

ment must be diligently and critically searched, particularly the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, and in doing this we must lay aside, as much as possible, the notions which from prejudice we may have been accustomed to apply to the words Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon, and to endeavour to ascertain if possible the ideas which the inspired writers annexed to these terms.—The next source is the witness of the primitive Fathers. It is the fashion of many in modern times, to depreciate the authority of the Fathers, to consider their witness either as spurious, or their reasonings so weak as to be entitled to no weight. It must certainly be confessed that some of them reasoned very ill, and that others, from the Schools of Heathen Philosophy in which they had studied previous to their conversion, brought into the Church, doctrines by which the pure Faith of Christ was greatly corrupted. But surely, if they were men of common sense, they must have known what was the form of Church government under which they lived, and if they were possessed of ordinary integrity, they would not wilfully have misrepresented it. As to the genuineness of their testimony, it may be dangerous to question this in so far as regards matters of importance, as upon the validity of which we establish Infant Baptism. For certainly there is no direct command given in the New Testament for the Baptism of Infants, although there are the strongest proofs to be drawn from analogy and inference, and the testimony of the ancient Fathers puts the point beyond dispute. The change of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Lord's Day depends upon the same evidence, for neither our Lord nor His Apostles gave any express commandment on the matter. But what is of still greater moment, the genuineness of the Canon of Scripture must be proved from the same testimony. This has been shewn at great length by Lardner, in his Credibility, and Jones on the Canon, and admirably by Paley in the 2d Volume of his Evidences; therefore to deny the genuineness of these writings may be very dangerous, as an Infidel of the least acuteness may say,—if you deny these writings to be genuine in one respect, you invalidate their authority in all. To the writings of the Fathers, then, especially to those of the first three centuries, an appeal must be made whether Episcopacy be or be not of Apostolical institution. This is a subject upon which I should have no hesitation whatever in directing the Student to examine and think for himself, to scrutinize the evidence with a keen and logical eye and to take

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