

PRIZE TRACT.

By the special contributions of a few friends, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel announce that they are enabled to offer a Prize of Ten Guineas, and another of Five Guineas for the best and second best Tract, not exceeding two pages 8vo, of good printing type, on "WHY WE SUPPORT THE S.P.C. AS A MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND."

All the manuscripts will be at the absolute disposal of the Society, and must be sent in by the end of September to the Secretary, 19, Delahay Street, Westminster. They must be headed by a motto, and be accompanied by a sealed envelope (endorsed with the same motto) containing the authors's name and address.

WHY AM I A CHURCHMAN ?

CONTINUED FROM NO. OF JUNE 22ND.

But far more important than any such legal and comparatively external evidence as to the continuity of the Church of England before and after the Reformation, is the internal evidence as to its continuity as a *spiritual* body.

This is witnessed to by the continuity of its (a) Faith, (b) Ministry, (c) Forms of Worship. Holy Scripture gives as the note of the Unity of the Christians in the Early Church that

"They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in [the] breaking of bread and in [the] prayers." Acts ii. 42.

Without pressing too minutely the exact meaning of the word "fellowship," which it is possible may, in the original, according to the Vulgate and some ancient versions, have been intended to be taken in connection with the following words, "in the communion of the breaking of bread," there is evidently implied in these words a unity of (a) Faith, (b) of Organization in connection with the Ministry of the Apostles, and (c) of Common Worship. The same is implied also in many other places (e.g., Eph. iv. 5, 11-14). Of the continuity of the FAITH in our Church we shall have to speak in the next chapter.

Equally important with the confession of a true faith—"the faith once for all delivered to the saints"—is the maintenance of continuity in the Ministry of the Church.

The two Sacraments of the Gospel are the bands of unity of the Church; for by the one (Holy Baptism) the perpetuity of the Body is sustained by the addition of new members; by the other (Holy Communion) the unity is maintained, and strengthened amongst those who are its members.

"The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved." "They that gladly received the word were baptized." "By one Spirit we are all baptized into one Body." Acts ii. 47, 41; 1 Cor. xii. 13.

"We being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread" 1 Cor. x. 17. Who, then, has the power and authority to administer these Sacraments? The answer to this question must be of vital importance, for on it must depend the maintenance of the unity of the Body as one organization.

"The perpetuity of doctrine is in itself undoubtedly of the very first importance..... But

if it were attempted to insist on succession in doctrine as the sole condition of the essence of a Church, any such proposition would be self-contradictory, inasmuch as that which would be perpetuated would not be a society at all, but a creed or body of tenets."—*Mr. Gladstone Church Principles*, p. 194.

Christ, the One Founder, and Head of the Church, gave this commission to His Apostles. See S. Matt. xxviii. 16-20; 1 Cor. xi. 23-25; S. John xx. 21-23. S. Paul therefore affirms that to them is "committed the Ministry of Reconciliation," that they are the "Stewards of the Mysteries of God," they have to "watch for souls as those that must give an account."

The Apostles committed that same commission to other faithful men, with power to rule in the Church, and to Ordain others.

None but those who have received this commission to the Ministry from those who have previously had power given to them to call and send others, can lawfully, under ordinary circumstances, presume to minister the word and Sacraments to others. "There is not in this world a greater presumption than that any should think to convey a gift of God, unless by God appointed to it."—*Bishop Jeremy Taylor Ductor Dubit*.

"The right to administer Sacraments, and to teach as an ambassador of Christ, depends upon the validity of the Ordination which has been received by the claimant of that right."—*Mr. Gladstone*, ib. p. 227.

Hence the Ministry has well been called by one of the most learned of England's Bishops in this century "*the historic backbone of the Church*." (*Bishop Lightfoot, Leaders in the Northern Church*.) "We cannot surrender for any immediate advantage the three-fold Ministry which we have inherited from Apostolic times, which is the historic backbone of the Church."

"Let them produce," says Tertullian, "the account of the origin of their Churches: let them unroll the line of their Bishop." *Praesert.*, 32.

Has our Church then this unbroken succession of Ministry from those whom Christ first commissioned? *Most undoubtedly*.

Certainly the Church *claims* to have that succession, and on it, alone, bases the authority of her Bishops, Priests, and Deacons to execute their office.

"It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. Which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man might presume to execute any of them except he were first called, tried, examined, and known to have such qualities as are requisite for the same; and also by public, *with imposition of hands*, were approved and *admitted thereunto by lawful authority*. And therefore to the intent that these Orders may be continued, and reverently used and esteemed in the Church of England; no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest, or Deacon.....except," &c., &c.—*Preface to Ordination Offices*.

When a society, whether secular or religious, by its accepted laws, is known to require certain qualifications, and regular methods of appointment, in its officers and governing body, the fact of any one having held such office therein is usually deemed a sufficient evidence of the fact that such person had been constitutionally appointed. For instance, if it is known that a certain person has commanded an army in the

field, it would be taken for granted that he had received his commission in the usual manner; it would not be thought necessary that he should produce the paper on which it was written, nor if in the lapse of time all record of his actual commission was lost, would any sane person for that reason doubt that he had been properly appointed? So it is with the Church and her Ministry. The records of the actual succession of some of her bishops may have been lost, and it may therefore be almost impossible to trace back the Commission step by step till we come to the first giving of the Commission to the Apostles, but if it is a sufficiently notorious fact, as it undoubtedly is, that the Church has always considered Consecration by other bishops to be necessary before any one should presume to execute the office of a bishop, or to ordain others to the Ministry, it ought to satisfy all reasonable requirements of proof, that a man who is known to have executed that office with the consent of the Church and of other bishops, did receive his appointment and commission in the usually accepted manner.

This is undoubtedly sufficient for ordinary circumstances and to answer those who assert that the Apostolic Succession of the Ministry is a myth because we are unable to bring forward actual legal proof of each link in the chain.

But it is said that in such a crisis as the Reformation, when there was a great unsettlement of opinions, and some, as it is known, regarded the Episcopal office very lightly, it is quite possible that the succession may have been lost.

The actual circumstances, moreover, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, undoubtedly reduced the succession to a very narrow limit.

Cardinal Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury in Queen Mary's reign, died within a few hours of the death of that Queen. The Archbishoprick was thus vacant on the accession of Queen Elizabeth, and eight other Sees were also vacant through death. Fourteen bishops were deprived for refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy. These, however, were mostly men who had been thrust into Sees, the rightful bishop of which were still alive, *without any canonical process*, by Mary, while the four consecrated previously had accepted under Henry VIII. all that they were now asked to accept. Only one of the bishops, Kitchin, of Llandaff, conformed. It must be remembered that the bishops appointed under Queen Mary, were so appointed, in a time of considerable agitation, as notoriously strong upholders of the Papal power. The action of the bishops under Henry VIII. was a far truer criterion of the real feeling of the English Church. Of about 9,400 clergy only 200 to 400 (accounts differ between these numbers) refused to conform.

Fortunately there were some of the bishops who had been consecrated previously, surviving. To six of these Queen Elizabeth issued the mandate for the Consecration of Parker, who had been chaplain to her mother, as Archbishop of Canterbury. He was consecrated in due form on Dec. 17th, 1559, by William Barlow, elect of Chichester who had been consecrated June 11th, 1536, by Cranmer and two others, John Scory, elect of Hereford, Miles Coverdale, formerly of Exeter, who had been consecrated on the same day, Aug. 30th, 1551, by Cranmer and two others, and John Hodgkins (Suffragan of London under Bonner), of Bedford, who had been consecrated Dec. 9th, 1537, by J. Stokesley, Bishop of London, and two others.

About forty-four years afterwards an absurd story (generally called the Nag's Head Fable) was invented by the Romanist party, which asserted that Parker and other bishops were ordained in a hasty and ludicrous way at a tavern in Fleet Street. This invention, however, has been amply disproved not only by writers of our Church but by Romanists such as Dr. Lingard,