

sinners were brought from the error of their ways to the knowledge of the true God. To him be all the praise.

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Miscellany.

JUDGMENT OF OUR REFORMERS ON APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.  
(From the London Record.)

In our former notice of this subject, we said, that to prevent mistake, the term, "Episcopal," should be here used, and not "Apostolical;" for the succession of orders, and not of doctrine, is what is intended. Whatever may be thought of sacerdotal succession, it cannot be viewed as important as the succession of truth, except we adopt the strange notion that the success and efficacy of truth is made dependent on certain orders of ministers; than which nothing can be more groundless, as it has neither Scripture, nor reason, nor experience in its favour; but it is what a vagrant imagination alone has discovered while under the guidance of spiritual ambition.

Bishop Jewel, both in his *Apology* and *Defence*, wholly concurs in opinion, on this point, with Archdeacon Philpot and our other martyred Reformers. He objects not to succession, but maintains that true religion is not confined to it; on the contrary, that false religion has often been found connected with it. He does not therefore make it an essential point in the constitution of a Christian Church. In his *Apology* he says:

"The grace of God is promised to a *pius* mind and one that feareth God,—not to chairs and successions.—If the place and designation of itself suffice, then Manasseh seconded David, and Caaphas Aaron; and an idol hath often stood in the temple of God."—P. 191.

Of singular import are the following extracts from the *Defence*:

"Lawful succession standeth not only in possession of place, but also, and much rather, in doctrine and diligence.—If it were certain, that the religion and truth of God passeth evermore orderly by succession, and none otherwise, then were succession a very good substantial argument of the truth. But Christ saith:—*In cathedra Moysis sedent scribae et Pharisei*; by order of succession, 'The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses's chair.' Annas and Caaphas, touching succession, were as well priests as Aaron and Eleazar. Of succession Paul saith to the faithful at Ephesus:—'I know that after my departure, ravening wolves shall enter and succeed me; and out of your own selves there shall (by succession) spring up men, speaking perversely.' Therefore St. Jerome saith:—*Non sanctorum filii sunt, qui tenent loca sanctorum*. (Dist. 40.)—'They be not always the children of holy men, that (by succession) have the places of holy men.'—Pp. 39, 127.

And having referred to the notorious heterodoxy and palpable vices of many of the Bishops of Rome, Jewel speaks thus of the Popish succession, and the same may be said of the Tractarian:—

"This is Mr. Harding's holy succession! Though faith fail, yet succession must hold: for unto such succession God hath bound the Holy Ghost! But St. Paul saith:—'Faith cometh, not by succession, but by hearing; and hearing cometh, not by legacy or inheritance from bishop to bishop, but of the word of God.' They are not always godly which succeed the godly. By succession, Christ saith, Desolation shall sit in the holy place; and Antichrist shall press into the room of Christ. It is not sufficient to claim succession of place; it behoveth us rather to have regard to the succession of doctrine."—P. 132.

And again he says:—  
"The faith of Christ, Mr. Harding, goeth not always by succession. The bishops of Rome have been Arians, Nestorians, Monotholites, and otherwise found in horrible heresies."—P. 341.

The above extracts sufficiently prove, that Bishop Jewel did not consider the true Church necessarily dependent upon Episcopacy, but on the doctrine of the gospel. He viewed the Church as connected with the truth, and not with any particular order of Church government. But the following passages are more decisive:—

"We neither have bishops without Church, nor Church without bishops. Neither doth the Church of England this way

depend of them, whom you so often call apostates, as if our Church were no Church without them. They are no apostates, Mr. Harding; that is rather your name, and of good right belongeth to you. They are, for a great part, learned and grave godly men, and are much ashamed to see your folkes. Notwithstanding, if there is not one, neither of them nor of us left alive, yet would not therefore the whole Church of England flee to Louvaine. Tertullian saith,—'And we being laymen, are we not priests?' It is written, Christ hath made us both a kingdom and priests unto God his Father. The authority of the church, and the honour by the assembly or council of order sanctified by God, hath made a difference between the clergy and laity. Where there is no assembly of ecclesiastical order, the priest being there alone (without the company of other priests), doth both minister the oblation and also baptize. Yea, and he there but three together, and though they be laymen, yet is there a Church: for every one liveth of his own faith."—P. 131.

The bringing forward of this passage from Tertullian, in connection with Episcopacy, can leave no doubt in our minds respecting Jewel's views. Like our other Reformers, he regarded Episcopacy as the best form, but not essential. Nor can we be surprised at this; for, like Bradford, and, we believe, all our martyred Reformers, Jewel did not think that there is any scriptural authority for Episcopacy as a distinct order from Presbytery. Had he, therefore, been a strong advocate for succession, which he was not, he could not have held the indispensable necessity of Episcopacy. His thoughts on this subject will be seen from the following quotations:—

"Mr. Harding saith,—'The Primates had authority over other inferior bishops.' I grant they had so. Howbeit they had by agreement and custom, but neither by Christ, nor by Peter, or Paul, nor by any right of God's word. St. Jerome saith, (In Ep. ad Tit. c. 1.)—'Let bishops understand, that they are above the priests, rather of custom than any truth or right of Christ's institution; and that they ought to rule the Church altogether.' And again, (In cod. loc.)—'Therefore a priest and a bishop are both one thing; and before that, by the influencing of the devil, parts were taken in religion, and these words were uttered by the people, 'I hold of Paul, I hold of Apollos, I hold of Peter,' the Churches were governed by the common advice of the priests.' St. Augustine saith, (Ep. 19.)—'The office of a bishop is above the office of a priest (not by the authority of Scripture.' Jewel adds, "but") after the names of honour, which the custom of the Church hath now obtained." (P. 111.) Again, in another place, Jewel says:—

"What meant Mr. Harding here to come in with the difference between priests and bishops? Thinketh he that priests and bishops hold only by tradition! Or is it so horrible a heresy as he maketh it, to say, that by the Scriptures of God the bishop and priests are all one! Or knoweth he how far and unto whom he reacheth the name of an heretic! Verily, Chrysostom saith,—(Inter Episcopum et Presbyterum interest ferme nihil. (In 1 Tim. Hom. ii.)—'Between a bishop and a priest there is in a manner no difference.' St. Jerome saith, somewhat in a rougher sort,—'I hear say, there is one become so peevish that he setteth deacons before priests, that is to say, before bishops: whereas the Apostle plainly teaches us, that priests and bishops be all one.' St. Augustine saith,—'What is a bishop but the first priest, that is, the highest priest.' So saith St. Ambrose,—'There is but one consecration of priest and bishop, for both of them are priests, but the bishop is the first.'—P. 108.

We may adduce here, on the same subject, the sentiments expressed by Morton, Bishop of Durlam, in the reign of Charles the First. From his book, *Apologia Catholica*, we translate the following passages. He introduces the objection of the Papists, and answers it:—

"The question is not concerning every difference, but concerning the difference of order, or the power of ordaining (potestati ordinandi). The opponent—'Aerius, the heretic, denied the difference of order by Divine right: so do the Protestants.' Answer—'The same thing does Jerome hold, nor do the other Fathers assert any thing different. Mich. Medina affirms, that not only Jerome thought the same in this respect with the Aerians, but also Ambrose, Augustine, Sedulius, Primosius, Chrysos-

tom, Theodoret, Oecumenius, Theophylact.' Thus, says Valentius, the Jesuit, 'thought these men, otherwise most holy and orthodox! but,' he says again, 'this answer is not to be borne.' But I shall prove that this is not only to be borne, but that it is to be preferred to all other answers. It is advocated by Erasmus, who says,—'Antiquity makes no difference between a presbyter and a bishop, as Jerome testifies.' It is advocated by Alphonsus de Castro, who declares, 'Jerome was of such an opinion, that he believed a bishop and a presbyter to be of the same order and authority.' Behold even another, even Bellarmine.—'Jerome,' he says, 'seems in every deed to have been of that opinion.' And was he alone! 'Anselm and Sedulius,' adds Bellarmine, 'accommodated their own opinion to that of Jerome,' which same opinion your Medina has ascribed to all the Fathers alike."—Par. i. c. 33.

We shall also refer on this point to a work of Bishop Stillingfleet, the *Irenicum*; in which he gives an account of the contents of a manuscript of Archbishop Cranmer, which he had in his possession. It was a document that contained the proceedings of an assembly of divines, which met at Windsor Castle by the order of King Edward the Sixth, about the beginning of his reign. There were certain questions proposed, which each of these divines answered in writing. The Archbishop's answers to some of them are given by Stillingfleet from the manuscript. One of the questions was concerning the original difference between bishops and priests. Cranmer's answer was this:—

"The bishops and priests were at one time, and were not two things, but both one office, in the beginning of Christ's religion."—P. 390.

"Another question was about consecration, to which Cranmer gave this answer:—

"In the New Testament, he that is appointed to be a bishop or a priest needeth no consecration by the Scripture: for election or appointing thereto was sufficient.' And Cranmer gave this also as his opinion:—'The people, before Christian princes were, commonly did elect their bishops and priests.' Then Stillingfleet proceeds thus:—

"In the same manuscript it appears, that the Bishop of St. Asaph, Threlby, Redman, and Cox, were all of the same opinion with the Archbishop, that at first bishops and presbyters were the same, and the two latter expressly cite the opinion of Jerome with approbation. Thus we see by the testimony, chiefly of him who was instrumental in our Reformation, that he owned not Episcopacy as a distinct order from Presbytery or Divine right, but only as a prudent constitution of the civil magistrate for better governing in the Church."—P. 393.

Stillingfleet then goes on to show that our Reformers in Queen Elizabeth's time were of the same opinion, that they did not consider Episcopacy as "absolutely prescribed and determined in Scripture as the only necessary form to be observed in the Church." We shall add the remarks which follow:—

"The first who solemnly appeared in vindication of the English hierarchy was Archbishop Whitgift, a sage and prudent man, whom we cannot suppose either ignorant, or afraid, or unwilling to defend it; yet he frequently against Cartwright asserts that 'the form of discipline is not particularly set down in Scripture.' And again, 'No kind of government is expressed in the word, or can be necessarily concluded from thence,' which he repeats over again, 'No form of Church government is by the Scripture prescribed to us or commanded by the Church of God.' And so Dr. Casine, his Chancellor, in answer to the 'Abstract':—'All Churches have not the same form of discipline, neither is it necessary that they should, seeing it cannot be proved that any certain particular form of Church government is commanded to us by the word of God.' To the same purpose is Dr. Lane, in his *Complaint of the Church*:—'No certain form of government is prescribed in the word, only general rules laid down for it.' Bishop Bridges says, 'God hath not expressed the form of Church government, at least not so as to bind us to it.' They who please but to consult the third Book of learned and judicious Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, may see the mutability of the form of Church government largely asserted and fully proved."—P. 394.

According to what Stillingfleet afterwards proves by evident quotations, there were no

differences of opinion on this subject between our Reformers and those on the Continent. Both held, that the form of Church government is not specifically detailed or expressly enjoined in Scripture, and that the best government is that which is best suited to the circumstances of the times. Hence it was that our Reformers did not make any serious objection to the ecclesiastical order of things on the Continent, nor did the Continental divines, not excepting Calvin, oppose Episcopacy as such, but mainly its abuses. The common opinion was, to use the words of Bishop Stillingfleet, 'that no one form of Church government is so necessary to the being of a Church, but that a good and perfect Christian may and ought to conform himself to the government of the place where he lives. The extraordinary virtues which are said by Tractarians to be connected with Episcopacy, are hereby completely negated. And indeed they never have had any existence except in the fantastic imaginations of men ambitious of priestly domination.

What has been stated respecting our Reformers cannot be reasonably disputed; but a change of opinion gradually took place in many of their successors. What was viewed by our Reformers as comparatively indifferent, being not prescribed in the word of God, became by degrees important, and from being important, it grew to be essential. Such has been the progress of erroneous views on this subject. Some, holding the last opinion, were in the Church as early as the reign of Charles the First, if not earlier. So soon did Popish corruption creep in among its members! Baxter in his *Treatise on Church Government*, published during the Protectorate, expressly refers to two classes of Episcopalia at that time; and the same are existing at present. "Of late years," he says, "a new strain of Bishops were introduced, differing much from the old, and yet pretending to adhere to the Articles and Homilies." (*Five Dissertations*, pref. p. 6.) And he calls them, the one, "the old Episcopal party," and the other "the new Episcopal party." And the difference between them he states in these words:—

"The old Episcopal divines did take Episcopacy to be better than Presbyterian equality, but not necessary to the being of a church. But the new prelatical divines of both sorts unchurch those churches that are not prelatical. The old Episcopal divines did hold the foreign Protestant Churches in France, Savoy, Holland, Geneva, Helvetia, &c., that had no prelates, as true Churches, and their pastors as the true ministers of Christ, and highly valued and honoured them as brethren. But the new sort do disown them all as no churches, though they acknowledge the Church of Rome to be a true Church, and their ordination valid."—Pp. 7, 8.

There was here certainly a consistency—to discard the foreign Churches, and to own the Church of Rome,—to deny the right-hand of fellowship to Churches holding the truth, and to extend it to a Church awfully sunk in apostasy! The one cannot be well done without the other. There is no hatred of light, without loving darkness. The same thing, the very same thing, is done at the present day.

Now, what we complain of, and, we think, justly, is this,—that the church of England should be represented as countenancing what it does not countenance; as holding what the Church of Rome holds, which it does not, and as repudiating what our Reformers did not repudiate. This is wholly unjust, and betrays either ignorance or something much worse. If any of its members adopt the Romish view of succession, let them set it forth as their own, and not that of our Church; for they have no just grounds to ascribe to it such a notion. They may, if they please, adduce the names of others in our Church who adopted the same view, but this cannot implicate the Church. And such instances, however numerous, can only prove the inconsistency of men. And to defend such a view on such an authority, is to justify one inconsistency by another. It is the same thing as to excuse a dishonest act by alleging that others have been guilty of the same—a plea that no court of justice can allow.

There are two serious evils arising from this act of injustice to the Church. The one is, that an approach is hereby made to the most degenerated and corrupt communion on earth; and that in a particular that has been the great stay, guard, and defence of its dreadful corruptions. It has been in