

For the P. O., Isld. Gazette.

"Church unity is held, and faith's increase,
By that of spirit in the bond of peace,
And righteousness of life; without this life
Forms are in vain prescribed to worship by."

To the Rev. C. G.

Priest of the United, &c.

SIR,

However disagreeable the present correspondence may be to you, I hope it will edify the public, therefore, agreeably to my promise, I shall take the liberty of continuing it. And as you made an unprovoked attack upon every society of Christians on this Island, your own Church excepted, you ought not to be offended at my undertaking their defence.

In my letter of the 12th ult. I shewed that the Church of England is not exclusively the Church of Christ, it therefore remains for you to prove what you asserted in your Sermon, viz. that it is. When you have accomplished this Herculean task, you may, if you please, bestow a little attention on the remarks I shall make in this and my future communications, in which I hope to prove, in opposition to all your prejudices and assertions that every man who understands and practices Christianity has a right to teach it, that ordination by Presbytery is equally as valid as Episcopal ordination, and consequently, that those who are thus ordained are scripturally authorized to preach the gospel and administer the Sacraments, that by attending a Methodist Chapel, or a dissenting place of worship we are not guilty of the sin of schism, that every man has an unalienable right to judge for himself in religious matters, and that to rail against, or to persecute those who do so, is unreasonable, unjust, and unscriptural.

As you have attempted to unchristianize the Presbyterians, Independents and Methodists, because their Ministers are not Episcopally ordained, it is sufficiently obvious that you deny the right to officiate as Christian Ministers, of all who are not ordained by the imposition of the hands of a bishop, according to the rites of the Church of England, by authority received in regular succession from the Apostles.

This being the case, it shall be my business in the present letter to prove, that every man who understands and practices Christianity has a right to teach it; and you, Sir, cannot deny it without directly opposing reason and Scripture. Has not every Christian parent a right to teach religion to his children? Is not every god-father and every god-mother strictly charged by the Church of England "chiefly to provide that the child which has been baptized may learn the creed, the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments, in the vulgar tongue, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health, and that this child may be virtuously brought up to lead a good Christian life"? And what can a bishop teach more than this? Has not every Christian master a right to teach religion to his domestics? Has not every Christian

schoolmaster a right to teach religion to the children committed to his care? Why do the bishops and clergy exert themselves so much for the erection of National Schools? Is it not that the children of the poor may be taught the religion of the Church itself by laymen? May not any good man administer the consolations of religion to a sick or dying neighbour? Is it not lawful for Christians to converse on religious subjects, and thus mutually to teach each other in the little circle of their friends? May not a Christian tell all that he knows of religion to a few of his neighbours who desire to hear him? And may not that few, without the breach of any law of God, be increased to a few hundreds? If we turn to the Scriptures we shall find sufficient proof of the truth of my assertion. When Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the camp, and Joshua went in and said "my lord Moses forbid them," what did Moses answer? "Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them." "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching." Thus do the sacred scriptures assert the right of every good man to teach religion to as many as will hear. And thus, Sir, the subject has generally been understood. The scribes of old, who were the ordinary preachers among the Jews, were not priests; they were not better than laymen. Yea, many of them were incapable of the priesthood, being of the tribe of Simeon, not of Levi. If we come to later times: was Mr. Calvin ordained? Was he either priest or deacon? And were not most of those whom it pleased God to employ in promoting the reformation in Europe, laymen also? Could that great work have been promoted at all in many places, if laymen had not preached? And yet how seldom do the very papists urge this as an objection against the reformation? Nay, as rigorous as they are in things of this kind, they themselves appoint, in some of their strictest orders, that, if any lay-brother believes himself called of God to preach as a Missionary, the superior of the order, being informed thereof, shall immediately send him away. In all Protestant churches it is still more evident, that ordination is not held as a necessary prerequisite of preaching: for in Sweden, in Germany, in Holland, and I believe in every reformed Church, it is not only permitted, but required, that before any one is ordained, (before he is admitted even into deacon's orders, wherever the distinction between priests and deacons is retained) he should publicly preach a year, or more, *ad probandum facultatem*, and for this practice, they believe they have an express command of God: "Let them first be proved: then let them use

the office of a deacon, being found blameless."

Now, Sir, whatever you may think it appears very evident to me, that every man who understands and practices christianity has, under God, a right to teach it to as many as are willing to learn. But do not misunderstand me. As in civil society many natural rights are sacrificed to the good order of the community, so in the Church of Christ, it is necessary for the good government of the whole, that the exercise of this right should come under some restrictions and regulations. Therefore, though every good man if he possesses ability has a right to teach religion to those who are willing to receive his instructions, the persons who are wholly devoted to the work of the ministry ought to be regularly inducted into the sacred office. But, Sir, who are regularly and scripturally set apart to the work of the ministry? You say those who have been *Episcopally ordained and no others*. I am of a different opinion, and in another letter shall endeavour to prove, that presbyters and bishops were one and the same order in the apostolic church, that ordination by presbytery is as valid (I do not say more, for I am not a bigot in this matter) as episcopal ordination, and that those who are thus ordained, are as scripturally qualified to perform the duty of Christian Ministers, as the Rector of George-Town. In the mean time,

I remain yours, &c.

VINDEX.

P. S. I understand you wish to make it appear that the Church of England and not your illiberal assertions is the object of my attack. I assure you, Sir, you labour under a great mistake. I told you in my last that I sincerely loved the Church, and perhaps you will give me credit for the truth of my assertion when I tell you, that I was dedicated to God at her font, that I cordially believe her doctrines, that I admire her liturgy as the best human composition in the world, and have frequently celebrated the death of the Redeemer at her altar. It is not the Church of England you have now to defend. It is your own declaration, that she is the Church of Christ, to the exclusion of all other religious societies, and that none, except her own Ministers have any right to preach the gospel or administer the sacraments. These require your support, not the Church of England.

Notice.

ALL Persons indebted to the Estate of the late JAMES SMITH, Plymouth, deceased, are requested to make immediate payment to the Subscribers, and all persons to whom said Estate stands indebted to, are requested to send their Accounts duly attested within Eighteen Calendar Months to ROBERT HODGSON, Esq. Attorney, for adjustment.

Duncan M'Kay,
J. N. Le Page,

Executors.

Charlotte-Town, September 23th, 1820.

Notice.

ALL Persons having legal demand against the Estate of the late JAMES CURTIS, Esq. of Cove-Head, deceased, are requested to render their Accounts duly attested within Nine Months from the date hereof; and all those indebted to the said Estate are requested to make immediate payment to

John M'Gregor,

Attorney for the Executors.

Charlotte-Town, May 22d, 1820.