

that not only those who penned the Articles, but the body of this church, for above half an age after, did, notwithstanding these irregularities, acknowledge the foreign churches so constituted to be true churches as to all essentials of a church." So, referring to the usurpations and disorders in the Romish church, the Bishop, without holding null its missions or orders—"an order existing in *fact*, though not, as it ought to be, in *right*"—claims for the prince, or for the people, as may be, the liberty to decline the authority of the corrupt body, and prefer the administration of men addressing themselves to the reformation of doctrine and worship, to those who, with more pretence to a formal investiture, were no longer worthy to be trusted with the government of sacred things. (See on Article 23.) Accordingly, our Protestant divines, said Dr. Willis, in their treatment of this question of orders, distinguish between the immediate and mediate authority concerned in the conveyance of a pastoral commission. So far as the mother church had to do with those who received orders within its pale, it had to do with the matter simply instrumentally; but while through men his servants might receive their orders, the orders themselves, as to their proper source, flowed from Christ the head. So far, then, as holding of any church, that church could indeed turn its ministers out of doors; but if, in serving the Head, they incurred persecution, would the Head less recognize their commission because they became martyrs in his cause—that is, were following their commission more faithfully out? Burnet (on Article 19) defends, on a similar principle, the right of the members as well as ministers of the church of Rome to leave her communion: "He who, being convinced of the errors and corruptions of a church, departs from them, and goes on in the purity of the Christian religion, does pursue the true effect both of his baptism and of his ordination vows." It was on this ground that Luther regarded the Pope's excommunication as so much waste paper. Nor did Knox, in entering on his ministry in Scotland, hesitate, from any doubt on this point, to accept the charge so earnestly proffered to him by the Protestant congregation: "I will not affirm," says his biographer, "that our reformer utterly disregarded his ordination in the Popish church, although, if we may credit Knox's adversaries, this was his sentiment; but I have little doubt that he looked upon the charge which he received at St. Andrew's as principally constituting his call to the ministry."* "Brother," said the venerable Rough, the congregation being assembled, "in the name of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, and in the name of all who presently call you by my mouth, I charge you that you refuse not this holy vocation, as you tender the glory of God and the increase of Christ's kingdom." Turning to the audience—"Was not this your charge?" said the aged pastor; "do you not approve this call?" They all answered, "We do." Knox, overwhelmed, burst into tears, rushed out of the assembly, and shut himself up in his chamber. "No man saw in him," says the old history, "any sign of mirth, nor had he pleasure in companying with any man for many days together." Who can doubt that God set his seal to the transaction? "Romanists," says McCrie, "of course, declaimed about Knox's want of Episcopal ordination, as some hierarchical writers have also learned to talk, not scrupling, by their extravagant doctrine of the absolute necessity of ordination by the hands of a bishop who derived his powers by uninterrupted succession from the apostles, to invalidate the orders of all the reformed churches except their own—a doctrine which has been revived in the present enlightened age, and unblushingly defended, with the greater part of its absurd, illiberal and horrid consequences. The fathers of the English Reformation, however, were very far from entertaining such unchristian sentiments. When Knox afterwards went to England, they accepted his services without the slightest hesita-

our Scottish divine, Durham, says: "As God may furnish some with gifts in a more than ordinary way, so may he and use them to trust them out in a mixed way to the exercise of these for the edification of his church and make the seal of his call extraordinarily ratify their mission. This he fulfilled at the entry of the Reformation, raising up men extraordinarily furnished and commissioned for his work."—*Lectures on Retardation. Chap. 10.*