

ment, by virtue whereof Christ ruleth in all. "For they all have the same pastoral guides appointed, authorized, sanctioned, and set apart by the appointment of God, by the direction of the Spirit, to direct and lead, by life and doctrine, the people of God, in the same way of eternal salvation; as therefore there is no Church where there is no order, no ministry, so where the same order and ministry are, there is the same Church."

There can be no other assurance of the perpetuity of the Church of God, than we have from Him that built it. Many thousand persons have fallen totally and finally from the faith professed, and so apostasized from the Church. Many particular churches or branches have been wholly lost; many candlesticks have been removed. But though the providence of God doth suffer many particular Churches to cease, yet the promise of the same God will never permit that all to perish at once. Christ said to St. Peter "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "Go teach all nations," said Christ, and "lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

(To be Continued.)

PRIEST AND PRIESTHOOD, WHAT?

History is constantly repeating itself. This question which is occupying much of men's attention at the present day, was largely discussed, and with bitterness, two hundred and fifty years ago, and more or less at intervals ever since. When the Church becomes apathetic, the question dies out, but when she becomes awake to a proper sense of her duty, as she is at the present day, it is sure to revive. The dispute is between a *taken* and a *given* authority.

In speaking of the ministers of the Gospel at the time here indicated, the "judicious" Hooker thus wrote:—"I rather term the one sort Presbyters than Priests, because in a matter of so small moment, I would not willingly offend their ears to whom the name of priest is odious, though without cause." It may here be mentioned that out of respect to such, the Prayer Book drawn up by, and for the use of, the Church of Scotland, which was the cause of so much trouble in that kingdom, not so much because they were averse to Liturgical worship, but because the book was forced upon them by England, has "Presbyter" through the book, where our Prayer Book has "Priest."

In answer to Cartwright in the same controversy, Whitgift, then Archbishop of Canterbury, thus wrote on this subject:—"The name of Priest need not be so odious to you, as you would seem to make it. I suppose it cometh of this word Presbyter, not of sacerdos, and then the matter is not great."

"As heretofore, use hath made it to be taken for a sacrifice, so will use now alter that signification, and make it to be taken for a minister of the Gospel."

In a letter dated Nov. 29, 1647, be-

ing one of that excellent collection, in which the writer, James Howell, Esq., gives much of the history of his own disturbed times, entitled "Epistolæ Holælianae," which has gone through many editions, the following on this subject occurs:—"Touching the word *Presbyteros*, it is as ancient as Christianity itself, and every Churchman, completed in Holy Orders, was called Presbyter, as being the chief name of the function; and so it is used in all Churches, both Eastern and Occidental, to this day. We, by contraction, call him *Priest*, so that all Bishops are Priests, though not *vice versa*. These holy titles of Bishop and Priest are now grown odious among such poor sciolists who scarce know the *hoties* of things because they savor of antiquity." This is the definition of the term "Priest" by a learned Laymen, two hundred and thirty years ago.

It appears clear that the Church of Christ takes the place of the congregation of Israel, the body of that people, and that their name and privileges are fallen upon us. They are thus represented in Exod. xix. 5, 6, "Ye shall be a *peculiar treasure* unto me above all people, for ye shall be unto me a *kingdom of Priests*, and a *holy nation*." So the Christian church has become a "*peculiar people*," which Christ has "purified to Himself." Tit. ii. 14. "We are made by Him *Kings and Priests* unto God the Father," Rev. i. 6. "We are a *chosen generation*, a *Royal Priesthood*, a *holy nation*," 1. St. Peter, ii. 9.

Again the same appears from that remarkable portion of the Holy Scripture, in the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the apostle shows the nature of the society into which Christians are admitted: "Ye are come," says he, "unto Mount Zion," and the old names are here applied to the new Church, the heavenly society of God and His saints, which David in spirit called the "Hill of the Lord." This is the "Zion of the Holy One of Israel," to which the forces of the gentiles were to flow from all parts of the world, as described by the prophet Isaiah, chap. lx., and could not have been fulfilled in the literal Zion where the Jews dwelt.

The Christian Church is here called "the city of the living God." All its members live unto Him. It is the "Heavenly Jerusalem," because of its heavenly nature. It is "the mother of us all," even of all the families of the earth that are admitted into it. It comprehends "an innumerable company of angels"; the whole family of heaven is included in it. It is the "Church of the first-born written in heaven," because its members, being entitled to the privilege of inheritance, are therefore called the first-born, to whom the right of inheritance belongs.

Old names are applied to shew that the Christian Church is no new thing, but the same holy mount of God, the same heavenly city of God, to which the spiritual part of the people always belonged.

The government of the Christian Church is established on the same plan as the old Jewish Church. The congre-

gation of Israel was divided into twelve tribes, under the twelve patriarchs; the Church of Christ was founded on the twelve apostles, who raised to themselves a seed among all the nations of the world. But in the prophetic description of the heavenly society, when both shall be united, we find *four* and *twenty* elders seated around the throne of God.

Besides the twelve apostles, our Lord appointed other seventy also. This number agrees with the seventy elders appointed to assist Moses in his ministry. In every respect the priesthood of the gospel was formed in exact accordance with that of the law. The priesthood of the Christian Church was, moreover, foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, in his prophetic description of the gathering of all nations into one Christian Church. "I will also take of them (the gentiles) for priests and for Levites, saith the Lord." On this text, St. Augustine remarks: "He promised that He would take priests and Levites from amongst them, which we now see to be done."

This new priesthood is distinct from the Order of Aaron, as the offering of bloody sacrifices has ceased; nor is it after the order of Melchisedec, for the clergy under the gospel are only the ministers of Christ, not the successors of the Redeemer in His incommunicable and eternal priesthood, who were first instituted by Him, as inferior priests, ministering under Him by His authority as the great High Priest. "When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John (though Jesus baptized not, but His disciples)." What the commissioned apostles did, Jesus is Himself represented here as doing. They acted under His commission and in His stead. They did His work that He had appointed them to do. He made and baptized disciples by them. Such proceedings are of hourly occurrence in the affairs of men. When the government of a country appoints a commission to investigate and settle any matter of state, it is bound by the acts of that commission so long as it acts within the limits of its instructions. In the same way is a sovereign bound by the acts of a duly appointed and commissioned ambassador. He acts instead of the sovereign, and what the ambassador does the sovereign does (though the sovereign does it not, but his ambassador). Now the Scriptures represent the ministers of the gospel as the ambassadors not of Christ, but for or instead of Christ. "We are ambassadors for Christ. As though *God did beseech you by us*, we pray you, in *Christ's stead*, be ye reconciled to God."—2 Cor. v. 20.

God set apart ministers under the law whose peculiar duty was the service of the sanctuary; the same rule was to be observed under the gospel, and hence our whole difficulty. Though men cannot rightly understand why God should confine the order of His ambassadors to those that are called of Him in the way that He has appointed; yet they can