

strategy, duly elected; and all parish matters makes them perfectly independent of any external interference. If, therefore, your correspondent means to assert that Synodical action is intended to supersede the legal authority, rights, and privileges of parishes, and thus to deprive them of all control in dealing with the incumbent and in managing their own affairs, is he aware that he thus makes an admission of a "most damaging tendency?" an admission which would at once condemn the Synod as illegal, unjust, dishonest, and oppressive. For one of the unanswerable arguments against that body is, that its action will necessarily interfere with the free working of Parish Corporations, and thus prostrate, it may be, their efforts to promote the interests of the Church.

His allusion to the weight of influence which is usually claimed for a majority in the decision of public questions, opens up a field of remark and discussion, which is by far too extensive for due consideration in a letter like this. I would merely state, for the benefit of your correspondent S. M. C., that no majority, however numerous and powerful, can enforce in this protestant country, their decisions or opinions on an unwilling minority, regarding matters of a religious character. The minority have a perfect right not only to maintain their own views and impressions, but also to carry them into practical effect, so long as their efforts do not conflict with the laws of the land. Thanks to the prescient wisdom of our forefathers, the Bill of Rights, and the Act of Settlement have decided that point for all time. At all events S. M. C. may rest satisfied that the present writer would not on any account whatever, identify his views and conscientious convictions with either the intentions or wishes of those, of whatever party, who would recklessly deprive us of that liberty of thought and speech with which the Bible and the British Constitution have made us free.

The paragraph, the last but one of his communication, in which he denounces the Anti-Synodists as obstructionists, and endeavours to arouse the energy and determination of his friends to the accomplishment of some great thing, deserves but little notice. No great harm can result from an attempt to mount the high horse, even in discussions of an important bearing, only the horseman should be careful, lest, while canteing and carvetting before an admiring public, the steed should become unruly and lead him into very unpleasant proximity to thickets and thorns, or mayhap throw him inexorably into the mud. He says: "let the ancient customs prevail." So say I. But will he have the goodness to point out and specify the precise time and place, when and where Synodical Episcopacy prevailed? Of course I do not here mean those Synods and Councils which often met in the early ages of the Christian Church, and at which numbers of bishops and presbyters gave their attendance, for the purpose of adjusting points of faith and discipline. I refer to a case where an attempt may have been made to administer the usual affairs of a Diocese, through the intervention of a Synod,—a case where such Synod met biennially, with the bishop as perpetual chairman, who at the same time managed to control the action of the whole body by means of committees, recommended if not appointed by himself, and composed of laymen as well as clergymen. Will your correspondent have the goodness, I ask, to point out to me and to your readers one such instance in the whole range of Christian antiquity, or of ancient Christian literature? I hereby challenge him to produce *one*. And let him observe that any future communication from his pen, in which this challenge shall be disregarded, will not receive any attention.

No, government by Synods was *not* an ancient custom. The invention is quite modern. From my own enquiries and earnest and devout seeking after truth, both in ancient and modern literature, I am well satisfied that Synodical government in our Episcopal Church is a direct innovation, both on primitive customs and the practice of reformed episcopacy. It may be characterised as a marked departure from the beautiful simplicity and scriptural consistency of our sound discipline and order. And the merest tyro in logic or theology will tell you, that it is in direct antagonism to the abstract yet scriptural theory of episcopacy. For this reason we, who are conscientiously opposed to the whole movement, do not hesitate to view it in the light of an attempt to set up a new denomination amongst us. And however much may be the regret and the sorrow, with which the admission is made, yet no skillful application of terms, no artful colouring of expressions can possibly alter the facts, as they are presented to us in the present position of our poor Church.

For one I do not for a moment dispute the right of the Synodists to follow out their