

lossal strength. Others still, aim at combining these elements into one, and while they would embellish the sanctuary, would at the same time shrink from obscuring its light or spotting its holiness. We may, however, safely assume as a rule of Scripture, that that form of Church organization which is most simple, and permits most freely the inner life and power of the Spirit to act outwardly upon the world, is the best. For our own Presbyterian Church we claim this simplicity and this adaptation to the free and active spirit of the Christian life. We think we can show that "*our Church*" is strong as a pyramid, *compacted and knit together*,—and yet, withal, that it is graceful in its proportions, as a Grecian temple. What! it may be asked, is your Presbyterian model the perfect archetype of forms? Perfect or not perfect, this only we say, that our constitution in its scriptural and normal form, has come from the hand of God. He is its Maker, and we claim for it accordingly a "*jus divinum*." True it is, and with sorrow we grant, that carnal elements do sometimes so interfere with it as to mar its beauty and to weaken its strength. Still, in its worst estate it is a noble ruin, and seems ever to retain the recuperative energy of the living temple. It is pleasing to find that in these days, both in Europe and in America, it is ridding itself of the frigid accretions of its torpid middle age, and is resuming its primitive Apostolic beauty and life. May the God of our Fathers be its shield and its strength!

Let us in a few sentences remind our readers of the scriptural authority upon which our Presbyterian Church organization rests. This question has been treated in a variety of ways, and its literature, both ancient and modern, is a noble monument of Christian erudition. We like exceedingly the way in which the question has been stated in a little book lately published in Ireland, entitled, "*The Apostolic Church, which is it?*" The plan of the writer is to examine the Scriptures with a view of ascertaining from them the facts that bear on the form of the Apostolic Church. Having done this, he then inquires which of the Church organizations embodies all or the most of these facts? By this means he arrives at that form which is best entitled to be regarded as Apostolic. The axiom upon which he proceeds is this:—"The modern Church which embodies in its government most Apostolic principles comes nearest in its government to the Apostolic Church." His Apostolic principles are the following:—

1.—"That in the Apostolic Church the office-bearers were elected by the people" In proof of which he refers to the election of an Apostle in Acts i. and to the election of Deacons in Acts vi. ✓

2.—"That in the Apostolic Church the offices of Bishop and Elder, or Presbyter, were identical." Titus i., 5.—7. Acts xx., 17, 18. ✓

3.—"That in each Church there was a plurality of Presbyters or Elders. Phil. i., 2. Acts xx., 17., and xiv. 23." ✓

4.—"That in the Apostolic Church, ordination by the imposition of hands, was the act of a plurality of Elders: the Presbytery." Acts vi., 6, and xiii., 1-3. 1 Tim. i., 14. ✓

5.—"The privilege of appeal to the Assembly of Presbyters." Acts xv." ✓

6.—"That the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Head of the Church." Eph. i., 22." ✓

To these we would add.

7.—"That the Church is a government. Rom. xii., 8. 1 Cor. xii., 28. &c.

8.—"That Presbyters were of two kinds, teaching and ruling. 1 Tim. v., 17. Eph. iv., 11.

9.—"That there were two and only two orders of ministers in the Church, namely: Bishops or Presbyters, and Deacons. Phill. i., 1. 1 Tim. iii.

These complete a circle of principles, which we feel persuaded are irrefragable and cannot be explained away. Upon these we take our stand. By comparing the existing forms of Church polity in the world with them, we find that the