

government extends, Congregationalism making each worshipping assembly independent, while Presbytery carries out to the widest limits desirable the principle of subordination and centralization. "It must be admitted that here the argument is more inferential than in the former case; but yet it seems sufficiently convincing. It is a presumption in favour of the Presbyterian view, that other systems here side with it against the Congregationalist, for the Anglican, the Lutheran, and the Methodist, however in some respects different from Presbytery, and from each other, all refuse to treat a single congregation as a final governing unit, and bind a whole organization into administrative unity. The Presbyterian view seems also—and this is more important, in harmony with the Bible representations of the oneness of the visible church of Christ, which beyond all question includes help and sympathy and from which it is hard to see why joint counsel and regulation should be excluded. Nor do the facts of New Testament history seem so well to agree with the Congregationalist as with the Presbyterian scheme. If it could be made certain or probable that there was only one worshipping assembly in places like Jerusalem, Antioch, or Ephesus, the inference would be different. But with the thousands of converts in Jerusalem, the open door in Antioch, and the vast success in Ephesus, this is hard of belief, not to mention that in the latter place (as elsewhere) there is mention of a church "in the house," i. e. of Aquila and Priscilla. And yet these various bodies of worshippers are spoken of as the *church* of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Ephesus respectively (Acts xiv. 27, xv. 22, xx. 17; Rev. ii. 1). Church acts are ascribed to this whole body; as in Jerusalem, meeting to consult and frame decisions; while in Ephesus the elders, as a body, are enjoined to take heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made them *episcopoi*. The council of Jerusalem may be urged too far as a Presbyterian precedent; since the Apostles were an exceptional element, and the churches affected by its decree were not fully represented. But it certainly speaks more for united government than for absolute congregational finality; and something equally clear as to an important debate, beginning and being prosecuted and despatched within the limits of a single congregation, would need to be on Scripture record, to counterweigh its authority. When once the element of real church power in the hands of office-bearers is admitted (and all Congregationalism that is not absolutely democratic admits this), the way seems paved by Scripture precedent for an indefinite extension of the rule; and all ordinary Synods and Assemblies that secure the fair representation of the body of Christ, so that it is truly governing itself in His name, are warranted—with even such novelties as a Presbyterian Council, or (were it desirable) a universal Assembly. It may be proper to close these statements and arguments, chiefly Scriptural, with one or two remarks of a more general character.

*First*, Presbyterianism is fitted to conserve and extend Scripture truth. Everything in the church of Christ connected with the formation of its creed, the admission of its members, the education, licence, and teaching of its ministers, and the bearing of its public acts, as affecting the truth of God, is thus matter of universal interest and debate, and the ordinary procedure of its courts affords innumerable opportunities of witnessing for truth and resisting defection, such as do not exist under