

Continental Protestants, and English Dissenters. Among the most conspicuous of the Anglicans were the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishops of Salisbury and Worcester, Canon Meyrick, and Dr. Newin, of Rome, representing the American Church. The Rev. R. S. Oldham attended officially to represent the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"EPISCOPALIANISM."

Dr. Sinclair, the Archdeacon of London, has again brought forward publicly the theory that episcopacy is good for the well-being of the Church, but not necessary to its existence; in other words that it is not of the *esse* but only of the *bene-esse* of the Church of Christ. It ought not to be difficult to show that this contention, when pushed to the result that the dissenting sects should be recognized as imperfectly organised members of the Christian Body, rests upon a confusion of thought. This confusion, indeed, is often shared by those who hold the traditional doctrine about the necessity of episcopacy. Deeming themselves bound to maintain the essential character of a *threefold ministry*, and of a certain form of *Church government*, they are at an obvious disadvantage in the controversy. What is essential cannot be dispensed with even for an hour. But it is easy to imagine exceptional circumstances in which a true portion of the Church has temporarily existed without all the three Orders, or under a non-monarchical *regimen*. * * * *

It is specious to assert that the Church is only divided from the sects and from the foreign Protestant bodies by a question of "Church government." It must certainly seem harsh to "unchurch" and refuse the hand of fellowship to portions of the Church of Christ on the ground that they are governed on a somewhat different model from that which we hold to be most primitive and most advantageous. That this is not the real question at issue is shown by the fact that the Church accords no more recognition to the "Episcopal Methodist" than to any other sect. If Calvin and Luther's disciples were to adopt an episcopal form of ecclesiastical polity, or if the Scottish Presbyterians were to appoint certain of their ministers to a position of authority over the rest, the Church would be glad that they had returned to ancient models, but would not be a bit more disposed to enter into communion with them than at present.

It is perfectly true that Hooker and his contemporaries conceived the important question to be one of Church polity. But Hooker, who has been called the father of Whiggery (though, indeed, Dr. Johnson put the origin of Whiggery a good deal further back), took a view of the constitution of the Church which every High Churchman rejects. His view that authority proceeds from the Christian people was developed by Locke and the Whigs into the political doctrine that all government proceeds from the consent of the governed. Hooker held that the ministerial commission and pastoral authority are derived *upwards* from the people of Christ who may, if they see fit, for good cause vary the laws of the Church and the form of Church government. While, therefore, deploring the necessity which has caused the foreign Protestants to abandon the "historic episcopate," he

unchurching the organisations they had set up.

The Church of England, however, soon returned to the traditional and Catholic standpoint. Dr. Sinclair will never convince Churchmen that his contention is right until he has grasped and attacked the Catholic doctrine of *Apostolic* Church, in other words, the doctrine that authority exists by *devolution from above* and not by representation from below. The commission which the ambassadors for Christ hold, and the authority which the rulers of the Church exercise, is strictly *Apostolic*, not representative. The Church Association lately contended that this is not so; because when our Lord said, "As the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you," the verb in the former part of the sentence is "Apostello," in the latter part "pempo." But "Apostello" is used again and again of the ministerial commission given by Christ (e.g., John xvii. 18), and the name "Apostle" was, we are expressly told, given by our Lord to the twelve. As He was the Father's Apostle, so those whom he should send were to be His Apostles. To receive or reject them is to receive or reject Him. The Apostles certainly did not derive their authority from the Christian democracy. Nor is there any evidence that after them the transmission of authority was to cease, and the people to become the depository of authority. The people nominate the seven, but the Apostles appoint them (Acts vi. 3, 6). Timothy and Titus, ordained and placed in authority by St. Paul, ordain others. However, we are not concerned to prove the point, nor even to show that an "apostolic ministry" means not merely one modelled on a primitive pattern, but one which is continued by *apostling*. The fact remains that the issue between Liberal theology, represented by the Archdeacon of London, and the Catholic standpoint is just this: Are the Christian *people* the depository of authority to govern and minister, or is *Christ's commission given by successive transmission* through a special order of men? It is plain that the ministers of the denominations have been commissioned, mediately or immediately, by "two or three," or some larger number meeting together and appointing them; the shepherds appointed by the sheep; the ambassadors by those to whom they are sent; the rulers by those whom they are to govern. Whether this was first done yesterday or three centuries since makes no difference. A stream can rise no higher than its source; a chain is not better for having many links if it be not fastened at the top.

Here, then, is a plain issue. Puritanism holds that with the people of Christ, the body of believers, (seeing that each member of it has an unction from on high and is both king and priest) is lodged the ultimate authority, under Christ, to legislate and send. If Dr. Sinclair agrees with this view he is right in defending it. But he has to convince his fellow-Churchmen that it is a *scriptural* and *true* theory. He has to show that it does not change Christ's kingdom into a democracy, or at least a democratic Caesarism. His object is not to be gained by arguments, *ad populum*, or (to speak frankly) *ad captandum*; by language likely to obtain the applause of the shallow newspaper and the worldling, but unconvincing to those who are striving to maintain the supernatural and authoritative character of the ministry which Christ

"gave" (Eph. iv. 11) and *not* man. He has to show that the organisation and ministry of the sects are not built upon a humanly invented and unscriptural foundation. He has to answer the question, who gave these men their outward call and commission; who sent them into God's vineyard? Or to put the question another way, Does the Venerable Archdeacon believe that it is not absolutely essential that he who ministers and sends others to minister for *Christ*, shall have been ordained thereto by one (or more) of those who have received authority themselves to minister and send? Can a human being confer an office and authority which he has not received himself? But, now, every dissenting ministry has originated in this way. Or if the Archdeacon were to reply that transmission by devolution is the rule, but that in great need and emergency the people may ordain their own pastors, he must then say whether, supposing this to be so, the ministries of the existing communities has such a justifiable origin.

It is plain, then, that the question is not one of differing forms of Church government and organisation, but about the source of the pastoral commission. The Apostolic Succession is a vital principle based on Holy Scripture, Church tradition, and the idea of supernatural religion. The threefold ministry and prelatial government on the monarchical pattern, on the other hand, are of Apostolic appointment, like the Lord's Day and many other institutions in the "Kingdom of God," about which, doubtless the Lord was speaking "to the Apostles whom He had chosen" (Acts i. 2, 3,) before He ascended to the Father. But a portion of the Church might conceivably exist for a time with two orders (Bishops and priests) or one (Bishops only) and might be governed by several Bishops exercising their authority in common, i.e. oligarchically rather than monarchically.

When it is said that succession and transmission are the only things absolutely necessary, such a doctrine lends no colour to Presbyterianism. A man can transmit no powers which he has not himself received. But the modern Presbyterian traces (at best) through the mediæval priest, who in being ordained received no authority to ordain others. It is not enough that a man shall have authority to administer the Word and Sacraments. This gives him no right to *ordain* others. "Those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent which be chosen and called to this work by men who have public authority given them in the congregation to call and send ministers into the Lord's vineyard." (Article XXIII.) Suppose that there were in some parts of the primitive Church for a short time men called "presbyters" who had been given authority to rule and to ordain, yet it does not follow that because a man is in modern times called a "presbyter," and traces some sort of succession through the mediæval "priest" (that name being etymologically the same as "presbyter") that he holds the office of the supposed "ruling-elder" or presbyter-bishop of the Apostolic age. It is a question of things, not names. What the Presbyterian has to show is that the second order of the ministry, without having received formal commission from the Apostles to govern and ordain, did govern and ordain. If they did not, how could John Wesley, (e.g.) do so?

Archdeacon Sinclair's strongest argument is