

the Apostles ordained as Presbyters those whom the Church elected. Clement, of Rome, writing at the close of the first century to the Corinthians, speaks of Presbyters ordained by the Apostles with the common assent and approbation of the whole Church. In this freedom of choice the Christian Church followed the precedence of the Jewish synagogue, whose office bearers were elected by the people, and in which the humblest Israelite with piety and gifts might attain to the highest position. Although this primitive right of the Christian people was gradually encroached upon, yet until the middle of the sixth century the laity continued to have a voice and vote in the choice both of bishops and of presbyters.

At the Reformation this right was re-asserted, although in our own Church obscured by that system of patronage which originated in the feudalism of the middle ages; but notwithstanding this obscurity Hooker (E. P. VII., 14, 12) maintains that "neither is there in the Church of England any man, by order of law, possessed with pastoral charge over any parish, but the people in effect do choose him thereto." To the primitive exercise of this fundamental prerogative of the Christian people, I will now cite two testimonies from the Church of Rome, not the less significant because of the character of the witnesses. The Reformers appealed in support of the laity to the choice of their pastors to certain passages in the ancient liturgies and service-books, especially to the Roman Pontificale, in which are clear and indisputable testimonies to the primitive principle of election. At the council of Trent a Canon of Valentia admitted the primitive rule of election, which he maintained had been justly set aside by Papal authority and proposed to expunge the passages referred to from the service-book. But this the council feared to do lest the very act of expurgation would add to the force of the testimony, and con-