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THE PERMANENCE AND EFFICIENCY OF THE MINISTRY.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE PREACHED AT HALDIMAND, U. C., JULY 10, 1839.

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IN the beginning of the Gospel, God vouchsafed miraculous endowment to his church, in rich and suitable variety. There is reason to think that the office-bearers, in general, shared in this liberal effusion: we do not, however, mean to assert, that such extraordinary endowment was indispensably necessary to every office, though it is obvious that some of them entirely depended on it. Attention to this distinction is of much importance; because miraculous endowment having ceased, it shews that some of the offices have also ceased, whilst others remain permanent in the church.

There are, what we call, an ordinary end, and an extraordinary end. By the former, we mean what is common and usual in the condition of man; by the latter, what is uncommon and unusual. The extraordinary end can be accomplished only by extraordinary means; the ordinary, either by ordinary or extraordinary. The dividing of the Red Sea, the bitter water made sweet by salt, Naaman cleansed of his leprosy by dipping in the waters of Jordan, the dead raised by the touch of Jesus, the sick healed by the shadow of Peter, are instances of the extraordinary end accomplished by extraordinary means. But the circumstances of feeding the children of Israel with manna, supplying them with water

from the flinty rock, and causing their clothes not to wax old for forty years, were extraordinary with regard to the means, but ordinary with regard to the end; because, by our usual sagacity and industry, we can procure food and raiment. It is, however, obvious, that by no sagacity or power of our's can we accomplish the extraordinary end. The ordinary condition of man must be preserved; not so with the extraordinary: hence the permanency of the ordinary means, and the temporary nature of the extraordinary. Extraordinary means may be employed to promote an ordinary end; but an extraordinary end can never be promoted by ordinary means. It follows that this end cannot be accomplished when the extraordinary means cease; but it does not follow that the ordinary end cannot be promoted, though the extraordinary means cease; because ordinary means are sufficient for this purpose. For instance, extraordinary aid was afforded to Bazaleel and Aholiab, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, &c.; for the Lord said unto Moses: "I have called by name Bazaleel; and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship," &c.—Ex. xxxi. Yet we find, in a subsequent