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PRESBYTERY VERSUS EPISCOPACY.

In the present times when a party in the Church of England are proceeding with a retrograde movement to unite themselves with the Romanists, whom they had professed to have forsaken for ever, a few remarks on the unscriptural character of episcopacy may not be unprofitable. It is to be regretted that the ambition and blood-thirsty spirit which the heads of the Church of England manifested during the reigns of Charles the first and second, as well as during the brief reign of James the second, should be so soon forgotten by the christian community. The late Mr. McGavin, of Glasgow, though an Independent, previous to his death, shewed a truly christian and patriotic spirit in publishing in two handsome volumes, accounts of the martyrs who suffered in Scotland by the hands of their prelatial enemies, together with the dying testimonies of these holy men against prelacy. Mr. McGavin was a man who had studied the Popish Controversy, and who, in the course of these studies, saw the resolute stand which these men made against its encroachments into the kingdom, and it was doubtless his desire to draw the attention of his friends to a portion of history well worthy of their thoughtful consideration. Another motive also, doubtless influenced the mind of that eminent man, in undertaking the editorship of these volumes, and this was the debt of gratitude which all denominations of christians in the kingdom owed to the martyrs in lifting up a standard

against popish and prelatial usurpation. The prelates sought to overcome them in argument by captious questions; the brethren were mighty in the scriptures, and their adversaries were worsted—their rage was now kindled, and for thirty years they persecuted them to the death. Considering these things, we cannot but think that a yearly commemoration of the doings and sufferings of our Presbyterian forefathers might be of advantage in the present times, more especially when the followers of Laud are again on the field ranging themselves side by side with their popish allies. Meanwhile we shall offer a few hints to shew that prelacy is unwarranted by scripture. The fabric of this system rests on the distinction which they make between a Presbyter and a Bishop.—We say that the office is identical—thus in Acts, chapter xx, 17, “And in Miletus he (Paul) sent to Ephesus and called the *Elders* of the church.” And in addressing them, the apostle thus speaks, verse 23, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers* (bishops) to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” It may be said, why do they receive different names if the office is the same? the explanation is easy. They are called *elders*, as the heads of the congregations—they are called *overseers* as set over them in the Lord. A man may be called a parent, and in another view the guardian of his child; but how absurd would