

mentioned in a former page, that there were never less than three, that the judicatory might never be equally divided.

Such were the arrangements for maintaining purity and order in the Synagogues, or parish churches of the old economy, anterior to the advent of the Messiah. It would seem to be impossible for any one to contemplate this statement, so amply supported by all sound authority without recognising a striking likeness to the arrangements afterwards adopted in the New Testament Church. That this likeness is real and has been maintained by some of the ablest writers on the subject, the following short extracts will sufficiently establish.

The first quotation shall be taken from Bishop Burnet. "Among the Jews," says he, "he who was the chief of the Synagogue was called *Chazan Hake nazelh*, that is, the Bishop of the Congregation, and *Sheliach Tsiibbor*, the Angel of the Church, And the Christian Church being modelled as near the form of the Synagogue as could be, as they retained many of the rites, so the form of their government was continued, and the names remained the same." And again; "In the Synagogues there was, first, one that was called the Bishop of the Congregation. Next the three Orders and Judges of every thing about the Synagogue, who were called *Tsekenim*, and by the Greeks *Presbyteroi* or *Gerontes*. These ordered and determined every thing that concerned the Synagogue, or the persons in it. Next to them, were the three *Parnassin* or Deacons, whose charge was to gather the collections of the rich, and to distribute them to the poor. The term Elder, was generally given to all their Judges; but chiefly to those of the great Sanhedrim. So we have in Matt. 16, 21. Mark 8, 31. 14. 43. & 15. 1 and Acts 23. 14." "A great deal might be said to prove that the Apostles, in their first constitutions, took things as they had been modelled to their hand in the Synagogue. And this they did, both because it was not their design to innovate, except where the nature of the Gospel dispensation obliged them to do it: As also, because, they took all means possible to gain the Jews, who we find were zealous adherers to the traditions of their fathers, and not easily weaned from those precepts of Moses, which by Christ's death were evacuated. And if the Apostles went so great a length in complying with them in greater matters as circumcision and other legal observances, (which appears from the Acts and Epistles,) we have good grounds to suppose that they would have yielded to them in what was more innocent and less important. Besides, there appears, both in our Lord himself, and in his Apostles, a great inclination to symbolize with them as far as was possible. Now the nature of the Christian worship shows evidently, that it came in the room of the Synagogue, which was moral, and not of the temple worship, which was typical and ceremonial. Likewise this parity of customs betwixt the Jews and Christians, was such that it made them taken by the Romans, and other more

overly observers, for one sect of religion. And, finally, any that will impartially read the New Testament, will find that when the forms of government or worship are treated of, it is not done with such architectural exactness, as was necessary, if a new thing had been instituted, which we find practised by Moses. But the Apostles rather speak as those who give rules for the ordering and directing of what was already in being. From all which it seems well grounded and rational to assume, that the first constitution of the Christian Churches was taken from the model of the Synagogue, in which these Elders were separated, for the discharge of their employments, by an imposition of hands, as all Jewish writers do clearly witness."

The second testimony shall be that of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Godwin, an English divine of great erudition, especially in oriental learning. In his well known work, entitled "*Moses and Aaron*," we find the following passage:—"There were in Israel distinct Courts, consisting of distinct persons; the one principally for Church business; the other for affairs in the commonwealth:—the one an ecclesiastical Consistory; the other a civil Judicatory. The secular Consistory was named a Sanhedrim, or Council; the spiritual, a Synagogue. The office of the ecclesiastical court was to put a difference between things holy and unholy, and to determine appeals in controversies of difficulty. It was a representative Church. Hence is that, *Dic Ecclesia*; Matt. 18, 16.

The next question shall be taken from Dr Lightfoot, another Episcopal divine, still more distinguished for his oriental and rabbinical learning. "The Apostle," says he, "callethe the minister Episcopus, (or Bishop,) from the common and known title of the *Chazan* or Overseer in the Synagogue." And again; "Besides these, there was the public minister of the Synagogue, who prayed publicly, and took care about reading the law, and sometimes preached, if there were not some other to discharge this office. This person was called *Sheliach Tsiibbor*, the angel of the Church, and the *Chazan Ecanmeth*, or Bishop of the congregation. The *Aruch* gives the reason of the name. The *Chazan* says he is *Sheliach Tsiibbor*, the angel of the Church, (or the public minister,) and the *Targum* renders the word *Aruch* by the word *Huze*, one that oversees. For it is incumbent on him to oversee how the reader reads, and whom he may call out to read in the law. The public Minister of the Synagogue himself read not the law publicly; but every Sabbath he called out seven of the Synagogue (on other days fewer) who he judged fit to read. He stood by him that read, with great care, observing that he read nothing either falsely or improperly, and called him back, and corrected him, if he had failed in any thing. And hence he was called *Chazan*, that is, *Episcopus*, Bishop, or Overseer. Certainly the signification of the words Bishop and Angel of the Church, had been determined with less noise, if recourse had been had to the