

## PREFACE

---

The Church of Christ has three tenses—Past, Present and Future. Amongst its members, therefore, there will always be found those whose gaze is turned with reverend affection upon the Past. Others there will be who on the whole are contented with the Present. Before the spiritual eye of a third class will float the entrancing vision of the Church of the Future.

To this last class the present writer belongs. By nature and temperament an Idealist, looking with no regretful eye upon the past, and with dissatisfaction upon the present, he is full of confident hope for the future.

In these two sermons an attempt is made to express as clearly as possible a current view of the Christian ministry, and to draw from it certain deductions and applications which are believed to be of the utmost importance to the church of God.

But lest the exact position maintained in these sermons should be misunderstood, I have endeavored to express their contents in the following propositions.

1. The study of the Gospels does not warrant the conclusion that our Lord gave any fixed constitution to His church.
2. The study of the remainder of the New Testament and of the so-called Apostolic Fathers shows that no fixed constitution is to be found in the earliest days of the church. But that the Christian ministry is the result of