

church should instal or ordain in office him whom it has chosen. It may neglect to do this, even as many other things are neglected ; but it must not plead Scripture precedent or license for the omission.

We assert, then, that to preach the gospel to the world, a man needs no human authority. If he wishes to have with him in his labours the *prestige* and support of a constituted, and perhaps well-known church, let him seek the sanction of that church, and go forth as its agent, missionary, or evangelist. When his agency ceases, by his becoming a member and a bishop of another church, he must look to the church he has joined, and not to the church he has left, for such ministerial *status* as it is desirable he should have. If his ordination to the work of an evangelist did not make him an elder in the older church, most assuredly it does not in the newer. And though his connection with the old church, as its agent or missionary, might give him a certain *status* or character, when preaching at large in the world, it certainly confers upon him no *status* in the new and organized church to which he has now transferred his labours. That church only has the right to say who shall teach, and who shall bear office within it.

If the churches are really equal, and really independent, then an officer of A, coming to B, can have no official rights at B ; for the simple reason that his ecclesiastical allegiance and responsibilities are all connected with A. As soon as his connection with A ceases, by his joining the church at B, he can only have such rights at B, as the church there gives him. He could not now return to A, to claim any official authority there. But surely, if a man's ordination had a perpetual virtue anywhere, it ought to be where he received it. But if the brethren at A repudiate that brother's official power among themselves, can they, by virtue of that same lapsed and superseded election and ordination, insist upon and maintain his having power at B ?

There are only two grounds in ordination. It is either, (1) a sacramental act, in which the ordained receives some spiritual power, gift, or influence, from the ordainers ; and which, existing in them by virtue of their own ordination, are transmissible by them, and of course transmissible by him,—a holy inoculation, with infinite powers of transmission : or, (2) it is the induction or installation into an office already conferred, and by the authority that conferred the office. There is no middle ground. If the sacramentalists claimed to be inspired men, we could easily say to them, "Show us a proof of your apostleship. What gifts of healing, interpretation, or tongues, have you ?" But as their claims do not rest on their being themselves inspired, but on a valid and unbroken succession of sacramental touches from men who were, we ask, "Since you assert this succession to be so indispensable, where is your ecclesiastical genealogy ?" and secondly "Since this spiritual influence or power does not show itself in the visible and audible manner of the inspiration of Apostolic times, what proofs have you to offer of its existence ? Has it any blessing, or success, any unity and brotherhood, any inherent christian power, not found outside itself ?

But let those who have been disposed to scout the claims of the "Apostolic Succession" distinctly understand, that if there is any virtue in the ceremony of ordination, which is not derived from the church interested in the ordination, it must be derived from the Apostolic "succession." Trace the matter up. Four elders or bishops meet to ordain a fifth. Is it by virtue of any power in themselves ? Perhaps the answer will be, "Yes ; for ordination must be by those already in office." How did they get into office ? by virtue of the election of some church ? or by virtue of their ordination ?