

primitive Church, where, though it was the Bishop's business to "see that he laid hands suddenly on no man," and with whom therefore the final option of the candidate rested (for otherwise it is manifest he could not exercise this discretion in the act of Ordination); yet were *the people* invited to bear a part in the choice of the candidate. Accordingly the Church of England requires, that before any youth offer himself to the Bishop for Holy Orders he *give notice* of such intention publicly, *in the face of the congregation* in the church of the parish where he dwells; thus challenging his neighbours who have been acquainted with him, probably from childhood, to a scrutiny of his character, openly appealing to them for a *negative* testimonial, at least of their approval of his purpose: of their belief that no stain attaches to him to disqualify him for so sacred a function; and proclaiming aloud, in this "*Si quis*" (as it is called) that if any person knows any just cause or impediment for which he ought not be admitted to Holy Orders, he would now declare the same, or signify the same forthwith to the Bishop to whom he means to present himself for Ordination. That moreover she requires a certificate of this challenge having been openly made, and no adverse response returned to it, under the hand of the churchwarden, as the representative of the people; thus converting the instrument into a deliberate attestation of the merits of the individual.

Such a check has the Church deposited in the hands of *the people* against the introduction of persons of character or qualities unsuitable to their profession into Holy Orders; and so long as the people have this remedy in their power, it is not for them to content themselves with casting blame on the Clergy who grant testimonials to improper persons (supposing this to be the case); on the Bishop who accepts them, culpable, doubtless, to the last degree, as such a proceeding would be in both of them; but to attend to their own responsibilities, and take their own share in purging the Ministry, if purging it wants. So bent is the Church on involving the people in the responsibility which attaches to the selection of Ministers, that the positive testimonial of their beneficed Clergymen to the learning and good behaviour of the candidate for three years, or such period as may have elapsed since he left college, and up to which period his college testimonials reach, ought, in strictness, to have the subscription "of other credible persons"—i. e., respectable Laymen.

Although this latter part of the injunction may have fallen into disuetude from the practice of the Bishops and the supineness of the people, the clause itself stands fast as a monument of the interest the Church gives to the people in the most important article of religious provision for the country. Mr. Blunt further points to other most important duties which the Laity may perform, but those to which allusion has already been made are sufficient to convince the people that they have a very decided *role* in the choice of Pastors of the flock, and that to a very considerable extent the purity of the character of the Priesthood is positively entrusted to them. If the Laity did such duties as the interests of religion demand of them, they would