

earth was done, to hand on his commission to others. The Apostles, in like manner, were sent by Christ to act as his chief ministers in the Church, to appoint subordinate ministers under them, and then, as He had done, to hand on their commission to others. And on this commission, after our Lord had ascended up on high, the Apostles proceeded to act. They formed their converts into Churches: these Churches consisted of baptized believers, to officiate among whom subordinate ministers, priests and deacons, were ordained, while the Apostle who first formed any particular Church exercised over it episcopal superintendence, either holding an occasional visitation, by sending for the clergy to meet him, (as St. Paul summoned to Miletus the clergy of Ephesus,) or else transmitting to them those pastoral addresses, which, under the name of Epistles, form so important a portion of Holy Scripture. At length, however, it became necessary for the Apostles to proceed yet further, and to do as their Lord had empowered them to do, to hand on their commission to others, that at their own death the governors of the Church might not be extinct. Of this we have an instance in Titus, who was placed in Crete by St. Paul, to act as chief pastor or Bishop, and another in Timothy, who was in like manner set over the Church of Ephesus. And when Timothy was thus appointed to the office of chief pastor he was associated with St. Paul, who, in writing to the Philippians, commences his salutation thus: "Paul and Timotheus to the servants of Jesus Christ who are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons."

Now we have here the three orders of the ministry clearly alluded to. The title of Bishop is, to be sure, given to the second order; but it is not for words, but for things, that we are to contend. Titles may be changed while offices remain: so senators exist, though they are not now of necessity old men; and most absurd would it be, to contend that when we speak of the Emperor Constantine, we can mean no other office than that held under the Roman republic, because we find Cicero also saluted as emperor.

So stood the matter in the apostolic age, when the