

tations of those facts ; the fundamental principles of the Divine revelation from the successive applications of these principles ; the completeness of the Divine teaching from the extent to which that teaching was understood and assimilated, even in the Apostolic Church ; the ideal portraiture in the Scriptures of the Church, which is the realized fullness of Him who filleth all in all, from the measure of the attainments and growth of the infant Christian communities. We must clearly discriminate between the Life which is unchangable, and the changing forms in which the one Life is embodied. Let us keep this distinctly before us, while we enquire first into the origin and then into the functions of the Christian ministry with special reference to the vital and intimate relationship which subsists between it and the Christian people.

Any enquiry into the origin of the ministry must deal with three important questions—the essential nature of the ministry, its external form, and its relation to the congregation.

The ministry, like the Church, is in its essential nature spiritual. Both are constituted upon the same basis. In fact, the ministry is a function of the Church, originating within it by the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit. Whatever is the basal principle of the Christian life, is also the basal principle of the Christian ministry. There is no difficulty in discovering from the Scriptures what this principle is. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, personal trust in Him, with the obedience which flows from it, is the primary and essential characteristic of a Christian, without which he could not be a Christian in reality, whatever he might be in profession. So the Church itself is, in its essential being, simply the fellowship of believers in Christ.

As the eminent Dr. Jackson, president of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, in the early part of the 17th century, a divine,