

by our Blessed Lord, that He would be with His Apostles always, even unto the end of the world, has been to our day fulfilled, and doubtless will be to the end of time.

And this perpetuation of the Ministry, by uninterrupted succession, is most promotive of due order and regularity, and most consonant to right reason. And yet, how often do we find that this important principle in the Christian Ministry is not only disregarded, but strenuously opposed, by many who profess and call themselves Christians. Let us hope that a better appreciation of its value may ere long obtain.

And in order to this, we would request your attention to the circumstance, that those bodies of Christians who generally oppose the doctrine of succession in the Ministry, yet find it necessary, with but few exceptions, to act upon the same principle in effect, though limited and defective in extent in their own religious organizations.

For even those bodies who have separated from the Church, do not, at least with very few exceptions, acknowledge any as their Ministers except such as have been ordained by other Ministers of their body, and these again by Ministers preceding them. And this is precisely the principle of succession in the Ministry, with the exception, that this succession does not extend up to the Apostles, but centres in some eminent individual, who was the founder of their peculiar organization, either in the Sixteenth Century or at some subsequent period. But if ministerial succession be right and proper now, it was equally so then; if it be not lawful for any man "to take this office and authority upon him" now, "except he be called of God as was Aaron," neither was it lawful at any former period.

Some indeed claim succession from the times of the Apostles through the second order of the Ministry, to whom however, as we have already pointed out, the power of ordination was never given, and by whom there is no proof of its ever having been exercised, either in the age of the Apostles, or the ages that immediately succeeded them.

But, Brethren, with what possible consistency can those who are obliged to act upon the principle of succession in the Ministry now, and those who endeavour to claim it through a subordinate channel, attempt to oppose, or even rashly to deride the truth of an uninterrupted succession of the Ministry in the Church, from the Apostles, through the highest order, which the Church of Christ has ever held, at all periods of her history, and in all places of her sojourn upon earth?

That this succession in the Ministry has always been preserved is abundantly evident; for not only have ancient authors preserved the very names of those who succeeded the Apostles in the principal Bishoprics, so that every Bishop in our Church may trace the transmission of his office from some or other of the Apostles; but moreover, the same testimony of the Church which assures us that the Scriptures which we now possess are the same Holy Scriptures given to the Church from the beginning, and transmitted down to us, assures us also that the Ministry in the Church has been always transmitted through its highest order, each Bishop having been ordained by those