

of ordination. This order was clearly appointed by the laying on of the hands of the apostles. St. Paul laid his hands upon Timothy and Titus. He speaks of the gift that was in Timothy "by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim. i. 6), and again "with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (1 Tim. iv. 14).

In the case of James of Jerusalem, and as it seems to me of Timothy and Titus, we see the beginning of territorial bishops, which was general in the next century.

Historic controversy has raged, and still rages round the origin of the Episcopal order. There are three possibilities:

(1.) Was the Episcopal order an extension of the Apostolate, which was established as a permanent order superior to that of presbyter-bishops? or,

(2.) Was the authority once exercised by apostles subsequently exercised by a college of presbyters in the local church, and then the chairman gradually became possessed of authority over others, and thus the Episcopate was evolved? or,

(3.) Did the functions of the original apostles die with them, and was then the historic Episcopate evolved from the order of presbyter to meet the needs of the church?

Without minimising the historic arguments which are deduced in support of the two latter contentions, it seems to me that the first proposition is the one which is supported by the great weight of historic evidence. We find Episcopacy in the modern sense established at a date within the lifetime of some of the twelve. Clement, of Alexandria, tells us that when St. John returned from Patmos to Ephesus, he went about in the neighbouring districts "in some places to establish bishops, in others to organize whole churches, in others to ordain clergy, etc."

Tertullian confirms this. "We have the Churches who have John for their teacher. For the series of bishops (of the Churches of Asia) if taken back to its origin will rest upon his authorization." And Irenaeus, who had been a disciple of Polycarp, says, that he (Polycarp) was "not only made a disciple by apostles and held converse with many who had seen Christ, but was also established in Asia by apostles as bishop in the Church of Smyrna." No fair minded scholar can question, in the light of Bishop Lightfoot's work, the authenticity of the Ignatian Epistles. It is not necessary for me to do more than to quote one passage from the many which might be quoted from his writings, to show the existence of the order of bishops in his day.

"So then" he says, "It becometh you to run in harmony with the mind of the bishop; which thing also ye do. For your honourable presbytery, which is worthy of God, is attuned to the bishop, even as its strings to a lyre."