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STUDIES.

EAST TORONTO.

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England and the episcopal idea, but the Episcopate itself was beyond their reach, until in the days of her deepest depression, when the hearts of the people were sick through waiting in vain, the few clergymen remaining in the State of Connecticut took the matter in hand for themselves, and selected one of their number, Dr. Samuel Seabury, to go over to the Old Country and return with the Episcopate. It speaks volumes for the ardent love and faith that must have consumed the souls of that small remnant when they resolved to be Episcopalians in reality as well as in form, and to have a chief pastor among themselves to feed and lead forward the flock. We need not repeat here the oft-told tale of Dr. Seabury's using all influences he could bring to bear upon the English Church and Government, and his application, as a last resort, to the Scottish Bishops who were then suffering under the penal laws. In August, 1784, he thus states the position of affairs: "Unhappily the connection of this (English) Church with the State is so intimate that the Bishops can do little without the consent of the Ministry, and the Ministry have refused to permit a Bishop to be consecrated for Connecticut, or for any of the thirteen States, without the formal request, or, at least, consent of Congress, which there is no chance of obtaining, and which the clergy of Connecticut would not apply for, were the chance ever so good. * * * On this [and other] ground it is that I apply to the good Bishops in Scotland, and I hope I shall not apply in vain. If they consent to impart the episcopal succession to the Church of Connecticut, they will, I think, do a good work, and the blessing of thousands will attend them. And perhaps for this cause, among others, God's Providence has supported them and continued their succession, under various and great difficulties—that a free, valid, and pure ecclesiastical episcopacy may, from them, pass into the western world." Bp. Seabury was duly consecrated in an upper chamber in Long Acre, Aberdeen, on Nov. 14th, 1784, and on the following day a concordat was signed as between the Scottish and American Churches. The fifth article had more special reference to the Scottish Bishops' wish with respect to the Communion Office which was to be adopted in America. They did not seek to lay down a condition, but they expressed a strong desire that there should be as little difference as possible between the Scotch and American Offices. Bp. Seabury made no promise beyond that of giving a favourable consideration to the Office, and if he found it "agreeable to the genuine standards of antiquity," he would then use all judicious means for its reception. By the time that the Communion Office came before the American Convention, Bishops White and Provoost had been consecrated at Lambeth. At the Convention of 1787, Bp. Provoost was absent, and the House of Bishops consisted of Seabury and White, so that peaceful measures predominated, and almost the only variation from the English Communion Office was the insertion of the Scottish Prayer of Consecration in place of the English after the words of Institution. This was urgently desired by Bishop Seabury, and accepted, apparently without opposition, by Bishop White. The Office is thus a combination of the two liturgical usages, and yet is peculiarly American in its form; it may, in God's own time and way, be the solvent of wider ecclesiastical differences. But looking first at the Office as a whole, and passing over mere verbal alterations, we see that the general strain is that of the English Prayer Book. The Summary may be added to the Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed

may be used for the Nicene, while the second Post-Communion Collect is given the place of the two Collects for the King or Queen. The prayer is for "Christ's Church militant," but the text of the prayer is unaltered, and so is that of the Comfortable Words. The Consecration Prayer is that of the Scottish Office of 1764, with the one exception that in Bp. Falconar's Prayer of Invocation there is the petition that the gifts and creatures of bread and wine "may become the body and blood of thy most dearly beloved Son," while in the American Office of 1787 the petition is "that we, receiving them [the same gifts and creatures blessed and sanctified] according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed Body and Blood." This is evidently done to get round a difficulty, and is wholly in accord with Bp. Seabury's character, which prompted his receding from an outpost that the main point might be gained—the retention of the Oblation and Invocation. There is no word of Bp. Provoost's offering any objection, and after a century's use this special feature is highly valued in the American Church, so that the venerable Bishop of Connecticut could say of that primitive form of consecration that in giving it "Scotland gave us a greater boon than when she gave us the Episcopate." It is scarcely necessary to add that the first prayer after the Lord's Prayer has disappeared, being taken up into the more formal Oblation, and that the whole service appears to have gained in fulness of eucharistic expression and in proportionate balance of parts, but the alternative use of the baptismal creed does not seem to be a gain in the liturgy.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

CHAPTER VII.

THE EPISCOPATE.

In a series of disquisitions relating to the foundation, the different aspects, and the functions of the Christian ministry, it is not possible to give the space to the subject now before us which recent controversies would seem to require. It may be possible, hereafter and separately, to discuss at length the statements and arguments of the late Mr. Hatch, of Mr. Gore, and others who have recently taken part in the controversy. For the present it must suffice to state plainly what we mean by the office of bishop and our reasons for regarding it as of divine origin.

MISSION.

We have already pointed out that, according to the New Testament, the Christian minister derives his authority from God. Every one who exercises that ministry as it was exercised by the first followers of Jesus Christ must speak as being sent from God. We are aware that some will maintain that the only mission required is the inward impulse of the Holy Ghost, prompting him who receives it to go and proclaim the message of salvation. Yet there are few Christian communions who will consider that the ministry among them can be thus validly constituted.

ORDINATION AND APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

And the common use of ordination, or the laying on of hands, may be regarded as a testimony to the doctrine of a mission which comes indeed from God, but which is conveyed by the hands of those who have themselves first received it from others. If we say that a Christian minister must be ordained, and that his ordainers must be those who have themselves been ordained, we do in fact assert the doctrine which is called the apostolic succession, for we can stop short nowhere until we have gone back to the beginning of the chain; and thus of necessity we mount up to the apostles.

This would seem to be the doctrine of the Presbyterian Standards, although they would deny the

necessity of an episcopal succession. They certainly seem to hold and teach plainly enough that only those who have received the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery have authority to minister in the Church of God. By whatever title this theory may be designated, whether as "the divine right of presbytery," or any other, it is assuredly a doctrine of apostolic succession.

THE MINISTER OF ORDINATION.

The whole question, therefore, between the great Presbyterian communions—Lutherans, Reformed, Scottish Church, other Presbyterians—and ourselves, has reference not at all to the transmission of authority, but to the quality of the minister by whom the authority is transmitted. According to the Presbyterians, there are only two orders, the Presbyter and the Deacon, and ordination may be performed by a number of Presbyters. According to the ancient, historical practice of the Church, which obtained universally down to the Reformation, there is a superior officer required, the Bishop, without whom ordination is not valid.

It is not, as we need hardly explain, that the Presbyters are excluded from participation in the designation and setting apart of men to the ministry. The Presbyters are united with the Bishop in the solemn act; but they are so united as assistants who could not by themselves confer valid ordination.

Such is the undoubted episcopal theory of the ministry, however exclusive it may appear; and the question which we have to consider is not at all its apparent exclusiveness—a title which might be applied to Christian Baptism, and to other Christian ordinances and doctrines—but its truth and the foundation upon which it rests. We must, however, protest against the imputation that we are hereby unchurching the non-episcopal communions in Scotland and in Germany, for example. We are, in fact, giving no opinion as to the status of those bodies or as to the work of their ministers. We believe that God blesses every good work which is done in faith; and we have no right to judge them that are without. Of those who preached Christ without His authority, He said, "Forbid them not;" and we can hardly have the arrogance to transgress His command. Yet we are equally bound to maintain that, in our judgment, the ministry is properly constituted only by episcopal ordination; and that those who depart from this institution are violating an apostolic ordinance.

GENERAL VIEW.

It is a very natural remark that it is strange that, if episcopacy is an apostolic institution, it should not be universally received. But this may be said equally of every doctrine of the Gospel. To most Christians every article of the Nicene Creed is almost as plainly contained in the New Testament as is the personality of the Godhead itself. Yet many of these doctrines have been and are now called in question.

No one denies that for many centuries, three orders were recognized in the Christian ministry. The question is, how did these orders originate? According to the Catholic view, they were originated by the apostles. According to their opponents, they came gradually into existence, by the development of the Church, after the death of the apostles. This is the simple question which we have to examine.

We shall not, we hope, be thought guilty of taking any unfair advantage of our adversaries, if we point out that they are under the necessity of defending a difficult position; and that this necessity is not laid upon ourselves. No one has called in question the validity of episcopal ordination, whereas presbyteral ordination has been widely questioned. Moreover, the original reformers, as Luther and Calvin, would gladly have preserved the episcopal office in the Churches which they reformed; but they could not secure bishops. We quite admit that this circumstance is not conclusive. Still, it must have weight; and we recall it to the remembrance of those who occupy a different position from our own.

It is a remarkable fact that the late Mr. Hatch, in his Bampton Lectures on the Organization of the Christian Church, did not begin with the New Testament and connect the subsequent testimony with that which is found in the writings of the