

though depressed for a time, remained uninjured: so that there—among the American republicans—under the superintendence of no fewer than sixteen\* bishops, you will find her sacraments and ordinances administered, and all her ritual and liturgical services administered, with not less of piety, zeal, and solemnity than here in England; there you may see the Church, like an oasis in the desert, blessed by the dews of heaven, and shedding heavenly blessings around her, in a land where, because no religion is established, if it were not for her, nothing but the extremes of infidelity or fanaticism would prevail.

And so you may perceive what is meant; when we say, that we wish to speak of the Church, not as an establishment, but as *the* Church, a religious society, a particular society of Christians.

We will commence with an indisputable fact. In this country there is at this time a religious society, known by the name of the Church. The question is, when and by whom was this society instituted?

Now the Roman Catholics or Papists assert that it was instituted and founded, like the generality of Protestant sects, by certain Reformers in the 16th century, and thence they would deduce a strong argument against us. They would ask us, whether any man can take unto himself the office of the ministry, unless he be sent by God; and if we are scriptural Christians, if we take the Bible for our guide, if we act on that sound Protestant principle, with the fifth chapter to the Hebrews open before us, we must answer, no. Then they proceed to ask, how can *you* prove that your ministers are called of God to the office? And if their assertion were true that our Church was founded at the Reformation, we could give them no answer at all.

But at the period of the Reformation, when Cranmer and Ridley flourished, there was a Church existing and established in England, and as Archbishop of that Church, Cranmer, our celebrated Reformer, was consecrated. That Church had existed, as all parties admit, from the first planting of Christianity in England. But Arch-

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\* Now [May, 1842] there are twenty-one bishops.