

taste. It is further censured as in some degree sully-  
ing the purity of the fundamental maxim of the polity of the  
Christian Church, "That nothing be done without the  
knowledge and consent of the Bishop."

Many years ago I had a conversation with my friend the  
celebrated Bishop Hobart, on this subject. I asked him  
how it happened that in some of the Diocesan Conventions  
the Bishop's rights are questioned, and he became little  
more than the chairman of a club or the moderator of a  
Presbytery? The good Bishop said it was a serious  
defect, much to be lamented, and contrary to the sacred  
character of the Church, and had been wholly unknown to  
ecclesiastical history. He attributed its introduction into  
the American Church to the unhappy times, and the great  
ignorance among the Clergy as well as the Laity at that  
early period, of the true principles of Church polity.  
After all, continued he, it seldom troubles a Bishop of firm-  
ness and discretion, and indeed our more intelligent  
people begin to feel that the Bishop does not preside over  
his Synod by election or connivance—he sits there by  
divine permission and an inherent right, which the people  
can neither give nor take away, and the moment he leaves  
his chair the Synod ceases to exist. It is nevertheless a  
pernicious error, and from time to time threatens great  
evils in dioceses where the Bishop is weak or irresolute,  
and would soon sink them into a species of Presbyterianism  
but for the house of Bishops, which has proved itself by  
wise and timely interference the safety valve for all such  
difficulties. Of late years they have been of more rare  
occurrence. The children of a family, continued the  
Bishop, might as well dethrone their father, as a Synod to  
dethrone their Bishop. The government of the Church of  
Christ is paternal throughout, and the Bishop sits at the  
head of his Synod as a father in a well regulated family  
sits at the head of his household.

No trace of this dangerous innovation is found in the  
Archbishop's bill, which passed the House of Lords, but  
was stopped in the House of Commons, nor in constitu-