

to any fixed diocese, but both were sent forth and recalled as extraordinary evangelists, or helpers of the Apostles, as occasion for their ministrations occurred—we see in the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, and the fact that the very Apostles acted with Presbyters in the ordinary work of the early Church, that they (the Apostles) were just in this way providing for the continued exercise of these functions, including the power to ordain, by the ordinary officers of the Church, when they themselves, the extraordinary, should be withdrawn. But, on any construction of such passages, the position we take at present holds good. Whether by the hands of one or by the hands of a plurality, laying on of hands rashly, indiscriminately, is forbidden. Presbyters there were to be in every city. Timothy was to commit the things he had heard to trust-worthy men. And see the description in those letters of the qualifications of the “*Episcopos*,”—“holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.”—Tit. i: 9.

It is scarcely necessary that we should refer to additional evidences of its being the will of God that to the end of time there should be an order of men called pastors and teachers, elders and overseers of the flock of Christ, and these pastors, too, distinct from other rulers, as having it for their chief employ to labor “in word and doctrine.” There is but one passage in the New Testament that with the least plausibility, as it appears to us, can be brought in justification of the idea that to teach and preach belong to all christian disciples,—and indeed no one denies that both by his life, and by use of private conversation, every Christian may preach, or spread the good tidings. It is said (Acts viii.) that they who were scattered abroad on the persecution about Stephen, went everywhere preaching the word. We rather think that some, in reading this passage, do not advert to the fact that, though universal terms are used in the first verse,—“they were all scattered abroad except the Apostles,”—it is not said in the fourth verse that all who were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word; it is simply, “they who were scattered abroad.” And it is surely a good reason for taking this with limitation, that the very next verse again tells us that the dispersion brought Philip, a companion of Stephen, and one of the seven, to a city of Samaria; thither he went and preached Christ to them, performing miracles also.* And only follow the narrative out, you find the instruction of the Ethiopian eunuch provided for by this same Philip being detached and directed by the spirit of God himself to proffer his aid, in the interpretation of the word of prophecy, to the stranger. And yet, as illustrating still further our present position, the Apostles having once heard that Samaria had received the word of God, all is so done in order, that two of their own number are sent down by authority of the Apostolic College, to do what none less than Apostles could do,—impart the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

Finally, our brief induction would not be complete without our noticing how the later books of Scripture are the most express in warning against erro-

* I would not lay stress on the difference between the two words *εὐαγγελιζόμενοι* and *ἐκήρυξαν*, used in the two verses, for without doubt the former is more than once applied in this same chapter to the public and official proclamation of the gospel message; yet it is to be remarked that the sacred writer, in passing from the statement concerning the dispersed, applies the latter term in distinction to the official preacher.