

in their churches, as there were in England. The scheme was frustrated, it is said, by the Romanists.

MELANCTHON, the friend and colleague of Luther, one of the brightest ornaments of the church in any age. Writing against the claims of the bishops of the Roman church, says:—"We have stated in our confession, the power that the gospel gives to bishops. Those that now are bishops, do not discharge the office according to the gospel. Let them be *truly bishops*, according to the canonical polity, and this we do not censure, but we speak of the bishop according to the gospel; and what meets our appropriation, is the ancient partition of power, into the power of order, and the power of jurisdiction. Therefore, the bishop has the power of order, that is, the ministry of the word and sacraments; he has also the power of jurisdiction, that is, the authority to excommunicate those obnoxious, by reason of public crimes.—And again, to absolve them, if, being converted, they seek absolution. But bishops have not a tyrannical power, that is, a power without any certain law; nor have they a royal power, that is, a power above the law; but they have a certain mandate, a sure word of God, which they ought to teach, and according to which, they ought to exercise their jurisdiction." Again, "We wish to testify, that we would willingly preserve the ecclesiastical and canonical polity, if only the bishops would cease to rage against our churches. This our will shall excuse us, before all nations, to all posterity, lest they should impute it to us, that the authority of bishops is undermined;—when they shall hear and read, that we deprecated the unjust cruelty of our bishops, and could obtain no equity at their hands."

JOHN LE CLERC, justly celebrated as one of the most famous scholars of the 17th century, a minister of the Dutch church, (or church of Holland,) thus writes:—"It is asked among christians, which form of church government is from the apostles? for that seems to be preferred before others, which was constituted at the beginning; and of two churches, in which otherwise the gospel is taught with truth and purity, that church is to be chosen in which the apostolic form exists; although the government without the thing, that is, government without the gospel, is but the empty image of the church." "But now, there are two forms of church government, of which the one is that when the church acts under a single bishop, who alone has the right of ordaining presbyters, and the inferior order of evangelical ministers; and the other, when the church is governed by equal presbyters, to whom are joined from the people, certain men of some prudence, and irreproachable conduct. Those who have read without prejudice, the remains of the most ancient christian writers, know well, that the first form of discipline, which is called episcopal, such as we see in the southern part of Great Britain, was every where established, in the very next age after the apostles, from whence it is reasonable to conclude, that it was of apostolic constitution. But the other, which they call presbyterian, was instituted in many parts of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland, by those who in the sixteenth century seceded from the Church of Rome."

"Those who have read attentively the histories of that age, know perfectly well, that this latter form of church government, was introduced only, because the bishops refused to grant any reformation, in those points of christian doctrine and manners, which were complained of as being corruptions. For otherwise, if the bishops had been willing to do every where that which was shortly afterwards done in England, that same church government would have obtained at this day, among all who seceded from the Church of Rome; and thus, innumerable calamities, which have happened from the confusions and convulsions of ecclesiastical affairs, might have been avoided."

Again, the same eminent writer observes, that "prudent men, although they ardently long for that form of church administration which was apostolical, or like it, yet they think it best now, to leave matters as they are." And in the same connection, he says, "Whoever has read the writings of that most eminent man, Hugo Grotius, knows that he vehemently applauded the episcopal form of government, such as obtains in England, because, when he had studiously examined the writings of christian antiquity, he found it to be the primeval form."

Grotius himself thus speaks on the point in ques-

tion. "You see how well the reformation of hurtful opinions proceeded in England, and chiefly from this cause; that those who undertook that most holy work, admitted *nothing that was new*, and nothing that was their own, but had their whole attention bent upon the purer ages."

This great man also endeavored to persuade the remonstrants in Holland, to adopt the episcopal system. "I advised them (he says,) to select some amongst themselves, for a more eminent grade, as bishops, and to receive the imposition of hands from the archbishop of Ireland, who was there, that so being ordained, they might ordain others." The archbishop alluded to, was John Bramhall, archbishop of Armagh.

We have now seen, that the form and order of the church, as instituted by the apostles, was preserved by succession, wherever the church was preserved, yet not without corruptions, down to the reformation; and, that at, and after that period, some of the most eminent men of the reformed churches on the continent, ardently wished, that they could have enjoyed the privilege of primitive apostolic order, of which they were deprived, for want of reforming bishops.

DR. ADAM CLARKE AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The late Dr. A. CLARKE, who died of cholera at Bayswater, near London, August 26, 1833, was a Methodist Preacher, of much learning and research. Of this fact his valuable commentary on the Bible is a sufficient proof. He was deservedly esteemed by all, especially by those of his own religious connection. He was elected President of the Conference in the year 1806.

Dr. Clarke was warmly attached to the system of Mr. Wesley; but he was, at the same time, a most cordial friend of the Church of England, as is very evident from his "Life," written by himself and edited by one of his sons, an ordained clergyman of that Church, from which work the facts contained in this present paper are gleaned. Dr. Clarke would himself gladly have been a minister of Christ within the pale of the Church of England; and was prevented only by the poverty of his father, who could not afford to send him to college to be properly educated. Dr. Clarke, however, had great satisfaction in seeing two of his sons ordained ministers of that Church, having been brought up by him in attachment to her communion, and trained at her renowned universities. He always felt pleasure in reading the Church Liturgy; and in the administration of Baptism he always used her service, only substituting parents for sponsors.

His sentiments are fully expressed in the following letter, written a few years since to Dr. Bloomfield, the present Bishop of London.

Haydon Hall, Oct. 16, 1829.

"My Lord—I humbly beg your Lordship's acceptance of the volumes of Discourses which accompany this note. They are now for the first time published, though the substance of them has been preached at various times through the now United Empire, and the Norman and Zeland islands. Whatever may be their merit, they are not constructed after the common manner of sermons. It has ever been my aim, both in preaching and writing, to endeavour to explain the words of God, that by this method I might attain to the knowledge of the things of God. Your Lordship well knows how little is done for the interest of divine truth, where texts of holy Scripture are taken as mottos to sermons, in which only sentiments or maxims of general morality or social duties, are explained. To secure the end of public instruction, I have often been obliged to call the attention of the people not only to the literal meaning of several exotic words, but also to the import of many terms in their mother tongue, which, though of frequent use in religious matters, are little understood."

"With this short explanation, I take the liberty of sending these volumes, as a mark of my deep reverence and high respect for your Lordship's sacred office and great personal worth—a reverence and respect which I have long entertained for your Lordship, and which have been greatly increased by the late opportunity with which I have been favoured of having the honour of paying my respects to your Lordship at Fulham. The '*lais cum sis*,' &c. with which

your Lordship dismissed me, have done me indeed great honour; for your Lordship's inflexible attachment to truth and honour, shewed me how much I should value the opinion then expressed, though retaining a just sense of my own littleness."

"I hope that the '*omnino*' in the remaining part of the quotation, which I told your Lordship had been sent in a letter to me by the worthy Archdeacon of Cleveland, neither refers to my creed nor to my essential membership in the Church, but only in reference to my being destitute of its orders. I am afraid of making too free in mentioning the following anecdote; if so, your Lordship's goodness will pardon me:—At an anniversary meeting of the Prayer Book and Homily Society, an excellent clergyman quoting something that I had written, was pleased to preface it by the remark, 'The worthy Dr. who, of all men I know, who are not of our Church, comes the nearest both in doctrine and friendship to it.' When he had done, I arose, and after making an apology (which the company were pleased to receive with great tokens of kindness), I took the liberty to observe, '*I was born (so to speak) in the Church, baptized in the Church, brought up in it; confirmed in it by that most apostolic man, Dr. BAGOT, then Bishop of Bristol, afterwards of Norwich; have held all my life uninterrupted communion with it; conscientiously believe its doctrines; and have spoken and written in defence of it; and if, after all, I am not allowed to be a member of it, because through necessity laid upon me, I preach Jesus and the resurrection to the perishing multitudes without those most respectable orders that come from it, I must strive to be content; and if you will not let me accompany you to heaven, I will, by the grace of God, follow after you and hang upon your skirts.*' This simple declaration left few unaffected in a large assembly, where there were many of the clergy. Mr. WILBERFORCE, who was sitting beside the Chair, rose up with even more than his usual animation, and with "winged words" said, "*Far from not acknowledging our worthy friend—far from not acknowledging him as a genuine member of the Church, and of the 'Church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven,'—far from preventing him to be of the company who are pressing in at the gate of blessedness, we will not let him 'follow'; he shall not 'hang on our skirts' to be as if dragged onwards—we will take him in our arms, we will bear him in our bosom, and with shouting, carry him into the presence of his God and our God.*" The worthy clergyman, whose speech had given rise to these observations, soon placed himself on the best ground, with "Indeed Dr. Clarke, my observations went only to the simple fact of your not being a clergyman of the Established Church." Whatever may be in this, I believe your Lordship already knows, lies at the fault of the '*res angusta domi*.* It was neither my fault nor my folly. Of the Established Church I have never been a secret enemy nor a silent friend. What I feel towards it, the angels are welcome to ponder; and what I have spoken and written concerning it, and in its favour, I believe I shall never be even tempted to retract. Being bred up in its bosom, I early drank in its salutary doctrine and spirit. I felt it from my earliest youth as I felt a most dear relative. While yet dependent on, and most affectionately attached to her (my natural mother) who furnished me with my first aliment, I felt, from an association which your Lordship will most readily apprehend, what was implied in *Mother Church*. Howsoever honourable it may be to a person who was in the wrong, to yield to conviction and embrace the right, that kind of honour I have not in reference to the Church. I was never converted† to it; I never had any thing to unlearn, when with a heart open to conviction, I read in parallel the New Testament and the Liturgy of the Church. I therefore find that, after all I have read, studied and learned, I am not got beyond my infant's prayer.—'I heartily thank my heavenly Father that he hath called me into this state of salvation; and pray unto Him, that He may give me grace to continue in the same to the end of my life.'

* Referring to the narrow circumstances of his father's fortune, which would not allow of his receiving a University education, and being regularly prepared for ordination in the Church of England.

† Meaning that he had been always a Churchman, as he declares above, and had never been turned about from one profession of religion to another, from conviction or any other cause.