

speak, then, of prelacy in connection with Methodist Episcopacy conveys an idea of power over God's heritage which has no existence in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Anything like prelacy, as that term is generally understood, has never been claimed for our Bishops in any portion of the world, by any part of the church, nor has it been sought for by any of those who have ever been appointed to the episcopal office. Thus far in the United States and Canada the Bishops have been a devoted and most laborious class of men. They have not, as a body of ministers, been surpassed as earnest workers by any similar number of church officers on this continent. Why, then, should we be fearful where no danger exists ?

We can see no valid or scriptural reason, therefore, why we may not follow the example set us at Antioch, and ordain one or more of our Elders to take the general superintendency of the Church.

Titus had the general charge in Crete, and was authorized to "ordain Elders in every city." He, therefore, made provision for the proper administration of the ordinances, and the congregations were thus supplied with pastors who might in all things be able to attend to the spiritual wants of the people, according to the direction of the Apostles.

In due time Paul and Barnabas, after having made an extensive tour among the Gentiles, as well as among some of the churches already established, returned to Antioch, and reported to the Church the success of their Gospel labors. But a difficulty having arisen in consequence of some who came down from Jerusalem, who insisted on circumcision in addition to faith as a condition of salvation, Paul, Barnabas, and certain others of the brethren were requested to go up to Jerusalem to confer with "the Apostles and Elders and brethren" in regard to this matter.

The Apostles and Elders alone, it would appear, met in council, or as we would call it, a Conference, the Church having a right to be present. James, who, it is admitted by both Catholics and Protestants, was Bishop of Jerusalem, evidently presided at this general Christian Council. Peter, Paul, and Barnabas were the chief speakers in opposition to those Pharisees, who, having united with the Christians, were the advocates of circumcision. And, after the debate was ended, James, as presiding officer or Bishop, gave his decision. See the 15th chapter of the Acts, and Dr. Clarke's note on the 13th verse.

We have, then, this fact, that James not only decided in accordance with the views of Paul and Barnabas, but advised a pastoral letter to be sent to the churches, giving them proper instructions in the things of God. And Paul took Silas as his travelling companion and went in one direction to visit the churches, and Barnabas took John Mark with him as his assistant, and went in another direction to visit the churches. Paul had, it is true, lost confidence in Mark,