

lation in which he stands to the flock which he oversees. Paul said to the presbyters of Ephesus, "Take heed to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you bishops,"—(Acts xx. 28.) And Peter says, "The presbyters which are among you I exhort to feed the flock of God which is among you, acting as the bishops thereof,"—1 Peter v. 1) But the prelatial bishop is the pastor, not of the flock, but of the shepherds of the flock. He derives his existence as a bishop, not from his relation to the Church, but to his brother pastors. Such a relation is perfectly anomalous and imaginary. There is no foundation for it in the Christian Church; Christ has appointed no such office-bearers; there are no rules for their election, no qualifications prescribed, no work assigned for them. Even our Lord Jesus himself, "the shepherd and bishop of our souls," derives this title from his relation to the Church, his spiritual flock which he feeds and governs. He is not called a bishop because He has rule over ministers,—nor the Chief Shepherd, because He is the head of the shepherds; but because He is the Head of the Church, including pastors and people. He is "that great Shepherd of the sheep," occupying, in a supreme sense, the same relation to His Church, with that which is occupied, in a subordinate sense, by the meanest of his servants in the ministry.

It might be easily shown that the power claimed by the prelate is as little known in our civil jurisdiction, as it is in that of Christ's house. We have Courts rising above Courts; but nothing like Judges domineering over Judges. Such an anomaly, at least, is not to be found in civil Courts, whatever pretensions they may have made of late over the ecclesiastical. Parity of jurisdiction reigns in our Courts of law and Houses of Parliament. There may be a superiority of *order*, as there is in the Presbyterian Church; but no superiority of *authority*. Neither the President nor the Speaker claims any more power than our Moderator, who wields not his own authority but that of the Assembly, and who is not the master of the Court but its servant.

But, again, the office of bishop of a bishops, or pastor of pastors, is not only a nonentity and a nondescript thing in the Church of Christ, but it has been expressly discharged by Him, as incompatible with the character and status of his ministers. Our Lord knew well that such a thing would be attempted, and in point of fact, set up in His Church; and he straitly forbade the Apostles to make the attempt. "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule among the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them; but so it shall not be among you,"—(Mark x. 42.) No veto could be more express. As the moral governor, God appoints kings and rulers, invested with magisterial and legislative power. As the King of the Church, the Lord Jesus appoints in her, not kings, but ministers, whose power is strictly ministerial and executive. Hence the absurdity of transferring to the rulers of the Church those ideas of regal dignity and princely grandeur, which we annex to the same office in civil governments. And hence the very pretension which the prelatic bishop makes to "exercise lordship" over his brethren, proves him to be no true minister of Jesus Christ.

In the next place, we maintain that the prelatic bishop wants the call of the Church to the office which he occupies. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Where, we ask, is the divine call of the bishop? It is not, as we have seen, to be found in the Scriptures. And by whom has he been called? Certainly not by the Church; for he has neither the call of the Christian people, nor of the Christian ministry. In fine, the prelatic bishop does not perform the *work* of a Christian minister. When the Lord met the Apos-