

The idea that the bishops, priests and deacons of the Christian church, succeed to the offices of high priests and levite in the Jewish, is as absurd as it is unfounded, It is acknowledged by every one, who has ever read the Scriptures, that the ancient high priest was a type of our Saviour who is a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec—granting then sir, that the Jewish and Christian churches are editions of the same, it operates with equal force against the cause of my adversary. Our great high priest having offered a sacrifice once for all, ascended on high, and led captivity captive, has left the two other orders of priests and levites on earth according to his ancient prediction quoted and applied by saint Clement to the two orders of ecclesiastical officers. This ridiculous parrallel between the Jewish and Christian priesthood, was never known or thought of, 'till the pride and ambition began to swell the doctors of the church who wished to succeed to the emoluments of the Jewish priests. “ This notion (says Mosheim) was propagated, with industry, some time after the reign of Adrian, when the second destruction of Jerusalem had extinguished, among the Jews, all hopes of seeing their Government restored to its former lustre, and their country arising from its ruins. It is, indeed, highly probable, that they who first introduced this absurd comparison of offices so entirely distinct, did it rather through ignorance and error; than through artifice or design. The notion, however, once introduced its natural effects, & these effects were pernicious. The errors which it gave rise to, were many; & one of its immediate consequences was, the establishing a greater difference between the Christian pastors and their flock; than the genius of the gospel seems to admit (Ec. Hist. vol. I p. 147.) The mist with which my antagonist darkens and disgraces St. Jerome's sentiments, to conceal the inconsistency of his remarks on St. Clement is thus dispelled by the masterly hand of bishop Stillingsfleet: ‘ Jerome spends a great part of his epistle, to prove that a bishop and a presbyter are the same. Is it imaginable, that a