

question of the origin and nature of the authority of the ministry. This is indeed the crux of the problem at present. However carefully it may for a time be concealed, it is always there. On the other hand, it is not a subject concerning which there is nothing new to be said. On the contrary, the patient, careful, scholarly investigation of the early history of the Church has produced results which have fundamentally changed the position of all scholars with reference to the origins of the Church and its ministry.

The old controversy turned almost solely on the testimony of the New Testament. It was *assumed* that the one right and permanent form of the ministry would be found there. Some scholars found Congregationalism, others Presbyterianism, yet others Episcopacy. So far as Episcopacy was concerned, the argument took two forms. In the one which we may call the Evangelical view, Episcopacy was held to be scriptural, but not necessary to the being of a church, which must be tested by more spiritual tests than an external title. Nevertheless, it was important, and by no means to be lightly disregarded. In the High Church view it assumed greater importance, and was regarded with gradually increasing emphasis as of the *esse* of the Church. Yet exceptions were made in favour of Presbyterian Protestants on the Continent, on the ground that Episcopacy could not be had by them. Finally, a most rigid form of Episcopacy was propounded by the leaders of the Oxford movement, a form which so distinguished an authority as Dr. Sanday declares to be new in the Church of England. His words should be carefully weighed : "It should be distinctly borne in mind that the more sweeping refusal to recognize the non-episcopal Reformed Churches is not, and can never be made a doctrine of