the performance of the special work for which it was instituted. Epaphroditus (Phil. ii. 25) and those whom Paul sent to the church of Corinth (II. Cor. viii. 23)

* Blunt's Annotated Prayer-Book, p. 150.

are called in the original *apostles* (ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν), which our translators have properly rendered “messengers of the churches.” Were they all apostles in the official sense? You might as well contend that every old man, or πρεσβύτερος, is a presbyter, and every ἄγγελος a celestial angel. Some, indeed, have claimed Epaphroditus as belonging to the apostolic college; but none, so far as we know, have conferred this honor upon the messengers sent by Paul to Corinth. Timothy and Titus, for whom the office is claimed, are nowhere in the New Testament called apostles in any sense.

When the end for which any office is instituted is accomplished, and the mode by which men have been inducted into it is no longer in use, and the attestations of its authority can no longer be produced, the conclusion that the office itself has ceased to exist is irresistible. The application of these simple tests to the question before us is easy. The apostles all received their appointment directly. The original twelve were neither chosen nor ordained by men; Christ *made* them apostles. Paul claims in this respect to be on an equality with the others. “Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ” (Gal. i. 1). “The lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles” (Acts i. 26). There was no human election or ordination in his case. It was an essential if not the chief design of the apostles’ office that they should be eye-witnesses of the resurrection. This is the avowed end for which Matthias was chosen. To qualify Paul for the same office the risen Saviour appeared to him on the way to Damascus; and hence, when he would vindicate his title to the apostleship, he says, “Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen the Lord Jesus Christ?” (I. Cor. ix. 1.) It was an essential qualification of the apostles for their office that they should be endowed with power to work miracles. Hence Paul says, “Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you” (II. Cor. xii. 12). Now, we submit that it is a manifest absurdity to say that men who have not received the direct appointment of an apostle, and are not qualified to perform the specific work of an apostle, and are not able to show the signs of an apostle, are invested by divine light with the apostolic office.*

* Dr. Lightfoot, present Bishop of Durham, in the essay on the Christian Ministry appended to his Commentary on Philippians, says: “The opinion hazarded by Theodoret and adopted by many later writers, that the same officers in the Church who were first called apostles came afterward to be designated as bishops, is baseless. . . . The apostle, like the prophet or the evangelist, held no *local* office. He was essentially, as his name denotes, a missionary moving about from place to place. . . . It is not therefore to the apostle that we must look for the prototype of the bishop.”

“When I see bishops immediately sent of God infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost, travelling to the remotest kingdom to preach the Gospel in their own language to the

But we have no disposition to dispute about words; still less would we take advantage of any inconsistency in the use of them by our opponents. In this regard we do not think full justice has been done by anti-Episcopal writers to the advocates of apostolic succession. It is not always easy to understand them. But we are warranted in saying that none of them advocate a succession of apostles in the *full meaning of the title*. Thus even Blunt, though he affirms that the "apostolate was *in substance* an episcopate," admits immediately afterward that "their extraordinary powers and the *apostolate itself* ceased with the death of the apostles." * We might ask, If the apostolate ceased, did not the substance of it cease also? But let that pass. The learned annotator comes back again to his original position that the substance of the apostolate is an episcopate, meaning, of course, the *diocesan* episcopate. He affirms that "the apostles ordained a bishop over each newly organized church, and these chief pastors or bishops inherited the powers of ordination government and Church censures which were the ordinary parts of the apostolic office." Now, this statement just as it stands is good Presbyterian doctrine, provided the word bishop is used in its Scripture sense as interchangeable with presbyter. But this is not the author's meaning. By bishops he means an order of men distinct from and superior to presbyters, inheriting from the apostles, by right of official succession, the exclusive possession of the power of ordination and government in the Church. And this is the head and front of the contention between us. Here we join issue in the question of fact.

Is it not remarkable, and a strong presumption against the Episcopal theory, that the power of ordination is never once mentioned in the instructions Christ gave to the apostles, never once asserted by the apostles themselves, and that not one clear and indisputable instance of its exercise by apostles alone is mentioned in Scripture? If they were in the intention of Christ and in their own consciousness of their position the head of a long succession of ordainers, a succession on whose integrity depends the very existence of the visible Church, the validity of the sacraments and the right of men to administer them, is it credible that the chief thing for which this succession was established should never be mentioned by Christ or by themselves?

This, however, is only a negative argument. The Saviour and

infidel nations, and confirming their doctrine by undoubted miracles, I shall believe them to be the apostles' true successors in the apostolic office" (James Owen's Plea for Scripture Ordination, p. 56).

* Annotated Prayer-Book, p. 530.

his apostles may have said and done many things not recorded in Scripture. We are willing and anxious to accept all facts, whether recorded in Scripture or in other histories, and all good and necessary inferences from them. There are only two grounds on which the claims of diocesan Episcopacy can be sustained: (1) a succession, in fact, of an order of men superior in office to presbyters, having the exclusive right to ordain, *established by the apostles themselves*; and (2) the *custom of the Church*, introduced after the death of the apostles and without their sanction. Most Episcopal writers strangely confound these two grounds, and play fast and loose between them. Aside from apostolic example and precept, the long-continued custom of the Church is not binding upon any man's conscience except upon the theory which co-ordinates tradition with Scripture and claims infallibility for the Church. If, indeed, the custom could be traced back to the days of the apostles, the inference would be irresistible that it has their sanction. But if there is any interval, however short, between their death and its establishment, its divine and binding authority is gone. An interval of *one* year breaks the chain as effectually as though it were a thousand years. The testimony of the Fathers is contradictory. Jerome is in open conflict with Cyril. If our opponents may reject the witness of the one, we have the same right to reject the witness of the other.*

It is admitted on all hands that if we leave out the apostles the only two classes of permanent church officers mentioned in Scripture are bishops and deacons (Phil. i. 1). If by bishops we meant only *diocesan* bishops, then there were no presbyters. If both diocesan bishops and presbyters are included under the one title, then bishops and presbyters are not two distinct orders. Our Episcopal friends stand at this point between Scylla and Charybdis. But let us not exult over them, for we stand on a similar position in regard to ruling elders. While they claim three orders in the ministry, we claim three orders of church officers.† (See Form of Gov., 3. 2.) But to justify this enumeration we must make ruling elders a subordinate class in the one order of presbyters, or else we must admit that their office rests upon the custom of the Church under the gen-

* It is not pretended that there is any explicit patristic testimony for the existence of diocesan episcopacy until at least a century after the death of the apostles. The apostolic fathers bring little aid and comfort to our opponents. The recently discovered "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" and the Epistles of Clement do not help them. The New Testament is the only extant book which tells us historically what was done in the Church in the lifetime of the apostles.

† The ordinary and perpetual officers of the Church are bishops or pastors, the representatives of the people usually styled ruling elders, and deacons (Form of Gov., 3. 2).

eral Scripture description of helps and governments * (I. Cor. xii. 28). If the distinction between presbyters and diocesan bishops is based upon the same broad ground, we have no dispute with those who insist upon it. They only distinguish upward, while we distinguish downward.

It is admitted by all candid writers on the subject that the words presbyter and bishop, as used in the New Testament, are synonymous and interchangeable. Some of the ablest Episcopal writers candidly acknowledge this.† “The one thing needful,” says Mr. Haddan, than whom we know of no abler or more consistent advocate on his side of the question, “to make the truth clear is simply the straightforward acceptance of what is manifestly the plain usage of the New Testament—viz., the employment of *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* as equivalent terms (Haddan on Apostolical Succession, p. 74). The same author further admits that to make the presbytery who laid hands on Timothy an assembly of diocesan bishops, or to insist that the Ephesian elders whom Paul declared to be bishops by the appointment of the Holy Ghost were bishops in the Episcopal sense of the word, “are desperate devices” (Ibid., p. 75). We fully agree with this author that there is no Scripture authority for the office of diocesan bishop, unless it can be shown that it is the perpetuation of the apostolate. Diocesan bishops are either successors of the apostles, or else their authority rests solely

* Our Scripture defence of the distinction between ruling and teaching elders or presbyters rests upon one text of doubtful interpretation. I. Tim. v. 17: “Let the elders which rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and doctrine.” This one text does not prove that at the time when the epistle was written there was a distinction between ruling and teaching elder. The *οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ* and the *οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες* may refer to the same persons. Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially *because* they labor in word and doctrine. Under all forms of church government the preacher is also a ruler. “Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken to you the word of God” (Heb. xiii. 7). “That elders alone are mentioned in connection with the government and presidency of the churches is a clear proof that they were the only spiritual overseers known to the people. But whether the passage is available to prove that there was in the apostles’ days a formal distinction among those who bore the common name of presbyter, as that some were set apart to the work of both teaching and ruling, while others were merely rulers, is not expressly said, and has often been disputed as well by Presbyterian and Independent writers as by Roman Catholics and Episcopalians” (Fairbairn’s Pastoral Epistles, p. 213).

† On this point Bishop Lightfoot is very explicit. “It is a fact now generally recognized by theologians of all shades of opinion, that in the language of the New Testament the same officer in the Church is called indifferently ‘bishop’ (*ἐπίσκοπος*) and ‘elder,’ or ‘presbyter’ (*πρεσβύτερος*).” After elaborately proving this he adds: “Nor is it only in the apostolic writings that this identity is found. St. Clement of Rome wrote probably in the last decade of the first century, and in his language the terms are still convertible” (Lightfoot on Epistle to Philippians, p. 95).

on the custom of the Church without scriptural or apostolic sanction.

The best representative of Episcopacy, and the most generally accepted authority in its defence, is Richard Hooker. To this day he retains the respect of all parties in the Episcopal Church. We freely accord to him the title of "judicious," and have an unbounded admiration for his exposition of that law whose seat is the bosom of God, and whose voice is the harmony of the world. His whole argument on the question before us is summed up in the following passage :

"The form of regiment established by the apostles at first was that the laity or people should be subject unto a college of ecclesiastical persons which were in every city established for that purpose. These in their writings they term, sometimes presbyters, sometimes bishops. *To take one church out of a number for a pattern of what the rest were*—the presbyters of Ephesus, as it is in the history of their departure from the Apostle Paul at Miletum, are said to have wept abundantly all, which speech doth show them to have been many. And by the apostles' exhortation it may appear that they had not each his several flock to feed, but were in common appointed to feed that one flock, the church at Ephesus. for which cause the phrase of his speech is this *attendite gregi*, 'look all to that one flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops.' These persons ecclesiastical being termed as then presbyters and bishops both, were all subject unto Paul, as to an higher governor appointed of God to be over them. But forasmuch as the apostles could not themselves be present in all churches, and as St. Paul foretold the presbyters at Ephesus that there 'would rise up from among their own selves men speaking perverse things to draw disciples after them;' there did grow in short time among the governors of each church those emulations, strifes, and contentions whereof there *could be no sufficient remedy provided, except according unto the order of Jerusalem already begun*, some one was endued with episcopal authority over the rest, *which one, being resident, might keep them in order*, and have pre-eminence or principality in those things wherein the equality of many agents was the cause of disorder and trouble. This one president or governor among the rest had his known authority established a long time before that settled difference of name and title took place whereby such alone were called bishops. And therefore in the book of St. John's Revelation they are entitled *angels*" (Hooker, Ecc. Pol., Book 7, ch. 5, sec. 1, 2).

Now, this is the best that even Hooker can do, and subsequent writers on the same side have only reiterated his arguments with the variations of the kaleidoscope. The first thing that must strike a candid reader of this passage is the circularity of its reasoning. It draws absolute conclusions from premises which are, at best, but probable, and then it doubles back the conclusions to strengthen the premises. The author agrees at the outset to stake the whole question of the Scripture authority for diocesan bishops upon the case of Timothy and the church at Ephesus. This is candid and fair; if Timothy was not a diocesan bishop and a successor of the apostles resident at Ephesus, there are none such in Scripture. But the argument has not proceeded two steps before James is lugged in, with the bald assertion, as though it needed no proof, that the order

of diocesan Episcopacy was already established in his person in Jerusalem before Timothy's time. Why, then, did not our author begin at Jerusalem? If the Episcopacy of James, aside from his apostleship, is so indisputable that it can be adduced without proof to establish an antecedent probability that Timothy was made diocesan at Ephesus, why not rest the whole discussion upon James and the church at Jerusalem? Any one who reads the record in Acts xv. will see that it is less available for diocesan Episcopacy than what we know of Timothy. A chain is no stronger than its weakest link, and this first link is very weak. We admit, of course, that James and all the other apostles, whether in Jerusalem or anywhere else, had all the authority that has ever been claimed for diocesan bishops; but how does this prove that they transmitted this authority to a succession of such bishops?

Again, our author asserts that the *only remedy* for schismatical contentions among presbyters is their subordination to bishops superior in rank and authority to themselves. But where is the proof of this? Not in the New Testament; such a remedy for schism is nowhere mentioned. Not in history, for, as a matter of fact, the establishment of diocesan Episcopacy has not brought peace and unity. There are to-day, to say nothing of the past, in the bosom of the Episcopal Church diversities of doctrine and practice quite as broad, and controversies quite as bitter, and the speaking of things quite as perverse, as any that prevail among other denominations of Christians. Moreover, there is a fatal superfluity in this argument of the "only remedy." It proves too much for the contentment of our Episcopal brethren. It constantly points and urges toward Rome. For, if the only remedy for contention among presbyters is a diocesan bishop, what remedy is there for strife among bishops, whom all history proves to be men of like passions, but archbishops; and what cure for the strife of archbishops but patriarchs; and who shall keep the patriarchs in order but the Pope? This plea of the only remedy runs through and unifies the whole system of the Roman hierarchy; if it is good in its first application, is it equally good in the last? and thus, as Milton says, it is "the stirrup by which Antichrist mounts into the saddle." *

But to our mind the conclusive proof that this is not the only remedy, and not a divinely appointed remedy at all, is the consideration that Paul did not apply it in his treatment of recorded cases. Take, for example, the desperate case of the church at Corinth. It is nothing to the purpose to say that Paul was the bishop of that

* Milton, *Smectymnuus*.

church, and kept the presbyters in order by his authority, because the apostle was not *resident* at Corinth, and manifestly did not fulfil the conditions upon which the efficacy of the remedy depends, according to Hooker's statement. And, besides, no one denies that the apostles exercised all the functions ever claimed for diocesan bishops. Nor do we deny that these episcopal functions were transmitted from them to others. The question in dispute is, To *whom* were they transmitted? How did Paul expect schismatical contentions among presbyters would be suppressed after he was gone? So far as the New Testament informs us, he left the whole responsibility with the presbyters themselves. In the Epistles to the Corinthians, which are full of rebuke against division and strife, there is not a word about diocesan bishops. In the case of Ephesus, of which we have an explicit account, the remedy prescribed by the apostle is entirely inconsistent with the present or prospective existence of any higher order than presbyters in the permanent ministry of the Church.

The apostle meets the elders of that church at Miletus. He informs them that after his departure—and this was his final departure—contentions and strifes would arise among them which in his absence could not be controlled by his authority. Now, if ever, is the time to apply, or at least to prescribe, the “only remedy.” Timothy, his supposed successor in office, was present (Acts xx. 4). Does the apostle point to him and say, “Here is my successor in office, appointed to rule over you as the only remedy for schismatical contentions”? No! but he says to the presbyters in the presence of Timothy, “Take heed to yourselves and to the flock over which THE HOLY GHOST HAS MADE YOU BISHOPS.” So the Revised New Testament honestly renders the passage, substituting the word bishop for *overseers*, which was the weak evasion of King James's translators. Now, is this conceivable upon the supposition that Timothy was at this very time diocesan of the church at Ephesus? What! lay the whole episcopal function upon the presbyters in the presence of their own bishop, and declare that this is the appointment of the Holy Ghost? If it be answered that Timothy was made sole Bishop of Ephesus at some time after this interview, this starts a fresh crop of questions and difficulties. Where is the proof that Timothy was ever made bishop at Ephesus? The subscription to the Second Epistle to Timothy—made by an unknown hand at an uncertain time (which the Revised Version properly expunges)—and the testimony of Eusebius in the third century, are nothing to the purpose. Hooker quotes them; but, even omitting the distinction between a Scripture and a diocesan bishop, we cannot accept them as of any value in this argument, for our inquest is for *Scripture*

proof. Is there any such proof in I. Tim. i. 3 : "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine"? Omitting the question whether these words imply either an ordination or a charge to the office of diocesan bishop, which they certainly do not, they utterly break down as a proof in their historic application to the case before us. Notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, we venture to affirm that the Epistle to Timothy was written before the interview of Paul with the elders at Ephesus, and must be interpreted in accordance with what was then said and done. We need not go outside of the record to quote authorities on this point. Paul's own words are conclusive. He says : "Behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, *shall see my face no more*" (Acts xx. 25). He *knew* it. Was he mistaken in what he so confidently asserted? Would he have affirmed this so positively if, indeed, it had been, as some presume to say, only an "expectation" and "a human inference from the danger which he knew to be before him"?* We cannot think so.† Paul was never at Ephesus again. Timothy went away with him on this occasion. His beseeching Timothy to remain there must be referred to some previous departure, when he went not to Jerusalem, but into Macedonia, and must be interpreted in consistency with the fact that in his last interview with the presbyters of that church he declared that the Holy Ghost had made them bishops over that flock. To assume without proof that this appointment of the Holy Ghost was afterward revoked as an insufficient remedy for the evils which Paul foresaw and to which he applied it, is, to say the least, a poor way to expound the Scriptures. Nor are these facts in any way modified by the Epistle to the Ephesians, written, as all the critics agree, by Paul subsequently to the interview at Miletus. In that epistle Timothy's name is not mentioned. Is this consistent with the supposition that he was sole bishop there? Can any intelligent Episcopalian conceive of an inspired apostle, or any one who believes in diocesan Episcopacy and understands the courtesies which prevail among gentlemen, writing

* Conybeare and Howson, *Life and Epistles of Paul*, vol. ii., p. 2241.

† "Some suppose that this was merely an opinion or surmise of Paul without divine communication or direction ; but this idea was expressed in verse 22 by the phrase '*not knowing* the things which shall befall me there,' *i.e.*, in Jerusalem, and it surely cannot be assumed that knowing and not knowing mean precisely the same thing. If *not knowing* there denotes that it was hidden from him and remained uncertain, then I *know* must mean that it had been revealed in some way and was certain. To attach the same sense to directly opposite expressions, in the same context, and in reference to the same subject, is to nullify the use of language" (Alexander on the Acts, *in loco*).

a letter of religious instruction to the Diocese of Long Island, without even mentioning the name of his honored head, Bishop Littlejohn? We think not.

From Timothy and the church at Ephesus Hooker makes a wide step and a long link in his chain of reasoning to the angels of the seven churches of Asia. Let us admit at once that by the angels are meant, not the churches themselves, as many commentators plausibly contend, but individual men and presiding officers. Does this prove that they were diocesan bishops? What! seven diocesan bishops in the little province of Asia, and each of them having only one church in his diocese? Why, they appear to us to be nothing more than pastors and permanent moderators of parochial presbyteries. And with all the magnifying glasses we can put on, without the risk of destroying our eyesight, we cannot make them look like anything larger.

We are compelled, therefore, as many of the most eminent bishops and scholars of the Episcopal Church have been, to adopt Jerome's account of the historic origin and prevalence of Episcopacy.

"As, therefore, presbyters do know that *the custom of the Church* makes them subject to the bishop which is set over them, so let bishops know that *custom*, rather than the truth of any ordinance of the Lord's, maketh them greater than the rest, and that with common advice they ought to govern the Church" (Jerome on the Epistle to Titus, quoted by Hooker, Ecc. Pol., Book 7, 5. 8).*

But now suppose we admit, for the sake of the argument, that diocesan bishops are of divine appointment, and that the apostolic office is perpetuated in them; does it follow that they have the *exclusive right to ordain men to the Christian ministry*? By no means. This is a separate doctrine, and requires a distinct proof. How meagre and inconclusive is the alleged proof appears in the fact that the passage of Scripture most frequently and dogmatically insisted upon as conveying such power is the saying of Christ: "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you." "This," says Mr. Blunt, "is the great charter bestowing the exclusive power of ordination upon bishops" (Annotated Prayer-Book, p. 543). But surely there must be a large reading between the lines to see any such exclusive power in this charter. The learned author might as well say it

* Hooker labors hard to reconcile this testimony with the doctrine of *jure divino* Episcopacy. But that he does not succeed to the satisfaction of the most zealous Episcopalians is evident from the fact that many of their later writers take the opposite course and impeach the credibility of Jerome as a witness. Thus Haddan says, "The sweeping implications of Jerome in the teeth of the practice of the universal Church only *throw discredit upon himself as dealing in over-wide statements*" (Apostolic Succession, p. 120). This is setting us a very bad example of disrespect for the testimony of the Fathers.

bestows upon bishops the exclusive power to preach the Gospel or administer the sacraments. The fact is, that it simply asserts their divine mission, without specifying any of the purposes for which they were sent. The whole reasoning is in a vicious circle. It begins with the promise of demonstration, and ends with begging the question. The only sources from which we can ascertain what the apostles were empowered to do are the instructions given to them by our Lord, their own claims as to their authority, and the inspired record of their doings. In their recorded instructions there is not one word about ordination ; so far as the New Testament informs us, they never claimed the power of ordination as belonging exclusively to themselves ; while they performed the duties of the apostolate, the exercise of this power was not confined exclusively to them ; and therefore, even if we admit that the apostolic office is perpetuated in the Church, there is no Scripture ground for including the power of ordination among its peculiar functions.

Admitting that Timothy and Titus were diocesan bishops, and as such successors of the apostles, there is nothing to show that they had the exclusive right to ordain in their respective dioceses. The avowed purpose for which Timothy was left in Ephesus was not to ordain, but to "charge some that they teach no other doctrine" than what Paul had taught. The injunction to "lay hands suddenly on no man," admitting that this refers to ordination to the ministry, might be addressed to any presbyter upon the supposition that presbyters had the right to ordain, and therefore is no proof that presbyters were excluded from the exercise of that right. The words addressed to Titus, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city" (Tit. i. 5), are entirely consistent with the theory that Titus was presiding elder or moderator of presbytery in Crete, and possessed the power of ordination in common with the other members of the body over which he presided. It is consistent also with the theory held by many that he was a temporary agent or representative of Paul, performing a special work in the organization of the church in Crete, and that the authority with which he was clothed ceased when that work was done.* Inasmuch as he is never

* Hooker says : "The apostles sometimes gave their episcopal powers unto others to exercise as agents only in their stead and as it were by commission from them. Thus Titus and thus Timothy at *the first*, though *afterward* endued with apostolical power of their own" (Ecc. Pol., Book 7, ch. 4). But where is the proof that they were afterward endued with apostolical power of their own? "It appeareth," says our author, "in those subscriptions which are set upon the Epistle to Titus and the second to Timothy, and by Eusebius in his ecclesiastical history." These subscriptions, besides being uninspired additions of uncertain date and authorship, do not affirm that

called an apostle, and there is no record of his appointment to that office, the exercise of the right to ordain does not prove that he *was* an apostle ; it rather proves that the power of ordination was conferred upon those who were *not* apostles.

These views are abundantly confirmed by all the examples of ordination found in the New Testament.

If the transaction recorded in Acts xiii. 1-3 was an ordination to office, it is conclusive against the Episcopal theory ; because, while one of the ordained was the apostle to the Gentiles, the ordainers were simply " prophets and teachers ;" and if they might ordain an apostle and those miraculously called to office, much more might they do the same for presbyters and those whose call is in the ordinary way.

If, on the other hand, we agree with Haddan and other High Church Episcopal writers, that the separation of Barnabas and Saul for the work to which the Holy Ghost had called them was not an ordination, in the technical sense, but only an extraordinary solemnity upon an extraordinary occasion,*—and we think this is the true interpretation—this does not affect the force and application of the example as against the Episcopal theory ; for the form of that extraordinary solemnity was the form of ordination. They who had the right to use these acts of the ordination ceremony upon an extraordinary occasion and upon extraordinary subjects, had *a fortiori* the right to use them upon ordinary occasions and upon such ordinary subjects as a presbyter. He who is authorized to sprinkle water upon a child in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, has the right to administer the sacrament of baptism. The right to participate by the laying on of hands in an ordination service implies and includes the power to ordain. And this brings us to the crucial case—the ordination of Timothy. There is no question that he was ordained in the fullest sense of the word, and that the ceremony is described in these two passages : " Neglect not the gift that is in thee which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (I. Tim. iv. 14) ; " Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (II. Tim. i. 6). These two statements describe the same transaction,† and they can

Titus and Timothy were apostles or *diocesan* bishops, but simply bishops, which we all admit. The testimony of Eusebius can hardly be accepted as a Scripture proof. " It is the conception of a later age which represents Timothy as Bishop of Ephesus, and Titus as Bishop of Crete. St. Paul's own language implies that the position they held was temporary" (Bishop Lightfoot on the Christian Ministry, p. 199).

* Haddan on Apostolic Succession, p. 84.

† We are aware that this is a disputed point, and that even as good a commentator as

be reconciled only by admitting that the apostle and the presbytery were equal participants in Timothy's ordination, and had equal authority to perform the ceremony. In the one passage the apostle does not mention himself at all; it was done by the hands of the presbytery. In the other the presbytery is not mentioned; it was done by the hands of the apostle. Each statement is complete in itself as a record of the transaction. What is the legitimate inference? That the hands of the presbytery and the hands of the apostle were, in regard to the power of ordination, interchangeable. Paul acted as the presiding officer of presbytery, and yet as one of the presbyters, with whom he held the ordinary power in common; for he, with Peter and John, was also an elder. How is the force of this inference contravened? The witnesses are not agreed. One says that by the presbytery is not meant the college of presbyters, but the abstract office which was potentially and by eminent domain in the apostles. But the word *πρεσβυτέριον* is never used in this abstract sense; and, besides, how was it possible for an *office* to lay *hands* on Timothy? Another says the first passage ought to be reconstructed thus: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee by the *prophesy of presbytery* with the laying on of hands—*i.e.*, the apostles' hands." So Bengal renders it. According to this interpretation, the presbytery took no part whatever in the ordination. This method not only does violence to the grammatical structure of this passage, but makes all Scripture a nose of wax in the hand of destructive criticism. So far as we know, no respectable defender of Episcopacy has adopted it. Another makes the presbytery a college of diocesan bishops, which Haddan calls a "desperate device." But, desperate as it is, Blunt claims for it the highest patristic authority, and the testimony of "all the best commentators, ancient and modern."* And he adds, "The utmost that can be claimed for the passage is that priests sometimes imposed their hands, together with an apostle or bishop." But why "sometimes"? If it was lawful once under apostolic sanction, why not always? And why may we not reverse the statement and say the apostles *sometimes* imposed their hands with the presbytery? The one assumption is just as valid as the other. Perhaps the strongest

Bishop Ellicott favors the opinion that the first passage describes Timothy's ordination as a presbyter, which is supposed to have taken place at Lystra, while the second passage describes his consecration as a bishop, which is alleged to have been done at Ephesus. This interpretation is quite as good for our argument as the other. But it rests upon mere conjecture, and is not generally accepted, even by Episcopal writers.

* By this sweeping assumption he excludes Alford, Ellicott, Wordsworth, and a host more of Episcopal writers from the category of the best commentators. (Annotated Prayer-Book, p. 543.)

Episcopal interpretation is based upon the alleged distinction between the prepositions employed in the two passages under consideration. The gift that was in Timothy is said to have been imparted *by* (*διὰ*), the laying on of the apostles' hands, and *with* (*μετὰ*), the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. This is supposed to indicate that the imposition of the apostles' hands was the *instrumental cause* of the divine charism, while the imposition of the hands of the presbytery was simply an *accompaniment* which added nothing to the efficacy of the ordination, and was designed only to express the approbation and concurrence of the presbyters.*

This distinction, we venture to say, is purely imaginary, and would never have been invented but for the necessities of this argument. The two prepositions are constantly used in the New Testament as synonymous.†

Even if we admit this imaginary distinction between *by* and *with* it avails nothing in the argument for episcopacy, except upon the theory of a literal and mechanical transmission of grace through the hands of men. All Protestants hold that the charism is but another name for God's blessing, accompanying his own ordinance and responding to the prayer of his saints; and therefore we cannot see that it makes a particle of difference whether we say it comes *by* or *with* any outward human act. If both the apostle and the presbytery laid their hands on Timothy by divine appointment in fulfilment of prophecy, and with the accompaniment of a divine blessing, their ordaining power was equal. If this is not a good and necessary inference, why do our Episcopal brethren insist upon the injunction to Timothy, "Lay hands suddenly on no man" (I. Tim. v. 22), as a proof that he had power to ordain, and was therefore a bishop? According to the reasoning which denies this power to the presbyters who laid hands on him, he might lay his hands on others and still have no ordaining power and be no bishop according to their theory. But we do not care to push these inconsistencies further

* See Annotated Prayer-Book, p. 543; Hobart's Festivals and Fasts, p. 25, and Had-
dan on Apostolic Succession, p. 84.

† "Many signs and wonders were done *by* (*διὰ*) the apostles" (Acts ii. 43). "And when they (Paul and Barnabas) were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done *with* (*μετὰ*) them" (Acts xiv. 27). Are we to infer that the miracles of the day of Pentecost were wrought by the apostles as instrumental causes, while the works of Paul and Barnabas were done simply with their approbation and concurrence? The two prepositions are used interchangeably in one of the passages between which they are supposed to mark so important a distinction. "The gift that is in thee, which was given thee *by* (*διὰ*) prophecy *with* (*μετὰ*) the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Was the *prophecy* the instrumental cause of Timothy's charism? What, then, becomes of the theory that the instrumental cause was the laying on of the apostles' hands?

It seems to us that the only consistent conclusion from these Scripture records, and the only theory which can explain the subsequent history of the Church, is that which recognizes diocesan Episcopacy as a growth and not an original and positive institution. Whether such growth proceeded from germinal principles within the Church, or was grafted on it from without, and whether it was justified by the changed conditions of the Church after the apostles' death, are questions aside from this discussion. In the days of the apostles presbyter and bishop were interchangeable names for the same class of church officers, who received from the apostles and shared with them the right to ordain others to the Christian ministry. They kept and exercised this right for a considerable time. But after the death of the apostles and the expiration of their peculiar office, when the number of presbyters had greatly increased, one was chosen in each city or district, as president over the rest, who imposed hands in ordination as the head and representative of the presbytery. Out of this arrangement grew by degrees the superior dignity and exclusive authority of bishops, who increased in power and pride with the increasing corruptions of the Church, until they not only laid their hands, as ecclesiastical superiors, on the heads of presbyters, but set their feet, as temporal rulers, on the necks of princes. This is the theory of Jerome, adopted by Calvin and by many of the most eminent scholars and bishops of the Church of England. It is reasserted and illustrated with great ability by Mr. Hatch. He affirms that "the Episcopate grew, by the force of circumstances, in the order of Providence, to satisfy a felt want." He professes to find "adequate causes not only for the existence of a president (among presbyters), but also for his supremacy without resorting to *what is not a known fact*, but only a counter-hypothesis—the hypothesis of a special institution." For this view he claims the support of Jerome, whom he calls "the earliest and greatest of ecclesiastical antiquaries."*

The doctrine that the power to ordain belongs exclusively and by divine right to diocesan bishops, and its necessary corollary that non-episcopal ordination is null and void, is new even in the Episco-

* Bampton Lectures for 1880, p. 98. The same theory is maintained by Bishop Lightfoot. "At the close of the apostolic age the traces of the Episcopate are few and indistinct. . . . If bishop was at first used as a synonym for presbyter, and afterward came to designate the higher officer under whom the presbyter served, the Episcopate properly so called would seem to have been developed from the subordinate office. In other words, the Episcopate was formed not out of the apostolic order by localization, but out of the presbyterial by elevation, and the title which originally was common to all came at length to be appropriated to the chief among them" (Lightfoot's *The Christian Ministry*, p. 196).

pal Church. It is not taught in the Thirty-nine Articles. The English Reformers never asserted it in theory or in practice.* There is no trace of it in the writings of Cranmer, Parker, Grindal, and Whitgift, the first four Protestant Archbishops of Canterbury. If, as some maintain, it was asserted by Bancroft, the fifth primate, in his famous sermon at St. Paul's Cross, it is certain that he did not undertake to enforce it; for in the consecration of the Scottish bishops he insisted and persuaded his colleagues that the non-episcopal ordination they had received as presbyters was lawful and sufficient.†

We have the testimony of Burnett that in the attempt to establish Episcopacy in Scotland "the bishops never required the Presbyterian ministers there to take episcopal ordination, but only to come and act with them in Church judicatories."‡

Bishop Hall, who wrote the first formal treatise in defence of the divine right of Episcopacy, which he dedicated to Charles I. in 1639, acknowledges the validity of non-episcopal ordination, and declares that he knows of more than one, ordained without a bishop, who had enjoyed promotions and livings in the Church of England "without any exception against the lawfulness of their calling." § Blunt, in his Annotated Prayer-Book, admits that up to the days of the Commonwealth non-episcopal ordination was recognized as valid in the Church of England. He gives a list of those who obtained preferment without episcopal ordination, and loftily says "they show the manner in which the Church of England was sagaciously leavened with foreign Protestantism by those *who wished to reduce it to the same object level.*" ||

The first systematic attempt to enforce exclusive episcopal ordination was made by Laud, the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury, whose zeal for the mitre and the crown, which he regarded as inseparable, was like the wrath of Achilles, "the direful spring of woes unnumbered." The high-handed tyranny and bloody cruelty of that attempt were among the chief causes of the revolution which brought both the king and his ecclesiastical prime minister to the scaffold. But the seed sowed by Laud did not perish at his death.

* See Keble's Preface to Hooker's Ecc. Polity, p. 30.

† Archbishop Spottiswoode's History of the Church of Scotland, vol. iii., p. 209.

‡ Burnett's Vindication of the Church of Scotland, p. 84. London, 1696.

§ Hall's Works, vol. ix., p. 536.

|| See Annotated Prayer-Book, p. 30. For further and abundant proof that Presbyterian ordination was recognized in the Church of England up to the time of Charles I., our readers are referred to Dr. Fisher's article in the *New Englander* for 1874, to Dr. Hodge's Church Polity, to Goode's Non-Episcopal Orders, and to vol. i. of Schaff's Creeds of Christendom.

In the violent reaction of the Restoration both his political and his ecclesiastical theories were dominant, and the party in power made full use of their opportunity to avenge their own wrongs and to enforce their doctrines. The solemn promises of Charles II. to those without whose aid he never could have attained to the throne of his fathers were ruthlessly broken. The Presbyterians and moderate Episcopalians were betrayed and trampled on. By the act of uniformity in 1662 episcopal ordination was made essential not only to preferment in the Church of England, but to the performance of any ministerial function in the land. And the act was enforced with relentless cruelty. "The clergy made war on schism with such vigor that they had little leisure to make war on vice."* Such men as Howe and Baxter were imprisoned for preaching contrary to act of Parliament. Two thousand of the best ministers of the land were expelled from their benefices. The effect of this was not merely the loss of their services and the extinction for the time of their evangelical spirit in the Church, but it was the final overthrow of the party which from the beginning had tried to bring the Church of England into closer fellowship with all the Reformed Churches, and into more complete harmony with the religious instincts of the nation. "The Church of England stood from that moment isolated and alone among all the churches of the Christian world." †

The attempt to span the great gulf which separates her in doctrine and practice from the Romish and Eastern churches by a suspension bridge hung on the wires of apostolic succession and episcopal ordinations, first made by Laud and repeated in our day in the Tractarian movement, has utterly failed. And though the ever-increasing power of the non-conforming interest compelled the repeal of the persecuting features of the Act of Uniformity by the Toleration Act of 1689, the Church of England still stands separated from all the churches of the Reformation by the doctrine and requirement of episcopal ordination.

This separation was effected in 1662 by the introduction into the preface of the Ordinal the following sentence as it now stands in the Episcopal Prayer-Book in England and in this country: "No man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried and admitted thereto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had episcopal consecration or ordination."

* Macaulay's Hist., vol. i., p. 165.

† Green's History of the English People, vol. iv., p. 364.

What is the implication of this law in regard to non-episcopal ordination? Does it involve the opinion and warrant the inference that those who have not been ordained by a diocesan bishop have no divine right to exercise any of the functions of a minister in the Church of Christ? We think it certainly does. They who are called High Churchmen candidly say so. We can readily understand them, and can respect both their candor and their consistency, whatever we may think of their opinions and of the attitude they feel compelled to assume. The history of the law and the uniform practice of the Episcopal Church in England and America since it was adopted confirms the High Church interpretation. The Episcopal Church receives priests from the Greek and Roman Catholic churches as having already received a valid ordination, while they uniformly reordain ministers coming to them from other Protestant denominations.

But surely *they* do not regard this as a *reordination*. The lowest of Low Churchmen, we venture to say, would not admit that they ordain over again those who have already received a lawful and valid ordination. The Church of England and her daughter in this country "hold no other orders lawful than those ministered by bishops, and she acts on that principle as her law. How can she avoid condemning as unlawful, and that not in England, but everywhere, all other orders non-episcopal?"* This is both frank and logical. While the law of the Episcopal Church, as interpreted by her uniform practice, continues what it is; while no man who has not been episcopally ordained is admitted to her ministry, nor even allowed *occasionally* to minister in her pulpits and in her celebration of the sacraments, it is neither consistent nor candid to contend that the Episcopal Church does not condemn the ordination of other denominations as null and void. Nor is the force of this inference at all impaired by insisting, as some do, upon the peculiar phraseology of the law, which says "no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful bishop, priest, or deacon in *this Church* . . . except he has had episcopal consecration or ordination." Was the expression "this Church" intended to separate, and does it, in fact, separate the Episcopal Church in the matter of its orders from the corporate life and the divine mission of the visible Church of Christ? Was it intended to affirm that episcopal ordination confers upon those who receive it authority to preach the Word and administer the sacraments *only within the bounds of the Episcopal denomination*? No churchman, High or Low, would admit this. They all hold, as

* Haddan's *Apostolic Succession*, p. 175.

we do, that ordination makes a man a minister of the visible Church of Christ, and gives him a commission as broad as that of the apostles to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments to every creature. If, therefore, non-episcopal ordination does not confer the right to perform ministerial functions within the bounds of "this Church," it does not confer the right to perform such functions anywhere. It is but a weak evasion to tell us that they recognize our ordination as valid in the Presbyterian denomination. For it is not a human right conferred and limited by a voluntary association of men that we are discussing, but a divine right conferred by the supreme head of the Church. The question before us is whether they recognize our ordination as valid *in the visible Church of Christ*. For their own sake we answer this question in the negative. We are not willing to believe that they account us true ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, and yet presume, in defiance of Christ's commission to us, to say, "You may preach and administer the sacraments anywhere else, but we cannot allow you to perform any function of the ministry in 'this Church.'" This would be the very essence of sectarianism and schism. We dare not accuse them of such disloyalty to the doctrine of the Church and to Christ, her living Head.

But it is asked, as though the question carried with it a complete vindication of their position, so far, at least, as we have any right to complain of it, "Does not the Presbyterian Church exclude from her pulpits and the administration of the sacraments some who claim to be ministers of Christ?" Yes, certainly, we exclude some who *claim* to be ministers of Christ; but we exclude none *whose claims we recognize as valid*. We dare not put a sectarian fence around our pulpit or our communion table. They belong not to us, but to Christ. In the matter of ordination we recognize the obvious distinction between validity and regularity. We think the substance of this or of any divine ordinance may remain, even when, through want of explicit instruction from God, or of clear apprehension on the part of men, the form of it has been changed. We recognize ordination by a diocesan bishop as valid, though we regard it as irregular; and there is not a presbytery in the world who would for a moment entertain the proposal to reordain an Episcopal minister.

"Why, then," say some of our Episcopal brethren, "since you acknowledge the validity of our ordination, will you not heal the schism between us by taking orders at the hands of our bishops?" This proposition has been made, and we believe that it is made, not in any spirit of proselytism, but in good faith, and with an earnest desire for the unity of the visible Church. But there are three

obstacles in the way of its acceptance : (1) We cannot consent to be ordained twice ; (2) we cannot admit the assumption on which the necessity for episcopal ordination is based ; (3) even if we could plead guilty ourselves, we cannot admit that multitudes of Christ's ministers, who without such ordination have made full proof of their ministry and gone to their reward, were usurpers in the sacred office. So long as this remains the only condition of mutual recognition the case seems hopeless. And while this obstacle stands, alliances and conventions outside of the Church, kind words and acts of courtesy carefully separated from ministerial functions and the communion of the body of Christ, however sweet and pleasant in themselves, are utterly inadequate to the case ; and when we consider the great interests at issue they seem like " vanity and a striving after wind " (Eccles. i. 14, Revised Version).

If the Episcopal Church could come back to the spirit and practice of her earlier, and in this respect her better, days, and acknowledge non-episcopal ordination as valid, though in their judgment irregular, this would put us upon an equal footing ; it would tend to remove prejudice and silence evil speaking on all sides ; it would, perhaps, put an end to that supercilious and irritating assumption which makes " *this Church*" synonymous with " *the Church* ;" and so it would create an atmosphere of mutual confidence and respect in which the unity of the Church would grow like the lily and cast forth roots as Lebanon. Zealous Episcopalians will probably resent the bare suggestion of such a concession on their part. Some, like Dr. Blunt, will look upon it as a renewed attempt of foreign Protestantism to bring them down " to the same abject level." But vehement protests, though they express the sincere conviction and desire of individuals, are not always true prophecies of what great bodies of people will do. Extreme opinions are never the most stable. Stranger changes than the one suggested have swept over even the Episcopal Church. When Bancroft, or Hall, or Laud first preached the doctrine of exclusive *jure divino* episcopacy, there was little prospect of its being dominant and established by law in the Church of England. And yet in half a century its triumph was complete, and that, too, through what seemed for a time to be its utter overthrow. And so the recent attempt to reconcile the Church of England with Rome and the Greek Church having failed, the desire for visible, catholic unity, coupled with the Protestant instincts of the English people, may make such utterances as those of Bishop Wordsworth,* in his recent charge to the clergy of his dio-

* " In dealing with this question we must not allow ourselves to be carried away by any merely mechanical or imperfect view of what is called apostolic succession, or, in

cese, and of Bishop Lightfoot, in his essay on the Christian Ministry, the seeds of another great movement leading to better and more permanent results. Perhaps there is a blessing in disguise for the Episcopal Church in England and in this country in the threats of disestablishment, which are the far-off responses of those who were expelled from the Church by the Act of Uniformity. We know that the doctrine of exclusive episcopal ordination was enacted into a law for political quite as much as for ecclesiastical purposes. The dominant opinion in the days of the Restoration was that prelacy and kingship must stand or fall together. "No bishop, no king" was always the battle-cry and the pass-word of the Stuarts and their adherents in Church and State. But if disestablishment should demonstrate in fact what nearly all men now believe in theory, that both Church and State can stand alone, and each fulfil its own function the better for the separation, this may go far to modify the attitude of the Episcopal body toward other denominations, by making them realize that they are dissenters from us as much as we are dissenters from them.

These observations are made in no spirit of unfriendliness toward the Episcopal Church. The writer of this article has no sympathy with the ignorant and indiscriminate denunciation of her government and forms of worship as inconsistent with vital piety, or as having a kinship with the errors of Romanism. We recognize her historically and in the present as one of the grand bulwarks of genuine Protestantism. We have a sincere admiration for the decency and order of her worship, and a profound gratitude, as every Christian scholar must have, for the rich biblical literature she has given and is still giving to the world. We observe with unmixed pleasure her increasing zeal for missions and for preaching the Gospel to the poor at home, and the demonstration she is giving that her liturgical forms and her maintenance of Church authority are not inconsistent with evangelistic fervor and success.

And because we thus regard her we desire to see her laying aside every weight, taking up every stumbling-block, and casting off every

other words, of the continuity of the ministry and of the Church itself. That continuity consists in doctrine at least as much as in order; and it may be claimed upon the former ground by all bodies that accept the articles of the Christian creed. More than this, it may be reasonably doubted whether orthodox non-Episcopal bodies have not done more to maintain the true apostolic succession as explained and insisted on by Irenæus and Tertullian than the Church of Rome has done, which has gone far by alterations and additions to corrupt the simplicity, not only of the apostolic doctrine, but of the apostolic ministry, whereas the only true and perfect continuity consists, as I have said, in having retained or recovered both" (Bishop Wordsworth's Address to Clergy, 1885).

prejudice which narrows her sympathies and hinders her progress toward the triumph of the Gospel and the unity of the body of Christ. Nor do we assume that she alone needs to adjust herself to the good time coming, that the stumbling-blocks are all in her way, and the shells of traditional prejudice cling only to her limbs. The Presbyterian Church is equally liable to changes, and by no means exempt from the need of them. Are they not now passing over and through us? Is not the atmosphere of our Church different from what it was a generation ago? While we trust there is no less zeal for essential truth, we know and feel there is far more toleration for non-essential differences in opinions and in forms of worship. We do not sympathize with those who are alarmed and troubled by these things. For we regard them not as the changing colors of the autumn leaves that prophesy decay, but rather as the tender hues and budding fertility of the spring which predict and produce the coming harvest. We adopt as our own these cheerful and generous words :

“ We are hopeful of a combination of Protestantism and the ultimate reunion of Christendom. We are sincerely attached to American Presbyterianism as the religion of our ancestors ; we believe that it is in advance of all other Christian denominations in the realization of the ideal of Christianity ; but Presbyterianism is not a finality. It is the stepping-stone to something higher and grander yet to come, when the Spirit of God shall be poured out in richer measure and in more abounding gifts and graces upon the Christian world, in order to a revival of religion which will transcend the Protestant Reformation by its omnipotent energy and world-wide sweep” (Briggs’s American Presbyterianism, Preface, p. 13).

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