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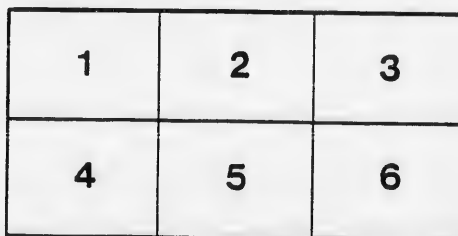
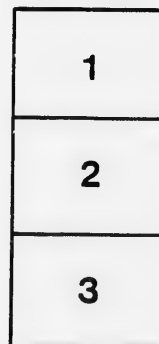
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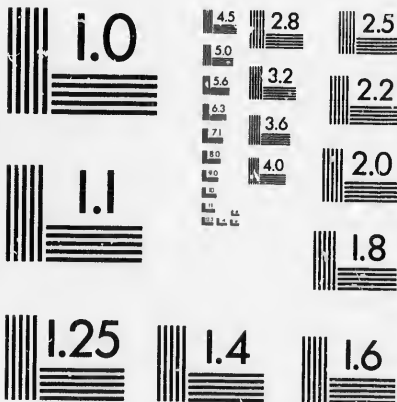
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THE
DIVINE ORIGIN
AND
UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION OF EPISCOPACY
MAINTAINED.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS
ADDRESSED
TO
THE REV'D. A. W. McLEOD,
METHODIST MINISTER AT GUYSBOROUGH;
IN ANSWER
TO HIS LETTERS ENTITLED
THE METHODIST MINISTRY DEFENDED.

BY
THE REV. CHARLES J. SHREVE,
RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH,
GUYSBOROUGH.

"Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see, and ask for the Old Paths, where is the good way and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."—*Jeremiah, 6—16.*

"Christians in all Ages are bound to make the Apostolic Order of the Church with respect to the Ministry as well as other points, the model, as far as possible, of all their ecclesiastical arrangements."—*Dr. Miller.*

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PREFACE.

It is well known that the Church of England does not acknowledge the validity of ordination performed by presbyters ; for if a minister thus ordained, be desirous of joining her communion, he must receive orders from a bishop before he can officiate at her altars ; but a priest from the Syrian, Greek, or Roman Church, neither needs nor can receive a new ordination. It can then scarcely be matter of surprise that a clergyman, firmly attached to her communion, should, when the occasion *fully justified it*, make known the opinion of the Church, particularly when he feels assured that it is an opinion based on the unerring word of God, and one, the correctness of which can clearly be seen by those whose judgments are not warped by prejudice, or led astray by the popular but insidious spirit of liberality—that spirit which in politics fosters republicanism and radicalism, with all their accompanying evils ; and in religion prepares the way for the wildest enthusiasm, and the boldest fanaticism ; in the praise of which the infidel is loud, for it removes that barrier which separates between him and the object of his fondest hopes ; and the deist promises to himself a rich harvest where that spirit most abounds. A clergyman, then, may be bold in promulgating the opinion of the Church,—he may reprobate what he honestly and firmly believes to be error, while he harbours not an uncharitable spirit towards those by whom the error is entertained. It does not neces-

sarily follow, that he is a bigot, because with candour and firmness he makes known and maintains his opinions.—Bishop Horsley, (whose father had been a dissenting teacher,) in his charge to his clergy, in the year 1790, thus speaks:—"For those who have been nurtured in the bosom of the Church, and have gained admission to the ministry, if, from a mean compliance with the humour of the age, or ambitious of the fame of *liberality of sentiment*, (for under this specious name a profane indifference is made to pass for an accomplishment,) they affect to join in the disavowal of the authority which they share, or are silent when the validity of their *divine commission* is called in question; for any, I hope there are few, who hide this weakness of faith, this poverty of religious principle, under the attire of a gown and cassock, they are, in my estimation, little better than infidels in masquerade." If, then, they desert her in time of trial and of need, they should, at least, in common honesty, resign all the advantages and emoluments which they receive from being ministers within her pale.

As Mr. M'Leod has taken the liberty to make some charges against me, in his advertisement, it will be well to meet those charges before I undertake to reply to his arguments against Episcopacy; and, by a statement of facts, shew to the world how far my interference with his flock has extended. I would first mention, however, that I have repeatedly spoken of the Church of England as a *branch* of the true Church, but at the same time, I hesitate not to say, it cannot be made to appear, that every sect and denomination into which the religious world is at present divided, has the Scriptural marks, whereby it may be designated a branch of the true Church. The cause of the present unnecessary controversy, I will now state more fully than it has yet been given to the public. In October 1838, I was requested by a person who was a member of the Church, to baptize his child; and as it was not convenient to take the infant to the Chapel at Manchester, where I officiated, the wish was expressed that I would baptize it at the house. The service

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being concluded, I returned to the house, and was met at the door by the father, who informed me that his wishes did not meet the approbation of his wife, who was a Methodist. I replied, that if they were divided in their opinion as to the person who should baptize their infant, I would not do it. A fortnight after this, I again preached at the Chapel, and was again requested by the father, in the presence of his wife, to baptize their child. The mother appeared still to be unwilling, for which I could not *then* account, as she stated that *she had no objection to me individually, nor to the baptismal service of the Church.* I was preparing to leave the house, when the father said, "It is hard that I cannot have my child baptized." I then thought it but proper to speak to the mother, very plainly; and at that time stated to her what I most fully and conscientiously believe, and what I think can be made clear, that Methodist ministers have no *right* to baptize. A few days after, I received a very insulting letter from this poor, misguided woman, who commences it by informing me, that she "was brought to the knowledge of the truth, to know that she was a sinner under the cross of Christ." She is then carried away by the vehemence of passion, and plainly shows that she is *ignorant of the first principles of religion.* Her letter contains a sentence which almost amounts to blasphemy. "I don't think you are God Almighty; as the Indian thinks the priest." This woman, according to her own confession, is a Christian. She opposes her husband's will from a private and unjustifiable motive, which it is not necessary here to mention—insults a clergyman—uses expressions which cannot be deemed otherwise than sacrilegious—and then denies her own language; and I am asked by a member of her own communion, when alluding to her conduct, "Is not this quite natural?" I reply, it is, but very far from being Scriptural, and if such persons are upheld in their ignorance and presumption, true religion must rapidly decay. A few days after I received the letter alluded to, the following epistle from Mr. M'Leod was put into my hands:—

" REVEREND SIR,—

" I regret that I am obliged to address you on this occasion. Were your belief in the dream of what is called "the uninterrupted succession," or "the divine institution of Episcopacy," confined to yourself, and your avowal of it to the persons who constitute the members of your Church, courtesy might dictate the propriety of others keeping silence. But when you overstep the boundaries which a proper deference to the conscientious views of those who differ from you should teach you to observe,—and when, in derogation of the office you sustain, you strive to make impressions on the minds of members of the Methodist Society, unfavourable to the ministerial character of their "overseers," it is time to lay aside reserve. I have lately been creditably informed, that you have stated *to a member of the Wesleyan Society* * * * * that baptism performed by Methodist ministers is not valid. * * * * I beg leave to say, I am prepared at any time you may think *prudent*, whether by public *viva voce* disputation, or through the medium of the press, *to put you to the proof of your assertions*. In the mean time, I shall claim the privilege of contradicting your statements publicly."

My time being much occupied in this extensive parish, I could not immediately reply, as it was necessary not only to acknowledge what I had expressly stated, but also to give a few of the arguments which establish the opinion I conscientiously entertain. I was much from home during that week, and on the Sunday following the receipt of his epistle, was, according to appointment, in a distant part of the parish. On that day he publicly stated, in the Methodist Chapel!! the reports which had reached him, and read and commented upon his letter, not by any means to the satisfaction of some of his hearers. Upon my return home I forwarded my reply with the least possible delay, and addressed to him a note which I concluded thus, "As you at present seem disposed to investigate the subject of Episcopacy, you had better examine thoroughly, and without prejudice, the works to which I have referred you.* It is altogether unne-

* Dr. Chapman's Sermons, &c., Slater's Draught.

necessary for Episcopalians to advance any thing farther on this interesting subject, till what they have written be clearly disproved. Having read your letter to your congregation for their edification, you are in justice bound to read mine to them all, and every part of it. I could not think of reading it in the house of God, but the members of the Church, and all others who desire, shall (*so*) see and hear it. I sincerely hope that all parties will judge for themselves, whether Episcopalians or Non-Episcopalians are in the right." Here is not a word about making the contents of my letter known beyond his own congregation. As some of them were not pleased with what he had already done, perhaps he thought it better not to adopt the course proposed by me. He did, however, upon a certain evening, read my letter to some of the class members, in the Methodist Chapel, the doors being locked. At this *secret meeting*, probably, was discussed the propriety of publishing my letter. It was, I believe, from that time determined that it should be made public. But the question is, how far was he justified in giving to the world a *private* letter, without the *sanction* of the author. If these be the correct ideas which Mr. M'Leod and his coadjutors entertain, then, I think, they greatly need to be corrected. Effectually, as I thought, to prevent a controversy between us, I stated to him at the close of my letter,—“This letter contains a variety, because it is the *first* and *last* which I propose to address to you. The subject in question has been taken in hand by those who were far better calculated to manage it than either of us; it has been fully discussed, and the claim of Episcopacy stands forth pre-eminent.” As a proof that I was correct in stating that the subject had been fully discussed, I may here mention that he has not *advanced a single new argument, nor given a new idea* in support of his plea. That he has proved himself to be a polemic, none will deny; and I am free to confess that I am no lover of controversial strife, but yet I love to see truth supported, and error corrected. It is not probable that any stranger would take the trouble to reply to Mr. M'Leod, and

if I remain silent, the enemies of the Church, in this place, would proclaim their cause triumphant. I am bound, therefore, for the sake of the people committed to my care, to shew by a correct statement of facts, that the charge of interference brought against me, is not by any means applicable; and also to point out the weakness and fallacy of the arguments he has advanced, in his series of Letters addressed to me. In the "plain simple statement" which he gives as the cause of these letters, not a word is said respecting the father of the child. Does Mr. M'Leod believe that portion of Scripture, that the wife should obey the husband? It appears in this case, however, that the husband is compelled to obey the wife. Thus much for my recent interference. Come we now to the interference of past years. A quotation from a letter addressed to Mrs. Cunningham, which is to be found in page 22 of Mr. M'Leod's pamphlet, might lead some to suppose that the charge was supported by the best authority—my own writings. But what drew forth this letter to Mrs. Cunningham? Shortly after I had taken charge of this parish, I put into the hands of an aged member of the Church, "Bp. Onderdonk's Episcopacy tested by Scripture." She was much pleased with the work, and thought that it would be calculated to give correct ideas respecting a part of the sacred volume, which, in these latter days, has been so little regarded. She spoke of Mrs. Cunningham, and her sister, who were her friends, and who had but recently left the Church, and joined the Methodist communion. Their names being mentioned, I said *I would be glad if they would read the work which I had lent to her.* They did read it, and some time after it was returned to me, not by the aged individual, but by Mrs. Cunningham, with several illiberal remarks in pencil, by whom written I know not, and a long letter from Mrs. C., in which were found assertions against Episcopacy, and a rebuke for sending her such an absurd ! pamphlet; which, however, I had not sent, but merely expressed a wish that she might see and read it. I was indeed surprised to be thus unexpectedly, and, as I

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thought unnecessarily assailed by a woman, and had the venerable prelate been here, I certainly would have left him to defend himself. It was thought better that I should write to Mrs. C., and I did so; this produced a reply, in which it was stated that no more communications would be received on the subject. As I am not a lover of controversy, it appeared advisable to yield to woman, what woman sometimes loves—the privilege of having the last word. Mrs. C. afterwards expressed to her friends her regret for what had transpired,—stated that she had been urged by others to write as she had done, and was desirous that all should be passed over, as though it had not been. I was also willing, and we were soon again upon friendly terms, and so far as I am concerned, we shall thus continue. It will be seen that I treat this *serious* ! charge of bye gone days with a degree of soberness proportionate to its importance. How far the charge of *interference* may apply to me, must be decided by those who read this simple statement of facts,—a statement, be it remembered, which would never have met the public eye, had not a lover of controversy called it forth. To one other person, whose unqualified assertions, and unbounded prejudice, required a check, I addressed myself upon several occasions, in plain language, respecting the Church. The Methodists in this place have again and again heard me say, that I did not visit amongst them, lest my doing so should be construed into interference; but notwithstanding all this caution, I can truly say that “things have been laid to my charge which I knew not.” The Methodist missionary residing at Guysboro, when I was sent hither, was, like some others whom I could name, loud in his praise of the doctrines, &c., of the Church of England; but that he had no real love for her, the following will, I think, clearly show. Delivering a farewell sermon at Manchester, he selected for his text Eph. 4th ch., 30, 31 & 32d verses, and during the discourse he stated, that thirty persons had, at one time, united themselves to the Methodist communion, but had now deserted it, and *were like the dog returning to his vomit, and the sow to*

her wallowing in the mire!! What a comment on the text ! What a compliment to the Church which he loved ! I think it more than probable, that if these thirty persons had not returned to the Church of their early affections and their choice, and other circumstances had not occurred, which it is unnecessary here to mention, I should not have been favoured with a series of Letters. Much that is stated here would never have been laid before the public, had I not very improperly, and as I conceive unfairly been charged with interference. As this pamphlet is chiefly intended for country parishioners, I shall endeavour to make it as plain and concise as the subject will allow ; and my prayer is, that he who is a God of order—the lover of peace and concord, may abundantly bless my humble efforts in the cause of truth, bring us to a right understanding in all things, and hasten that period when his people will no longer be divided by party spirit, and sectarian feelings, but be all of one heart and one mind.

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LETTER I.

REV. SIR,

HAVING shewn by a simple statement of facts, how little weight is to be attached to the charge of interference, which you were pleased to bring against me, we will now examine your arguments against the Divine origin and uninterrupted succession of Episcopacy,—there will be no difficulty, I think, in shewing that these are far from being conclusive. If, however, in the course of the inquiry, I should not be influenced by your example, to use harsh and indecorous language, I trust you will pardon me for this omission. Whatever I may once have thought, I do not now see the propriety or necessity of indulging in warmth, while in the defence of truth ; and He who is truth itself, has charged us when reviled not to revile again. In the very commencement of your series you demand of me more than you are either willing or able to produce, in favour of the mode of Church government which you advocate. Is a plain, positive, and direct command absolutely necessary, to decide the point in question ? Do you require the same express proof in favour of infant baptism ? No. Do you insist upon this direct proof, to shew that we are acting in accordance with the will of our Lord, by meeting together for public worship, on the first day of the week, rather than on the seventh, or Jewish Sabbath ? No. Do you consider the like proof necessary, before that females be admitted to the table of the Lord ? No. But yet, I presume, you are perfectly satisfied that *it is* the will of the Lord infants should be admitted into covenant with him. You doubt not the propriety of Christians publicly meeting together, on the Lord's day, to worship him. You are satisfied that females should not be excluded from the Supper of the Lord.—Whence do you derive your arguments for these points ? From the tenor of Scripture, and to confirm and strengthen these arguments, you advance the universal custom of the Church, and do not require a positive command, to convince you that your views on *these* points are correct and scriptural.

Now Sir, the same method do we take to convince the modern latitudinarian, that Episcopacy is of Divine origin ; and strange indeed is it, that they who admit and adopt this method to prove the propriety of infant baptism, &c. &c., should reject it when it opposes their favourite schemes. How strangely inconsistent do we generally find those, who step out of the good old paths. In my *private* letter addressed to you, I very briefly stated the arguments in favour of Episcopacy, gathered from Scripture. You are careful to notice this, and would gladly persuade all who may favour your letters with a perusal, that this was, in reality, the utmost that could be advanced in support of Episcopal rule. "You hope this confession of the necessity of brevity was not thrown in by way of salvo." Surely you must be but little acquainted with the writings of Episcopalians on this subject. Charity forbids that I should draw *any other* conclusion. I believe, however, you will find some additional Scripture proofs in Mrs. C's. letter, which you must have read, as you quote from that *private* epistle. You notice here the quotation from Jerome, who asserts that without the Bishop's licence, neither presbyter nor deacon has a right to baptize ; and because this does not meet your views, you would infer that Jerome was wrong. But it will be well not to pass judgment without enquiry. Now this evidently must have been the received opinion of the Church. or he would not so publicly and positively have asserted it, for he was far from being disposed to give to Bishops any more authority than they could justly claim. From what source this opinion was derived, Jerome does not say ; we may therefore with great propriety conclude that it originated with the Apostles themselves. You will, I suppose, admit that no layman has a *right* to baptize, for if he have that right, then, as no line of distinction can be drawn, every layman may administer that Sacrament—every father may baptize his own child, and the services of an authorized minister, may, for the performance of this duty, be dispensed with. That Scripture warrants such laxity of rule, and such a spirit of liberality, you will scarcely venture to assert. It is clear then, I think, that the administration of the Sacraments is to be confined to Ministers alone, for thus we may understand our Lord's commission to his Apostles, Matt. 28 ch. 19 v., and that (whatever may be the opinion of the present liberal age,) the Bible does not countenance lay baptism. But all Ministers were at one time laymen ; therefore, until their ordination, they could have no scriptural right to baptize. It follows then, that the right to baptize, must be given by those

whom our Lord has empowered to "ordain elders in every place." Without doubt the Apostles were the persons who were thus empowered, and as Christ promised to be with them always, through their successors, to the end of the world, they who have succeeded the Apostles, in the government of the Church, and were invested by them with full power to ordain to the ministry, can alone authorize others to baptize. Jerome, then, we may believe, is perfectly correct in his statement; and Bishops, being the successors of the Apostles, as the Fathers upon whose testimony we receive the New Testament, *declare*, without them neither presbyter nor deacon has a right to baptize. To favour the modern views of Church government, you next cautiously advance the opinion, that "the Christian Ministry was formed upon the model which the ministry in the Jewish synagogues afforded." There is something extremely weak in this method of handling the subject. We might as readily, and with equal propriety assert, that all the various modes of worship were taken from the same model, because we find in them all, some points of resemblance. But weaker still is it to argue, because that the people in the Jewish synagogue sat with their faces towards rulers, and "that this was the precise form in which the Bishop and presbyters used to sit in the primitive Churches," that therefore the Synagogue was the model of the Christian Church; much more might easily be proved in this way than you would be pleased with. There were rulers in the Jewish Synagogue with the minister, angel or bishop—these led the public devotions. To a single congregation, however, their authority was confined. This was not the case in the Christian Church. "It has been proved," says Dr. Bowden, by abundant and uncontrollable evidence, that the authority of the Christian Bishop, with his bench of elders, extended over numerous congregations; so that in this respect, which is a very material one, there is an important point of disparity."—Vol. 1, p. 154. The Jews were not *obliged* to be members of the synagogue, but they were under an obligation, from which no human power could absolve them, to attend the temple service. "The bishop of the synagogue had *no presidency* over the elders; the bishop of the Christian Church *had*, by the consent of all parties. The first had *no divine commission*, the last *had*; the one had no authority of any kind out of his own synagogue; the other had authority over numerous congregations. The one administered *no sacraments*; the other did. The one was the *messenger or angel* of God; the other

the messenger or angel of the people. And yet notwithstanding these *essential* points of difference, is it to be *supposed*, as you assert, that the one was the copy of the other, merely because they had the same name, and both of them preached and offered up the prayers. And even the title *overseer*, might just as well have been taken from the Greek supervisors of cities, and the Roman *overseers* of districts, as from the minister of the synagogue. Again : there was also an essential difference between the elders of the synagogue, and the Christian Church. The latter preach and administer the sacraments ; the former did nothing of the kind. This entirely destroys the analogy ; and besides, the title was in existence ages before synagogues had a being. *** Deacons, also, or those who were employed in inferior ministries, we find in the temple, the synagogue, the temples of the heathen, and in the Christian Church." (Dr. Bowden, vol. 2, p. 146, see also vol. 1, p. 154.) Now, Sir, with these "essential points of difference" before you, can you take the Jewish Synagogue as the model of the Christian Church ? If a synagogue of human invention, having a ministry of human appointment, without sacraments, is the model which you choose, and which indeed seems to please you ; all I can say is, we resign that to you, while we take for our model a Church of divine appointment, having a divinely constituted ministry, and sacraments, without which there is no church. "It is highly improbable that the Almighty would take for the pattern of his Church, a human institution. It is much more probable, that the external economy of the Christian Church was conformed in all things material, to the Jewish Church, as will appear from an enumeration of particulars. The congregation of Israel was divided into *twelve tribes*, under the twelve patriarchs ; so is the Church of Christ founded on the *twelve* apostles. Besides these, Christ appointed other *seventy* also ; in correspondence with the *seventy* elders, who assisted Moses in his ministry. Aaron was appointed a high priest, under whom were the priests, and subservient to both, the order of the Levites. There were then *three* orders in the Jewish Church ; in the Christian *three* likewise—the apostles, the presbyters, and the deacons ; to the first of which succeeded the bishops."—(Vide Dr. Bowden, vol. 2, p. 147.) The facts which have been stated should be sufficient to convince an impartial mind, that the christian ministry was not conformed to that of the synagogue.

The words of Jerome, you think, by no means imply "that the Bishop stands for the High Priest, &c. &c." His

words are—"and that we may know that the *Apostolic traditions* are taken out of the Old Testament, what Aaron and his sons, and the Levites, were in the temple, let bishops, presbyters, and deacons, claim for themselves in the Church." In another place he admonishes the presbyter Nepotian, "Be *subject to your chief priest*," and shortly after enforces it by this reason, "Because we ought to know that what Aaron and his sons are, *the same is a Bishop and his Presbyters*."—(*Hieron. Epist. ad Nepotianum*.) Here he expressly calls the bishop "chief priest"; this is clear to the plainest understanding, and in the passage above he calls the superiority of the bishops, an apostolic tradition, or command delivered, and states, that the three orders under the gospel dispensation, should *claim* the same rank which high priest, priest and Levite, held under the Jewish. The Ministers in the temple service had a divine appointment, and what they had, says Jerome, let Christian Ministers claim. You say, "that as the high priest, priest and Levite, were the *appointed* Ministers of God, under the old dispensation, so he (Jerome) considered bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as God's *appointed* ministers under the new." This no doubt is what Jerome would have us to understand, and that the bishop is chief, who alone has power to ordain; his own words are, "For what does a bishop which a presbyter may not do, *except ordination*." And yet you quote him to favour your cause! Isidore, a bishop of Seville, whom Mosheim calls "a man of uncommon learning and sanctity," gives the same testimony on this point with Jerome,—"To the apostles after their death succeeded the bishops; who are appointed *throughout the whole world* to the seats of the apostles." "It ought to be noted, that what Aaron the high priest was, the same was the bishop; his sons prefigured the presbyters."—(*Dr. Hobart's Apology*, p. 193.)

LETTER II.

REV'D. SIR,

I WILL now calmly and dispassionately consider the arguments deduced from Scripture, in favour of the Divine Rights of Episcopacy; and perhaps when I have done, you will be induced to change the opinion which it appears you formed upon reading my *private* letter. I certainly shall not

feel disposed to pass over the important Epistles addressed to Timothy, and Titus, so quickly, and with as little notice as you have done; and, in its place, shall notice your argument against Episcopacy, drawn from the community of names. The temple service and ministry being taken as the model of the Gospel Church, we have the two Sacraments and the three orders preserved, through succeeding ages, from the time that God established and appointed a regular ministry in his Church, to be continued "till time shall be no longer." It is a fact which cannot be controverted, that our Lord, while he remained upon earth, took the sole and entire management of his infant Church; admitting none as co-partners with him in the work. He called the twelve Apostles, and as he intended them for the important work of governing his Church, after that he should ascend into Heaven, as their conduct sufficiently proves, he kept them much about his person, continually instructing, and preparing them for their responsible duties. He appointed other *seventy* also, to preach the Gospel, but we read not of their attempting to govern the Church; and the only reason we can assign for it is, that they were not *authorized* by their Divine Master;—this ought to satisfy you that their *powers* were *not the same* with those of the twelve. That they were a separate and distinct body of ministers from the Apostles, is plain from the Scriptures. The Apostles were first chosen, and had the high honour of being the constant attendants of their Lord—*afterwards*, Christ appointed the seventy. The Apostles were sent forth by themselves, and the seventy two and two by themselves. The one governed the Church, the others did not. Now, although it is not stated expressly in Scripture that here were the three distinct orders, yet it may with good reason be inferred, since under the Jewish dispensation, by express command of God, there were three distinct orders, and the same in the days of the Apostles, as will, I trust, clearly and fully be shewn. You say, "supposing I were to grant that the orders of the Old Testament dispensation were typical of those under the New, and that there was a real distinction of order between the twelve and the seventy, the establishment of the three orders, as contended for by you, would not necessarily follow. Aaron, as high priest, say, was typical of Christ:—Christ then was the anti-type, in him alone the type received its full and complete fulfilment; it cannot then be fulfilled in another succeeding him, &c. &c." Now it is true that in the sense of a priest *who offered sacrifices*, the typical nature of Aaron's office was entirely fulfilled

in our Saviour, and could admit of no successors. But there is a sense in which it *did* admit of successors—that is, in the sense of an appointed minister in the Church of God. In this particular the type was not only fulfilled in the Redeemer, but he has also appointed others as his *under-shepherds*, to “feed his sheep,” and to be “ambassadors in his stead.” And again, if Aaron had been the only high priest under the Jewish dispensation, there might be some force in your reasoning; but when we take the Jewish ministry to be typical of the Christian ministry, and remember that the first order of the Jewish ministry had its successors, we reasonably conclude that the first order of the Christian ministry would also, at least in the sense of governing, have *its* successors. Not Aaron alone, but every high priest, was a type of Christ,—and there is one who may be called a truer type of him than was Aaron. Christ is not called a Priest *forever* after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec; so that his eternal priesthood is after the order of Melchisedec. Melchisedec was in no way connected with the tribe of Levi; neither did Christ belong to that tribe. The genealogy of Melchisedec is not known; of Christ it is said “who shall declare his generation.” Melchisedec had no successor—Christ in his *eternal priesthood* has no successor. But when we look upon Aaron, the high priest, having *his* successors, as a type of Christ, we can with the strictest propriety view Christ as our *sacrifice*, mediator, and intercessor, and also acting while on earth, as the High Priest, or *Apostle*, (as he is styled in Heb., 9, 1.) of his infant Church, and thus, as the Apostle of the Church, having his successors. Christ governed his Church while he remained upon earth, afterwards he committed the government of it to his Apostles. Under the Jewish dispensation the first order was confined to one man, because *that* one nation alone then formed the Church of God, and there was but one temple to which the people, far and near, were by express direction of God commanded to resort. Under the Gospel dispensation, the first order is not confined to one person, because the Gospel Church embraces all nations, and temples dedicated to the service of God may be erected without number, as the occasion may require. Christ, then, governing his infant Church and ordaining to the ministry, held the chief office or first order in it—he ordained the twelve, and other seventy also. Here the plan of the Gospel Ministry appears to be formed according to that shadowed forth under the Jewish dispensation. And the example of Christ, if he had never spoken

particularly to his Apostles on the subject, would have been a sufficient warrant to continue the three orders which, as Jews, they had always seen in the Church of God. But it does not follow of necessity that because Christ, his Apostles, and the Seventy performed miracles, that their successors in the ministry should possess the like *extraordinary* gift of the Holy Ghost. These gifts being *extraordinary*, it is plain that they were not indispensably necessary to the ministry. Miracles were continued in the Church so long as God considered them necessary, but not beyond that period. The objection, therefore, which you make on this point, may serve to keep in the dark those who are already too deeply prejudiced, but it can have not the least weight with an *impartial* examiner of the subject. It is plain then, I conceive, that the three orders were at once established by Christ himself, who while on earth, retained in his own hands the power of ruling his Church, and sending forth labourers into the vineyard. But you ask "Is not this still his prerogative?" I reply that it is, but he employs those to whom he entrusts the government of his Church, as *instruments* for accomplishing his designs. "Christ is certainly the fountain and original of all power in his Church, and every one who expects any part of that power, must receive it from Christ, as he himself has prescribed. Let a man be otherwise ever so well qualified, yet if he do not receive his commission to preach the Gospel, from those whom Christ the head has impowered to give such commissions, he must of necessity be an intruder. I confess, the ordainers do not give the *original* power, for that is lodged in, and flows from Christ; but then, according to Christ's command, they give them power (that is) upon trial of their qualifications, they *authorize* them to preach the Gospel, &c.," which they cannot do without such a commission, or without an *extraordinary* call; which I suppose none of our dissenters pretend to."—(*Barwick's*

* And this too, says Mr. Drury, though the *ordainers* might be mistaken in his qualifications, because the qualifications described, 1 Tim. 3—Tit. 1., are not necessary to the *being* of a *lawful* pastor, but to the *advantageous* execution of his office. I shall endeavour to make this clear by an example; suppose I were giving directions to one, whom he should make a judge, I would advise him to choose a sober, just man, well skilled in the laws, &c., and tell him, that these were the qualifications required by the law of God in a judge; but could any man be so inconsiderate as to imagine, that none were lawful judges, but such as had these qualifications; or that all who had them were lawful judges whether they had a commission or not?

Treatise, p. 43.) When Christ had finished the work which was given him to do, and was about to ascend into Heaven, he said to his Apostles, "As my Father hath sent me, *even so send I you.*" Now, I ask, was Christ sent *only* to preach? This appears to be your idea, if we may judge from the quotation with which you have favoured us from Dr. Whitby. Was he not sent to establish his Church—to govern that Church—and to ordain a ministry for that Church, with which he would be to the end of the world? His conduct proves this, and from his own mouth we learn that he was also sent to preach the Gospel. By these words then "As my Father hath sent me," &c., Christ evidently invested his Apostles with the power of ruling the Church, which power he had received from God the Father. The Apostles certainly acted upon the commission which they received from Christ—they exercised powers which they did not attempt to claim before—they ruled the Church, under Christ the supreme head—they ordained elders and deacons. The Apostles did not understand by what was upon this occasion said to them, that Christ was not to be the head over the Church forever, or that they could do any thing independently of him, as we may learn from their acts; but they understood that they were to *govern* the Church, and act "in Christ's stead" upon earth. As they had been previously sent to *preach*, our Lord having given them authority, he here intended to invest them with an increase of power. That they were elevated to a superior rank or order is evident, because they then exercised that power which did not previously belong to them,—and governing the Church, they of course were superior to those whom they governed—this, I believe, will not be denied. Be pleased then, Sir, to keep in view the duties to be performed by the superior officers in the Church, and this will greatly tend to remove the clouds and mist which float before your vision, and will help you to form a clearer and better judgment respecting the subject before us. I scarcely know with what feelings to regard the imputation you attempt to fix upon me, that what I said in my letter, leads to the conclusion that I believe the authority which our Lord gave to his Apostles and their successors, supersedes and renders unnecessary his own constant supervision. I can only feel deep sorrow that you could have allowed yourself to indulge in such an unjustifiable charge, and can hardly suppose it possible, that you could seriously intend to fix it upon any Christian. No, Sir, the authority committed to the superior officers of the Church is external,

they are empowered to confer the external commission, but it is the great Shepherd and abiding Bishop of his Church, who gives, through his spirit, the inward disposition; and yet he will have the authority he has fixed in his church so far honored, that even those called by him are also commanded to receive the external commission he has left in his Church. You assert very positively, that deacons were not at first an order of the ministry. Do the Scriptures intimate this? If so, where do we find in the word of God that they were ever advanced to the Ministry? "The office of a deacon was, besides the taking care of the poor, to preach the Gospel, and to baptize, as it appears Philip did. Had it only been to take care of the poor, they needed not to be so inquisitive to find out men full of the Holy Ghost for that service."—(*Burkett.*) It is attested by the whole current of antiquity, that they were one of the three sacred orders. Ignatius expressly styles them "ministers of the mysteries of Christ"—adding "that they are not ministers of meats and drinks only, but of the Church of God." In many other places to the same effect—requiring the people to be subject to them. * * Cyprian speaks of them in the same way, as "ministers of the Episcopacy and of the Church." Tertullian joins them with bishops and presbyters, as guides and leaders of the laity, and makes them in their degree overseers, as pastors of the flock of Christ. Augustine in one of his Epistles gives Præsidius the title of *fellow priest*, whom Jerome immediately after speaks of as a deacon. Yet it is to be noted, that the Deacons were not generally styled *priests*, but only *ministers*, the former words being reserved to the two first orders, and particularly the presbyters. They were frequently distinguished from priests by the term *Levites*.—(*Henry's Christian Antiquities.*)

Your assertion then, that deacons did not preach and baptize by virtue of this office alone, but by virtue of other qualifications, is void of proof, while it is proved from the Scriptures that they did preach and baptize (Acts 7 and 8,) without mention of *other qualifications*. We must then conclude with the Scriptures and the Fathers, that deacons were ministers, not to serve tables only, but also to preach the word. As then they are "Ministers of the mysteries of Christ," your interpretation of 1 Tim. 3, 13 v. cannot be correct. There can, I think, be no doubt but that the Apostle means that, being already ministers of the word, they were, when proved, and found faithful, raised to the office of presbyter, and thus purchase to themselves a good degree. Deacon-

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esses, on the other hand, were expressly forbidden to perform those duties which peculiarly belong to the clergy. They were set apart by the imposition of hands—"yet this mode of consecration gave them no *sacerdotal* power. Women were expressly forbidden the exercise of the sacred functions of the clergy; and it was made one of the special charges against the heretics and schismatics, that they allowed women to preach and perform *other functions of the ministry*." Thus Epiphanius says, "there is indeed an order of deaconesses in the Church, but their business is not to administer the sacraments, nor to perform *any part* of the sacerdotal office, but only to be a decent help to the female sex at the time of their baptism, sickness, affliction, or the like." And it appears that these duties were confined to certain inferior offices, chiefly relating to the women, for whose sake they were ordained. Thus they assisted in preparing them for baptism, so that the ceremony might be decently performed. They also had some charge as private catechists of those women, who were candidates for baptism; also in visiting women who were sick, or in distress, or in cases where the deacons could not do so, on account of scandal. In times of danger and persecution they were also employed to minister to the confessors and martyrs in prison, because they could do it with less suspicion and danger than the men. They also assigned to the women their places in Church—observed and regulated their behaviour—and had the special charge and oversight of the rest of the widows of the Church. How long this order continued is not precisely known. It was not probably laid aside all at once. In general it continued longer in the Greek, than in the Latin Church. There were decrees against further consecrations of them in the Western Church in the fifth century; but it is not until the tenth or eleventh century that all traces of them become extinct.—(*Henry's Christian Ant.*) The office seems to be revived, or rather assumed, in some Churches of modern date, with indeed very different powers, probably to suit the spirit of our liberal age. But how far does this custom agree with the express command of Scripture? "Let your women keep silence in the Churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak, but *they are commanded* to be under obedience, as also saith the law—for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church."—1 Cor. 14, 34. "Let the women learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach nor to *usurp authority over the man*, but to be in silence."—1 Tim. 2, 11, 12. Language cannot be more plain and ex-

press than this last sentence ; women are in the Church *to be, or continue in silence*, and why—because it is a shame for them to speak in the Church. It appears from 1 Cor. 11, 5 v, that they were allowed to speak in the single case of inspiration ; but who, in modern times, will quote that passage in support of their custom. If they can lay claim to the spirit of prophecy, or feel that they are divinely inspired, they may refer to it with every degree of propriety, but not till then. The direction of the Apostle seems plainly and evidently to extend as strongly to prayer as any thing else. Public prayer in assemblies of Christians, being official, and performed by authority, was exercised by kings for their people, patriarchs for their tribes, fathers for their families, priests for the people, and in all cases betokened authority. But authority, from the strain of the Apostle's argument, seems pointed out as the *precise thing* which *did not belong* to the woman, except in one case, and that extraordinary. For a woman then to teach or to pray publicly in the Church, unless she be divinely inspired, is contrary to Scripture ; yet notwithstanding the Apostolic command, this custom is persevered in and encouraged. Can we wonder then, that the Apostolic *example* is unheeded, when a command so express is evaded or disregarded ?

LETTER III.

REV. D. SIR,—

THE cause which we advocate is not built upon such a slender foundation that we need props to support it, as you insinuate. Were your prejudice entirely removed, and did you thoroughly and candidly examine the subject, you would, I think, freely confess this. Whatever Christ did upon earth was worthy of regard, and we may believe that his apostles would take his example in all things for their guide. Whatever then we may understand from the passages in St. Mark to which I referred you, it has been, I believe, from the earliest ages of the Church to the present day, the *usual*, though not the invariable custom, to ordain the three distinct orders for their several duties, at three distinct times. Our cause, however, does not rest upon these passages, but there is an abundance of proof which can be advanced to satisfy every impartial examiner.

The subject under consideration will be better understood, and much confusion avoided, if we keep in view the *official powers* which were exercised by the first preachers of the Gospel. In order they will stand thus :—

- 1st. Apostles.
- 2nd. Presbyter-bishops or Elders.
- 3rd. Deacons.

THEIR OFFICIAL POWERS AND DUTIES.

- 1st. Apostles to govern the Church—to oversee the presbyters and deacons—to ordain and confirm.
- 2nd. Presbyter-bishops or Elders—to preach, administer the sacraments, and superintend or *oversee* their respective *flocks*.

- 3rd. Deacons—To serve tables—to preach and baptize.

That the Apostles during their lifetime governed the Church cannot admit of a doubt. In this they acted immediately under the directions of Christ—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," &c. &c.—Matt. 16, 19. By this it is evidently meant that they should declare what was *lawful* or *unlawful*, that they should *bid* or *forbid*, *grant*, or *refuse*—do all things for the good of the Church, and that it should be sanctioned and approved of in heaven—that they should regulate and govern the infant Church of Christ—see also Matt. 28. 19, 20. *They* ordained elders in every place—and when Philip the deacon preached at Samaria, and baptized the converts, the Apostles sent Peter and John from their number, "who when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost ; (for as yet he was *fallen upon none of them ; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*) Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost." Why was it necessary that the Apostles should go to Samaria to confirm these new converts ? Evidently because that Philip (*although he worked miracles*) had not the authority vested in him. No other reason can be assigned. The Apostles then claimed and exercised a power superior either to elders or deacons ; and the exclusive exercise of that superior power is proof which will satisfy any reasonable mind that they *alone* possessed that power, and consequently were superior to elders and also to deacons. Before I proceed further with Scripture proofs, I would notice the very remarkable preface which you have found it necessary to insert (p. 23 of your pamphlet) before you introduce texts which you conceive to favour your theory. though indeed they do not give it any support. You here, as indeed throughout your pamphlet, rely almost altogether

upon names without attending to things. After having not very courteously nor correctly, insinuated that I placed more dependence upon the Fathers than upon the Scriptures, that I had inserted a salvo which you wished to make appear very suspicious, and that I gave you at length "the opinions of men," what is my surprise to find that *before* you proceed to Scripture you *first make a theory* of your own, which is not only totally unsupported by the least particle of evidence, but is in *direct contradiction* to the Scripture itself. This contradiction is manifest in several instances,—you say "there was then no ambition, no strife for precedence." St. John on the contrary, mentions an instance of such "love for pre-eminence," that his own instructions even, were contumaciously rejected. And St. Paul speaks of some who "were puffed up," and who spake of him that his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible," and of being divided into parties which strove for precedence. You say that the Apostles "as ordinary ministers never assumed any superiority over those whom they had set apart to the office of the ministry." In direct contradiction to this, St. Paul declares—"But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know not the speech of them that are puffed up, but the power.—For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. What will ye, shall I come unto you *with a rod*, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?" Other passages might easily be adduced, if necessary, from the Epistles of St. Paul. St. John also declares—"Wherefore, if I come I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words." Surely it was as ministers in the Church that they exercised this supervision, over inferior pastors, and not because they were endowed with extraordinary gifts, for many others besides the Apostles were endowed with the like gifts. You also assert that the government was in the whole body of presbyters. Now where, I ask, *is it to be found in Scripture* that presbyters governed presbyters? On the *contrary* St. Paul enjoins that government on one individual, placing Timothy at Ephesus—Titus at Crete. Thus Sir, the ingenious theory with which you commence, is not only totally without support in Scripture, but directly contrary to it; it is in reality nothing but "*a dream of your own imagination.*" But, Sir, it remains for me to mention; that you have not only gone contrary to Scripture, but also contrary to yourself. In many passages of your work, you endeavour to ridicule the idea of an uninterrupted succession in the conveyance of the ministerial commission. You endeavour to

characterise it as a mere "dream." It is indeed the easiest thing in the world to make assertions, but not quite so easy to *prove them*. What, however, must be the surprise of your readers to find that the very doctrine of succession, which you so often endeavour to sneer at, you here acknowledge and admit. You say "As ordinary ministers who in the discharge of the duties of their office, were required to preach the Gospel, to feed and rule the flock, the Church of God : in this capacity *they were to be succeeded by others*." That they were not to be succeeded in their extraordinary gifts, is allowed by all. You do not indeed say uninterruptedly succeeded, but this must be included in the words, for that succession which is interrupted is of course broken and ended ; or else you must resort to lay ordination, which I presume you do not advocate. No Sir, in this you are right, *they were to be succeeded by others*, and that too, until the end of the world, for our Lord's words cannot pass away, and he said "Lo ! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." You perhaps will say that the succession was vested in presbyters, but Scripture and history are both against you. It was with Apostles that our Lord promised to be, with men to whom he had just given a higher commission than they had previously received, the highest in the ministry ; who, as ministers, apart from their extraordinary gifts, exercised authority over presbyters and deacons, and committed that authority to others. Further, this same doctrine of succession is actually put in practice by many of the sects, who yet in words deny it. Thus even among dissenters generally, no man would be received as a minister who had not been ordained by another, or others, who had themselves been previously ordained by preceding ministers. And this is succession, the very same doctrine on which you would wish, if possible, to cast the blot of ridicule ; with this only difference, that their succession is not derived through the proper officer, as saith our Lord, "I am with you always," indicating that there should be always successors to the *Apostles*, endowed with the ordinary apostolic office, and standing in their place ; and it is also to be added, that dissenting succession reaches not to the fountain head, while the voice of history in every age proclaims that the Ordainers and governors in the Church, by whatever *name* they may be called, whether apostles, angels or bishops, received commission to *ordain* and govern by vicarious appointment from Christ, the source of all authority. I shall resume this part of the subject in another letter. Let us now turn our thoughts to the Church at Jerusalem, which affords a strong proof of *diocesan*

Episcopacy. Dr. Bowden has written so well on this point, that I cannot do better than to give his own words.—“The first Christian Church that ever was formed, deserves particular attention, as we may very reasonably suppose that all other Churches were formed upon that model. I think upon examination, we shall find this Church affording strong support to our cause. From the Holy Scriptures we learn, that there were myriads of Christians at Jerusalem; and, consequently numerous congregations. That St. James presided over these congregations, and over the presbyters who officiated in them, is evident from the Acts of the Apostles. The part which he acted, cannot be accounted for on any other supposition, than that he really was, what the concurring testimony of all antiquity represents him, the fixed bishop of the particular Church of Jerusalem. When Peter was miraculously delivered from prison, (Acts 12.) he said, “*Go show these things to James, and to the brethren.*” But why to James in particular? Or, why were the brethren with James rather than with John, who had not then, nor for at least four years afterwards, left Jerusalem? When Paul and his company went up from Cæsarea, (Acts 21,) the brethren received them gladly; and the day following they went in unto James; and all the elders were present. What induced them to go in unto James in particular: and how came all the elders to be with James? In the 2 Ch. of Ep. Gal. St. Paul says, that when Peter came to Antioch, he withstood him to the face, because that before certain came from James, he (Peter) did eat with the Gentiles, &c. What induced St. Paul to say that those who came from Judea came from James, rather than from the other apostles and elders, of whom many were then residing at Jerusalem? If St. James was the proper bishop of Jerusalem, all these facts, which upon any other supposition must appear very strange, were perfectly natural; for to what individual of the Church should St. Peter have sent so early an account of his deliverance from prison, as to the bishop? To whom was it so expedient, that St. Paul should give an account of the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry, as to the bishop and presbyters of the Church of the Hebrews? And could any thing be more natural than to say, that certain brethren who came to Antioch from the Church of Judea, came from the governor of that Church? * * I have but one or two things more to observe with respect to the Episcopal authority of St. James. After

* See this proved by Dr. Cave in his life of St. John.

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the council holden at Jerusalem, we find him always in his diocese. St. Paul in his Ep. to Gal. observes, that some Jews came to him from Antioch. Upon which St. Augustine observes, “they came from Judea; for James governed the Church at Jerusalem.” Several years after this, St. Paul returned to Jerusalem, and there he found St. James, and the presbyters with him. (Acts 18.) “James,” as Chrysostom informs us, “was that great and admirable man, who was brother to our Lord and Bishop of Jerusalem.” * * Another circumstance which proves our point is the succession of Simon to James, according to the unanimous report of the ancients. St. James is expressly said by Hegesippus, who wrote in the 2nd century, to have been appointed bishop of Jerusalem by the apostles. Ignatius, who was bishop of Antioch, a very short time after the death of St. James, affirms that St. Stephen was deacon to St. James. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished at the close of the second century, is quoted by Eusebius as saying, that immediately “after the assumption of Christ, Peter, James, and John did not contend for the honor of presiding over the Church of Jerusalem, but, with the rest of the apostles, chose James the Just to be bishop of that Church.” It was also received as an undoubted fact by Hippolytus—by Cyril of Jerusalem, and another Cyril of Scythopolis—by Epiphanius and Chrysostom—by Augustine and Fulgentius—by Nicephorus and Photius—by Decumenius and Nilus. And it was also mentioned as a matter universally acknowledged by the sixth general council; and Blondel himself confessed that it was asserted by all the Fathers. It does not appear to me possible, to produce any matter of fact that is supported by clearer and stronger evidence than this. Is there stronger evidence that Romulus was the founder of Rome—that Numa was the second king of the Romans, &c. There certainly is not. The testimonies to these facts, do not stand so near the events as the testimonies to the point in question; nor were these facts more universally believed by the Romans in all subsequent ages, than that St. James was bishop of Jerusalem, was believed by Christians in all subsequent ages. There is not the least contradiction, not one dissenting voice. Even Jerome, “whom you call a man of profound erudition,” bears his testimony to this fact. He affirms that “immediately after the passion of our Lord, James was constituted bishop of Jerusalem”—bishop in the ecclesiastical use of the word; the overseer of numerous congregations, and numerous clergy; just such a bishop as had the supreme power of the keys, of confirmation and of ordination. Is it not, Sir,

a most extraordinary instance of the perverseness of the human mind, that the advocatès of parity should be so tenacious of Jerome when he speaks obscurely, and totally regardless of him when he speaks in plain and unequivocal terms ; that they should admire him for the correctness of his *opinion*, when they have the *making* of that opinion ; but reject him for his *testimony* because that is inflexible." "There cannot, Sir, be a more rational way of ascertaining the meaning of Scripture passages which relate to a fact, than to appeal to the testimony of the ancients. To that testimony I have appealed, and it appears beyond contradiction, that the result is in perfect unison with the interpretation Episcopalians give to the texts relating to St. James. If you had the testimony of antiquity coinciding with your sense of those texts, I should immediately concede that we are wrong in our interpretation of them. If this be not the fairest and best way of proceeding, I know not what is." (*Dr. Bowden, vol. 1, p. 166.*) Timothy is called an apostle (1 Thes. 2, 6, compared with 1 Thes. 1, 1.) He is styled by the early Christian writers, bishop of Ephesus, and Titus bishop of Crete. Before, however, we examine the nature of the trust committed to them, it will be well to notice here the interchangeable use of the words bishop and presbyter, and remove that *seeming* difficulty which so much puzzles those who are not willing to comprehend that, which appears so clear to others. Let it be remembered then, that we look not for *official names* of any kind in Scripture, but only for *official powers*. You must admit this, according to your own method of reasoning, (*see page 19 of your pamphlet.*) St. Paul calls himself a deacon. "But surely," say you, "no one will contend that the apostle *was* a deacon in the proper sense of this word, and the circumstance of its being sometimes applied to certain persons whose office in the Church was to "serve tables" will not surely justify the inference that they were "ministers" in the sense in which the apostle uses the term." Now, if you would continually bear this in mind, that names alone are not to be depended upon, we might yet see you advocating the Episcopal cause, more strenuously than you now oppose it. Why should we not consider St. Paul a deacon in the proper sense of the word, although he calls himself one ? The answer is simple enough—Because, from Scripture, it is clear that he exercised official powers which a deacon, in the proper sense of the word, could not assume. For names then we must not contend, because that would lead to endless confusion, as it is very evident, that in many instances, the *name* neither can

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nor does define the official powers. In the Scriptures the first or highest order of the ministry is to be found under the name apostle. "It was after the apostolic age, that the name "bishop" was taken from the second order and appropriated to the first; as we learn from Theodoret, one of the fathers. At first view, this difficulty respecting the names of the sacred orders may appear formidable; but if we can find the *thing* sought, that is, an officer *higher* than that of presbyters or elders, we need not regard its *name*. Irregularity in titles and designations is of so frequent occurrence, yet occasions so little actual confusion, that it ought not to be viewed as a real difficulty in the case before us. Examples to this effect crowd upon us. The original meaning of "emperor" was only a general, but it was *afterwards* appropriated to the monarch; and the original meaning of "bishop" was only a presbyter, but the name passed from that middle grade to the highest. There are, again, the 'president' of the United States, 'presidents' of colleges, and 'presidents' of societies; there are the 'governor' of a commonwealth, 'governors' of hospitals, &c. 'ministers' of state, and 'ministers' of religion, ** There are 'elders' (senators,) in a legislature, 'elders' (aldermen,) in a city government, 'elders' (presbyters) in the church, and lay 'elders' in some denominations, &c." "Here, one would say, is an almost unlimited confusion of names or designations; yet this confusion is but apparent; there is no real or practical difficulty in the use of them; custom renders it all easy and clear."—"There was at least as much difference between the inferior kings, Herod, Archelaus, and Agrippa, and the supreme king Cæsar, as there is between the presbyter-bishops of Scripture and the bishops who succeed the Apostles; the mere title "King," common to all these, was far from implying that they were all of one grade. One irregularity in regard to the application of names, is particularly worthy of notice. The word "Sabbath" is applied in *Scripture* to only the Jewish day of rest; by very *common use* however it means the Lord's day. Now, "*the* (Jewish) Sabbath" is abolished by christianity, and the observance of it discountenanced; yet ministers of christian denominations are constantly urging their christian flocks to keep "*the Sabbath*." Does any confusion of the mind result from this confusion of names? we suppose not. All concerned understand, that *in Scripture* the word means the Jewish Sabbath, while *out of Scripture* the same word is commonly applied to the Christian Sabbath. Let the same justice be done to the word "bishop." In Scripture it means a pres-

byter, properly so called. Out of Scripture, according to the usage next to universal of all ages since the sacred canon was closed, it means that sacerdotal order, higher than presbyters, which is found in Scripture under the title of "Apostle." When a christian teacher who enjoins the observance of the day which he calls "the Sabbath," is asked for his New-Testament authority, he has to exclude all the passages which contain that word, giving them a different application, and go to other passages which do *not* contain it; and he argues that he seeks the *thing* not the *name*. And when we Episcopalians are asked for inspired authority for "bishops" we do the very same; we give a different application to the passages which contain that word, and build on the passages which teach the *fact* of the existence of Episcopacy, without that *appellation*. Thus secured by an example which is in high esteem with our opponents generally, may we not hope that they will withhold their censure from this portion of our argument?"—(*Ep. Tested Bp. Onderdonk.*) "But, Sir, after all, this argument from names in the present case, is a complete fallacy, and a gross misstatement of the point in dispute. The question is not whether a presbyter is called a bishop; that we acknowledge; but whether that officer, with a double title, was equal in point of dignity and jurisdiction, in point of office, character, and powers, with Timothy and Titus, and Barnabas and St. Paul, and the twelve. It is obvious to common sense, that this question can never be determined by saying that presbyters are called bishops. If you would prove the parity of presbyters with the above named rulers of the Christian Church, you must prove that they had equal authority, equal powers, and consequently, equal rank. This requires the evidence of fact; and, therefore, talk as much as you please about presbyters being called bishops, you will say *nothing to the point in dispute*. We have no dispute with you upon that particular; but we say it is arrant sophistry, and totally unworthy of men of sense and learning, to infer that there was no officer in the Church superior to those presbyters or bishops. Suppose presbyters had continued to be called bishops down to the present day, and that those for ages called bishops, had continued to be called apostles, what would you infer then from this double title? That presbyters were equal to apostles? Hardly. The fallacy would be too palpable. But it is as real in the present case, though not *seemingly* so. The taking the title of bishop, which belonged to the second order, and dropping that of apostle, which belonged to the first, makes no kind of alteration in the nature

and powers of the office. The successors of the Apostles, under the title of bishops, are precisely the same that they would have been under the title of apostles; and yet this trivial circumstance has ever put it in the power of our opponents to raise a mist about as plain a case as can possibly be conceived. But let our readers keep their attention fixed upon nothing but *facts*—upon *things* instead of *words*, and then the mist vanishes immediately.”—(Dr. Bowden to Dr. Miller, p. 165, vol. 1.) Do you not now, Sir, perceive the weakness—the fallacy of your arguments? Do you not see how absurd is the conclusion at which you arrive? You in effect say—presbyters are called bishops in Scripture, therefore there is no order in the Church higher than presbyters!! Is this sound reasoning? You must acknowledge that it is not; and then you must acknowledge that all the labour and pains which you have taken, and the *mathematical* skill which you have evinced, have all proved nothing. We acknowledge that presbyters are called bishops in Scripture, and therefore your labour was worse than useless. But we certainly do not infer from this, that there was not a higher order in the ministry, for we are confident that the Apostles belonged to that higher order. You will plainly perceive then that “the mode of comparison employed in your argument” does lie open to great objection. But “a similar method” you say “is observed in proving the divine character of the Holy Ghost,” and quote Acts 5, 3 and 4. This subject ought not to be introduced but with the greatest reverence. As you have mentioned it, it is necessary that I should notice it. Now, as we find that magistrates are called gods in the Scriptures, and the heathen idols also are called gods, the *term* alone is not sufficient to prove the divinity of the Holy Spirit—it must be proved by his attributes and character. Christ is called God, and the Arians and Socinians freely give him that title, manifestly shewing that they consider not the *term* as *any* proof. But as omnipotence and omniscience are ascribed to him, and these *exclusively* belong to Jehovah, he is thus proved to be one with Jehovah. And as Jehovah alone is the searcher of all hearts, and the Holy Spirit searcheth all hearts, he is therefore one with Jehovah. Again you say, that St. John, whom we style a bishop, calls himself a presbyter, as also St. Peter, and therefore you would wish me to understand that they were only presbyters, in the sense in which we now understand that *term*, and therefore that there was not any order superior to presbyters. But, my dear Sir, you run counter to your own reasoning. St. Paul, you remark, calls himself a

deacon—"But surely" (you very properly add) "no one will contend that the Apostle was a deacon in the proper sense of this word." It would be rather offensive, I think, to an English bishop, to tell him that he was not a presbyter, and lordly as you may think them, they do not consider that they demean themselves, by calling deacons their brethren in the ministry. I trust that you will give this letter a careful and attentive perusal, and that the community of names in Scripture will no longer perplex you.

LETTER IV.

REV'D. SIR,—

My preceding letter will have convinced you, I trust, that no argument can be brought against the divine appointment of the three distinct orders, from the circumstance that the terms bishop and presbyter are in the Scriptures applied to the same order, because the term apostle was then given to the *superior* order. We will now refer to the Epistles addressed to Timothy and Titus. In these *you* could find nothing in support of Episcopacy—strange indeed. If prejudice were once banished from every mind, how great a barrier to unity would be removed. What says St. Paul to Timothy—I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, that thou mightest *charge* some that they teach no other doctrine.—(1 Tim. 1, 3.) Here St. Paul *requests* Timothy to take the oversight of the Church at Ephesus,—*he* and *he alone* was to charge or command others not to teach any other doctrine than that which they had heard from the mouth of the Apostle. Now be candid and tell me, Sir, does it not appear from this that Timothy was superior to the elders of Ephesus? Nothing can be plainer than that he had authority over them, and authority belongs only to a superior. St. Paul gives his advice to Timothy as the superior officer in the Church, and particularly describes the qualifications of those who should be admitted to minister in holy things, stating what an overseer* or ruler of the *flock* committed to his charge should be—and what a deacon should be; plainly intimating that the deacon who proved faithful should be admitted to a higher degree in the ministry. Timothy was to *commend* the presbyters that

* This will also of course apply to an overseer of a *diocese*.

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ruled well, not to receive an accusation against them but before two or three witnesses—to *rebuke them publicly* if they were in error—neither was he hastily or rashly to ordain any to the ministry. Here is the power of *ordaining, reproving, rebuking, commending*, given solely to him. There is not a word about the presbyters uniting with him, or even being consulted. Now compare these Epistles with St. Paul's advice to the elders of Ephesus given previously to Timothy's appointment as Bishop of Ephesus. Is there a word about their ordaining others to the ministry? Surely, if St. Paul intended that they should exercise this power, he would have given them some directions respecting this important duty, particularly as this was his last communication with them, and he knew that they should see his face no more. Is it not evident then that this power was not committed to them, for if they possessed it, why send Timothy amongst them with authority to exercise it alone? Or, why was he not directed to associate the elders with him? No such directions being given to him it is plain that they were not to have any part in the matter. They were to *oversee* and rule their respective *flocks*. Timothy was to *oversee* and rule the whole Church of Ephesus, clergy and people. You say "overseeing and feeding the Church of Christ are the especial duties of the highest orders of ministers." But is not *ordaining* one of these especial duties, and a principal one? You know that it is—and you know that there is not a hint in Scripture, of this power of ordaining being entrusted to these elders or presbyters of Ephesus. It is evident then that there was an order superior to theirs, in which the power of ordaining was vested. Did it not occur to you, that in omitting the word ordain amongst the "especial duties of the highest orders of ministers" you omitted a very *especial* part of their duty? But why did you omit it, when you examined so minutely the powers given to the presbyters of Ephesus? Simply because you could not find that *that* power was committed to them? "When he (St. Paul) gives his charge to Timothy," says bishop Houlden, "it is in plain words, that he is to *govern and ordain presbyters*. When he gives his charge to these presbyters, it is to feed the flock of *lay-christians*. Let any one observe the difference, and judge, whether these presbyters were ever designed for the same offices for which Timothy had been set over them." "That Timothy did, after this, govern and ordain at Ephesus, and *not* these presbyters, is plain from St. Paul's *second epistle* to him; in which he is

supposed in the same office as in the *first* ; and the like injunctions, though in more general terms, repeated concerning his behaviour in it. From whence, I think it evident beyond all contradiction, that St. Paul did not, at this time, once think of leaving the whole government, and the matter of ordination, in the hands of these presbyters. For if that were his design and solemn act in this charge, what occasion, or what foundation could there be for him, afterwards, to take these rights away again ? And how various must his judgment, and how unbecoming his behaviour appear, (and I will add, how inconsistent with the notion of his being *inspired*,) to be perpetually thus changing, first giving to presbyters the right of ordination, then immediately restraining it ; then solemnly restoring to them the right of it when he was taking his final leave ; and afterwards putting the same restraint upon them again. This is incredible—and yet this must be supposed, if there be any thing implied in the text now before us, to the purpose of the presbyterian cause.—(*Brief Defence*, p. 121.) St. Paul solemnly addresses Timothy, *I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*—(1 Tim. 6, 13, 14.) And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, *the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*—(2 Tim. 2, 2.) This shows that the charge was for an *unlimited* time, and no such charge being given to the elders of Ephesus, it is evident that they had no power to ordain others. The duty of *overseeing* the flock, and feeding that flock with wholesome food belongs to every presbyter. But to *oversee many flocks* together with their presbyters—to give wholesome advice to these flocks and their presbyters—and to *ordain* presbyters to oversee their respective flocks belongs to a higher order, of which order was Timothy. That order was first distinguished by the term “apostle,” it is now known under the term “bishop,”—the name being changed—the *ordaining powers* remaining the same. You know, Sir, full well, that the term “bishop,” which means overseer, is not definite, that it applies to one who exercises the office of overseeing, whether that which he oversees be a *parish* or a *diocese*. You should have stated this, and then it is possible that conviction would have flashed upon your mind, and you would have discovered how futile—how fallacious—how absurd were your arguments founded on the

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community of names in the Scriptures. Before I proceed further with the arguments respecting Timothy's commission, permit me to ask, does your chairman or superintendent possess *exclusively* the powers which were entrusted to Timothy? Can your chairman *alone* ordain? Can he commend, reprove, rebuke with authority, rejecting those who will not be guided by his counsels? Methinks if he undertook to *dictate* to you, the extent of his authority would soon be pointed out to him. If then your chairman or superintendent does not possess *exclusively* this power which was given *alone* to Timothy and is possessed *alone* by bishops, (in the present acceptation of the term), why do you compare them with the highest order of the ministry? You may give them the same name, but they possess not the same powers, therefore they are *not equal*. As you seem to think that in my private letter, I passed over Scripture proof with so little notice, permit me now to propose to your consideration, in the words of Dr. Bowden, a few questions—you may examine the Scriptures and antiquity for a reply.—1. "How came the Apostle Paul to restrain the Presbyters of Ephesus and Crete from the exercise of their *right of ordaining*," supposing they possessed that right, "without any apology for so doing; without any acknowledgment that this *right* did originally belong to them; without any declaration that it was only for present expediency? Why do we find the first presbyters dealt with by St. Paul exactly as he would have dealt with them, had they been *originally* precluded from the right of ordaining?" 2. "If this restraint put upon the presbyters of Ephesus and Crete was but for a short time, (as some presbyterians have supposed,) and was designed to be taken off when the ground of the restraint was removed, how comes it that in all the accounts of the primitive Church, we read of *single persons* succeeding the Apostles, and such officers as Timothy and Titus? How comes it, that, immediately upon their death, we find the same restraint, and the same distinction spoken of with so much zeal in Ignatius' Epistles?"—3. "If this restraint upon the presbyters was designed to be taken off after the death of the Apostles, and was accordingly removed, *how* and when was it imposed again upon them? Which is the intermediate time, in which they exercised this right of ordination? Which is the time when the restraint was laid upon them again? And how comes it that their ordinations were always disapproved and condemned, and their *right* to this work always denied? It will require some ingenuity to answer these questions, consistently with the voice

of Scripture and antiquity." With respect to Timothy you say, "It is pretty evident that Timothy had a special call of God to the work of an Evangelist." Well what does this prove? That he was not a bishop? Certainly not. The term does not define the office. The text 2 Tim. 4, 5, makes him no more an Evangelist, than the words which follow make him merely a deacon; for he is directed to fulfil his deaconship. The merely being an Evangelist would not give him those powers with which he was invested at Ephesus. Philip the deacon was an Evangelist, but he pretended not to exercise the like authority. Timothy is not only called an Evangelist but an Apostle, and the duties which he performed at Ephesus, were doubtless exercised in virtue of the Apostolic office. You call so loudly upon me to point out in express words from Scripture that episcopacy is of divine origin, that I surely could not but expect, when you were attempting to substantiate the right of ordination by presbyters, that you, of course, would bring forward this plain, positive, and direct proof. This, however, you have entirely failed to do. You quote 1 Tim. 4, 14, compared with 2 Tim. 1, 6. Now the question is, who ordained Timothy? St. Paul says "Stir up the gift that is in thee by the putting on of *my* hands." Then St. Paul was the person who ordained him. But you say the presbyters were united with him. Supposing them to be presbyters in your sense of the word, did they join in the act by right, and of necessity. Their *right* is not so much as hinted at in Scripture, and that they were not of necessity joined with the Apostle is plain, because all will admit, that ordinations performed by St. Paul *alone* were perfectly valid. But suppose their concurrence necessary, will these texts prove that the ordination was performed by presbyters? Assuredly not, for they had an Apostle at their head, who speaks of the ordination expressly as being performed by himself "by the laying on of *my* hands." The mere circumstance that the presbyters laid on their hands together with the Apostle, does not at all prove their *right* to ordain. Presbyters in the Church of England lay their hands on the head of one who is to be ordained priest by the Bishop, but they do not presume to claim the right of ordination from this circumstance, for the ordination is equally valid without their concurrence. But do you notice the manner in which St. Paul speaks of this ordination? "*By* the laying on of *my* hands *with* the presbytery." "This is evident, that the ordination (of Timothy) could not have been *valid*, without St. Paul's concurrence; for

in 2 Tim. 1, 6, the preposition used is *dia*, by the imposition of my hands; but in 1 Tim. 4, 14, it is only *meta*, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. For in producing effects, *dia* denotes the principal, and *meta* the assistant causes. Therefore St. Paul ordained Timothy, with the assistance of some presbyters, for the greater solemnity of the act; and this is the custom of our Church also."—(*Barwick's Treatise*.) It is beyond doubt that the Apostles were superior to presbyters, in the common acceptation of the term,—but St. Peter and St. John call themselves presbyters or elders. The Apostles then, collectively, may not improperly be styled a presbytery. Such is the view taken of the subject by the principal ancient commentators; St. Ignatius calls the Apostles the presbytery of the Church. "It is incredible that the presbytery here meant should be a council of the grade of Church officers, who are called in these Epistles elders or presbyters. For then the absurdity results that Timothy was ordained by a council of the very men whom he was sent to ordain and to govern!" "Of course, the *presbytery*, whether a council of Apostles or of *presbyters*, properly so called, only concurred *with*, together with St. Paul. He actually conveyed ministerial authority. They assented, concurred in this act."—(*Dr. Hobart*, p. 159.) It is astonishing then that those texts should be brought forward in support of this modern opinion, that presbyters have a *right* to ordain, since the very passage adduced proves that an Apostle was present, and he expressly declares that *he* laid his hands on Timothy. What have you gained then by comparing these two texts of Scripture? Literally nothing—and you have searched the Scriptures in vain, for further proof, to help you out of your difficulty. By a quotation from Macknight allusion is made to another circumstance which some call an ordination. But it may be replied in few words, Paul and Barnabas were *Apostles* before the Holy Ghost said, "separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them"—therefore this could not be an ordination, for you certainly will admit the Scriptures do not speak of a higher order in the ministry than Apostles.—(*Gal. 1, 1*.) You say "all the examples of ordination which it (the Scripture) exhibits are confined to Apostles, to Evangelists, or to presbyters in conjunction with them." That the Apostles ordained, all will agree,—but where do you find that persons as Evangelists ordained? Timothy was an *Apostle*. He is not called an Evangelist, but is exhorted to do *ergon*, the work of an Evangelist, or in other words, to preach the Gos-

pel faithfully. From this we, no doubt, derive the word "Evangelical," so frequently used in the present day. But the happy circumstance that a deacon or a presbyter was evangelical in his doctrine, would not of necessity raise him to, or by *right* enable him to exercise the high office committed to Timothy and his successors. And, Sir, to allow you the very utmost which can be allowed, as, by your own confession presbyters *only* assisted, or ordained "in conjunction with" Apostles and Evangelists, it must of necessity follow, that to assume that right *alone*, is in direct opposition to the word of God, and is a usurpation. The truth is, Sir, that the more openly our opponents engage in this controversy, the more do they expose the weakness of their cause. The same authority which Timothy exercised at Ephesus, was vested in Titus who was left in Crete by St. Paul, and is declared by the concurrent testimony of all antiquity to have been the first bishop of Crete. St. Paul tells him, Titus 1. 5, For this cause left I thee in Crete, that *thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee*. Here the presbytery are not associated with Titus, and the omission cannot be accounted for in any other way than that the authority was not vested in them. But should you say, perhaps there were no presbyters at Crete when Titus was left there—then it is evident that there was a superior officer in the Church in the days of the Apostles, who had authority to ordain without the concurrence of a body of presbyters. The Epistles to Timothy and Titus clearly shew that the concurrence of presbyters was *not* necessary to institute a valid ordination. It has then been proved that Timothy and Titus were sent to Ephesus and Crete to ordain elders and deacons, and to govern both them and the laity in spiritual matters—they have thus been shewn by the powers which they exercised to be *superior* to presbyters. Dr. Bowden proves that "Timothy and Titus were the stationary bishops of their respective Churches, the former having never been absent that we know of, but on a short visit to St. Paul before his martyrdom, and the latter absent no longer than on a visit to the Apostle at Nicopolis and at Rome."—(1 vol. p. 132.) That Titus was bishop of Crete we have the testimony of Eusibius, Ambrose, Jerome, Theodoret, Theophylact, and Occumenius. The same authors, and others also testify that Timothy was bishop of Ephesus. That they had their successors is abundantly proved by primitive writers.—With respect to the angels of the seven Churches of Asia, you seem to have no difficulty in conclud-

ing that they were but presidents of the presbyters—the first among equals. Similar, I suppose you mean, to your chairman or superintendents. I hope you are convinced from all that has been said that the *powers exercised*, not the *name*, must determine the order. Let me ask then, does your chairman exercise exclusively the authority which these angels possessed, and does he retain that authority for life. Does he reprove and rebuke with all authority both clergy and laity—has he authority to silence any of your ministers who may be found unworthy—does he try those who say they are *commissioned* ministers and are not, and condemn them?—(Rev. 2, 2.) You are well aware that he has not the authority, and therefore he cannot be compared with them. You quote a passage from my letter to Mrs. Cunningham to help you out of your difficulty, but you are most unhappy in your selection, for that is far from being in your favour. Indeed it is very evident, that you here evade the subject in discussion, and instead of considering the *powers* attributed to the angel of the Churches, and which evidently mark him out as being of a superior order to other ministers in those Churches, you get rid of it altogether, by introducing instead this quotation, trying to make it prove that the angel of the Church was not superior to its presbyters, and by a bold, but unsupported assertion, that it was a mere matter of expediency. Truly, Sir, you have a novel method of answering Scripture proofs, by an ingenious turning away from the subject and mere assertion. You say “there is as much reason to believe that archbishops are a *fourth* order as to assert that bishops are a third order.” This is rather astonishing—we may give credit to this broad assertion when you prove to us the nature of those ecclesiastical powers which an archbishop exercises beyond those which belong by *right* to a bishop. As the president of the bench of bishops he is “first among equals,” that is all—he ordains—confirms—governs his diocese. The bishops do the same, therefore they are in order equal. But this is not the case with bishops and presbyters. The presbyter has *no right* to ordain—confirm, or govern the Church, which has been proved, and consequently he is inferior to a bishop, in the ecclesiastical sense of the word. You continually confuse yourself, and, I have no doubt, many of your readers also, by resting so much upon *names*, and having no regard to *official duties*. We have it here again in the term president. You assert, *without proof*, however, that the “angels mentioned by St. John were the presidents of the presbyters.” You then speak of the “presbyters who preside

well," and would from this infer that they were upon an equality. But you surely must be aware that one man may *preside* over a diocese containing a number of parishes, while another only *presides* over a parish, and that therefore nothing can be ascertained from the name. You might, with as great propriety, conclude that an arbitrator, a petty magistrate, and a judge of a Supreme Court, were all upon an equality—possessed equal official powers, because they all *judged* between man and man. Really, Sir, I trust by this time you are completely ashamed of your strange mode of reasoning. Grotius, who was not an Episcopalian, says, "They waste their own, and other people's time, who, when they undertake to treat this question, *laboriously* prove that the name of bishop was common to all pastors, when the meaning of that word is very plain." "But that is even a little more absurd, that some, in order to prove that bishops were not different from mere presbyters, adduce the fathers saying, *all bishops are of equal merit*; as if you should say, *all the Roman senators were equal to the consuls*, because the dignity of *both consuls was the same*; but he will make himself or his readers angry, who refutes such things."—(Chap. 11, sec. 11.) In the same chapter, sec. 3, he says, "Of the Episcopate, therefore, that is, the *superiority* of one pastor above the rest, we first determine *that it is repugnant to no divine law*. If any one think otherwise, that is, if any one condemn the old ancient Church of folly, or even of impiety, the burden of proof, beyond doubt, lies upon him." Let us, however, examine the *powers* with which these angels were invested, and then it will, I think, clearly be seen that your reasoning is far from being conclusive. The angel of the Church of Ephesus is said to have *tried them which say they are Apostles*, and were not, and that he had found them liars. He must have exercised authority in the Church, otherwise he could not have examined "those who pretended to be Apostles, and to have authority to preach without a commission." He must have possessed the same authority which Timothy had exercised thirty years before. The angel of Pergamos is commended for his personal good qualities, but as the overseer of the Church is charged with some neglect. *I have a few things against thee*, says Christ, *Thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. So also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes*. He is called upon to repent of this neglect, and is severely threatened, if this admonition should not have the desired effect. This surely proves that he had power to correct these evils. The angel of the Church of Thyatira is also accused of suf-

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fering Jezabel, who called herself "a prophetess to teach and to seduce" the servants of Christ. He had power then to silence her. The angel of Sardis is commanded to "*be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*," or, says Christ, "*I will come on thee as a thief*." These angels then being made chargeable for the disorders of their respective Churches, must have had power to correct all abuses, and consequently had the supreme power. "Christ," says Grotius, "writing to these bishops, thus eminent among the clergy, *undoubtedly approved of this Episcopal superiority*." It will be hard, says Hoadly, to shew how a prime presbyter, being only chosen chairman or president of the college of presbyters, for the more orderly management of their joint counsels, should become chargeable with the faults of *other Churches*, with which, according to this supposition, he had nothing to do. For it is manifest, he could be no more accountable for any *congregation* but his own, than any of the other *presbyters*, had he not the care of *others* committed to him in some peculiar manner. And this he *could not have*, if he were only chairman in the college." "That the fathers accounted the seven angels so many diocesan bishops, is beyond all contradiction. So say Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Eusibius, Ambrose and others. That Polycarp was then Bishop of Smyrna, is testified by Irenæus, who knew him well; by Ignatius; by Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, who calls him bishop and martyr in Smyrna; by Eusibius; by Tertullian; by Jerome; and by all antiquity. And Ignatius names Onesimus, as bishop of Ephesus when he wrote, which was but about twelve years after the inditing of these Epistles. It being then so evident, that one of those to whom St. John writes under the name of *angel*, was Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and most probably, the other, Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus, we may be sure that all the rest were bishops of their respective Churches, as well as Polycarp and Onesimus. And let it be particularly noticed, that these bishops—bishops in the ecclesiastical sense of the word, having presbyters and deacons under their direction, as Ignatius testifies—bishops who had the supreme jurisdiction, and, consequently, the power of commissioning the inferior orders in the Church—are declared by our Lord himself to be *stars in his own right hand*. This makes their office a *divine* appointment, &c."—(Dr. Bowden, 1 vol., p. 118.) It is unnecessary to add more; and you will now be convinced that all which was to be "gathered from the Scriptures on this important and interesting subject could not

be contained in one letter." You say in 22d page of your work, that you have thus considered all my Scripture proofs, but, in truth, Sir, I think, that on the contrary, you have not really considered them at all, but have dexterously evaded the consideration of the powers and authority they speak of, by talking only of the *names* without any attention to the *things*. *Names* are nothing, it is the *power* and *authority exercised* for which we contend. Before I conclude this letter allow me to recommend to your particular notice, the canons of criticism which are annexed to White's *defence of his letters to a dissenting gentleman*. The second canon runs thus—"Consider what end you write for. If it be the discovery and manifestation of truth, and the conviction of those who oppose it, use fair and clear reasoning; but if it be only to keep your party in countenance, your business will be to decline reasoning as much as you well can, and to make use of declamation and harangue in the room of it." The sixth runs thus—"If you cannot defend the true point in question, change it, and slip in another, which you can better defend in the room of it."

LETTER V.

REV'D. SIR,

THE abundance of Scripture proof which Episcopalians advance is sufficient to satisfy any unprejudiced mind that the form of Church government which they advocate is *clearly* pointed out in the word of God. But as there are those, in the present day, who are not free from prejudice, and consequently are not disposed to view the subject in the same light in which Episcopalians do, we have recourse to the writings of those pious and excellent men who lived in the earliest ages of the Church. We hear their testimony—we learn how they understood that the Church of Christ was to be governed, and we discover the nature of the government in *their* time. The Scriptures we believe afford sufficient proof, but it must be acknowledged that the corroborative testimony of the ancient writers give weight to that proof, and tends firmly to establish the truth of the cause we advocate. The Scriptures plainly shew that the Apostles exercised authority over presbyters and deacons. Here then the

Episcopalian contends are the three distinct orders—Apostle, presbyter, and deacon. We refer then to the writings of those who lived in the days of the Apostles, and long after them, to learn whether these three distinct orders were preserved in the Church, and from these we find that they were continued under the names bishop, presbyter, and deacon. We learn also why the term Apostle was no longer used; and distinctly and expressly are informed, that the name bishop was applied to the *first* order—the name being changed, the order and powers remaining the same. If a man were desirous of knowing the form of Church government in the second century, to what would he refer? Surely, if he possessed common sense he would have recourse to the *records* of that century—and if he discovered that one certain form of government was then universally adopted, and not a word spoken against it, nor a line written in opposition to it, if he were not wilfully blind, he would perceive—the conclusion would force itself upon his mind, that such must have been the government adopted by the Apostles, and when he found that it was expressly declared by the writers of this century, that this form of government was apostolic, then, if he were not completely under the dominion of prejudice, all doubts would be at once removed—he would at once perceive that a more *severe* *censure* could not be passed upon the wisdom of the *inspired* Apostles, than to suppose that they, under the influence of inspiration, established a presbyterian form of Church government, and that they were scarcely laid in their graves before it became manifest that this form of government must be changed for the welfare of the Church—he would expel such a thought from his bosom, and conclude that the Episcopal regimen must be apostolic and divine. Having then, Sir, examined the Scriptures, and, as I think, fully met your objections against our view of the subject, and shewn the fallacy and weakness of your arguments, I will now appeal to the primitive writers, and will take the liberty of *setting you right* with respect to them and their testimony, where, I think, you have not clearly understood them. That you may be as competent to comment upon a portion of the word of God as were any of the primitive fathers, I will not attempt to decide. But that you or any other person living in the 19th century, could have as clear an idea of the form of Church government which the Apostles established, as they had who conversed with the Apostles, and lived in the age immediately succeeding them, would be absurd to allow. No, Sir, sound reason is against your conclusion, and there-

fore it must be rejected. That the Scriptures *do* teach, there were three distinct orders, and that consequently they were divinely constituted, I think, from what has been remarked, every candid and unprejudiced mind will allow. Fully do I agree with you that *all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, &c.* I would therefore recommend to your careful perusal the following portions of the word of God—Numbers, 16th ch. ; 1 Samuel, 13th ch., 5th to 14th v., inclusive ; 1 Kings, 12 ch., 26th v. to the end, and following chapter ; 2 Sam., 6th ch., 6 & 7 v. ; 2 Chron., 26th ch., 16th v. to the end. Those portions of Scripture plainly shew with what jealousy God guarded the ministry of his appointment, and every thing connected with it, and how greatly he manifested his displeasure against those who assumed what did not, of right, belong to them, or dared to make a change unsanctioned by him. What became of Korah and his company ? The earth opened and swallowed them up because of their presumption. What was the fate of Saul ? His kingdom was rent from him because of his imprudence and disobedience. Where are the *ten tribes*, who, influenced by Jeroboam, *changed* the ministry of God's appointment ? The arm of the Lord has not been stretched out for their preservation and they are lost among the nations of the earth, and the blot of deepest die which stains the character of Jeroboam is, that he led the people into idolatry, and set up a ministry of *human invention*. What was the end of Uzza ? The anger of the Lord was kindled against him for his disobedience, (Numbers 4, 15,) and he fell lifeless before the ark of God. What befel Uzziah the king, for his pride and presumption ? He was smitten with leprosy, and, separated from all society, a leper he died. He invaded the peculiar rights of the priesthood, and the mark of God's displeasure, for this unsanctioned act, he carried with him to the grave. Are not these to be numbered amongst the "profitable" portions of God's word ? And are they not applicable to this generation ? True it is, that since the canon of sacred Scripture has been completed, God does not in so exemplary a way manifest his displeasure against evil, else every liar might expect the fate of Ananias. But is disobedience less hateful to him now ?—is it less offensive to his holiness and purity now, than it was in those days ? No—and therefore we must conclude, a ministry of *human appointment* is just as displeasing to him in the present day as it was in the time of Jeroboam. It cannot be that God would be so

particular as to the government of the Jewish Church which was only to continue for a time, and that he would leave the government of his Gospel Church, which shall last to the *end* of time, to be formed according to the caprice of man, whose nature it is to be fond of change, and who is so easily captivated by novelty that it is a restraint to him to walk in the *good old way*. But to the primitive fathers let us go for information. Here at the very commencement I meet with *your opinion*, you say "that their testimony makes *against* instead of *for* the cause I espouse." It is somewhat surprising then that you do not respect their testimony more than you appear to do. To what lengths will not prejudice lead mankind. Some are so prejudiced even against the *Gospel*, that they will put *darkness for light, and light for darkness*, &c. Now, Sir, is it not possible that early impressions and prejudices, combined with the force of education, have led you to this conclusion, that the testimony of the fathers makes against our cause? Will you please allow these venerable men to speak for themselves—to relate facts in their own way? I trust that we shall make it appear, if *express words* can do it, that the fathers believed in the *divine institution* of Episcopacy—this is what you demand, and I shall be happy to oblige you. As you seem to think it a little "suspicious" that I omitted to give the testimony of St. Clement, we will begin with him, and you shall have a little more from this author whom you appear to esteem, in the sermon to which you allude, so full as *you say* of acrimonious and bitter feeling against *dissenters*. You suppose his testimony to be peculiarly valuable; on this point we shall not differ. Thus he writes—"Seeing, then, these things are manifest to us, (that is to the Corinthian christians,) it will behove us to take care that we do all things in order, whatsoever our Lord has commanded us to do. And particularly, that we perform our offerings and services to God at their appointed seasons, for these he has commanded to be done, not rashly and disorderly, but at certain times and hours. And, therefore, he has ordained, by his supreme will and authority, both where and by what persons they are to be performed. They, therefore, who make their offerings (in the Church) at the appointed season, are happy and accepted; because that, obeying the commandments of the Lord, they are free from sin. For, the *high priest* has his proper services; and to the *priests* their proper place is appointed; and to the Levites appertain their proper ministers; and the *lay-man* is confined within the bounds of what is commanded to lay-men." St. Clement

is writing to Corinthian christians, not to Jews. It is plain then that this argument could have no force unless the Christian Church, in its three distinct orders, resembles the Jewish. Why did not St. Clement add here, which, if your idea be correct, would have been very proper, "Tis true, in the Jewish Church there were three orders, but in the Christian Church there are but two." Why did he not add this? Undoubtedly, because he knew to the contrary. He knew there were three distinct orders in the Christian Church, and so he tells us in the passage you have quoted. "Christ was sent by God—the Apostles by Christ. They (the Apostles) appointed the first fruits of their conversion to be bishops and deacons over such as should afterwards believe." Now, if one and two make three, then we have here the *three orders*. *First*—Apostles. *Second*—Bishops or presbyters. *Third*—Deacons. I really cannot see how you could understand the quotation in any other way, unless to make it coincide with modern views, you would not allow the *Apostles* to be of any order in the Church, and would eject them altogether. It has been shewn that the term bishop is not definite—that it applies not only to the overseer of a *flock*, but to an overseer of many flocks—of clergy and people—of a *diocese*. The prophecy then from Isaiah cannot fix and confine the orders to *two*—it does not determine the number. You do not yourself appear to think that it gives any weight to your cause—it certainly gives none, neither do the words of St. Clement quoted by you. "The Apostles had a reserved power, we have seen from Holy Scripture itself, both of government in general, and in special, ministerial or clerical acts besides, which they did not impart to all the presbyters or bishops they at first ordained for the Churches. If any time could be assigned therefore, or any general grant produced, when or whereby it might appear, that they conferred or bequeathed those *reserved powers*, so necessary to the Church for ever, to *all* the presbyters they ever ordained in it, it is but a modest question to ask, *in what text of Scripture*, or in what record of the Church, is such an important grant to be found? If no such evidence is to be had, as I think the ablest advocates for them have produced none, then the grants I have mentioned and proved above to *particular* presidents over *many* Churches, by their own *act* and *deed*, even where other bishops or presbyters were before, as they were indifferently called, till then, does infer such an evident translation of their own third order, with the reserved acts all along peculiar to it, to those *particular presidents* and the whole succession

of them, as, I think, no ministers in the Church besides have any shadow of a charter like it to produce for themselves. For, to say *the Apostles had no successors* to any ordinary and permanent prerogative of theirs, is to contradict all antiquity."—(*Slater's Draught*, p. 183.) We come now to the testimony of Ignatius the disciple of St. John. As his Epistles so strongly advocate the cause of Episcopals, you would endeavour to destroy the effect which his testimony ought to produce, by hinting that their genuineness was doubted. The vindication of these Epistles by Pearson and Hammond, *have never been*, and I will venture to assert, *never will be* answered. Blondel, Salmasius and Daille, who were undoubtedly learned men, tried all in their power to invalidate those Epistles; but they were so triumphantly vindicated by the above named writers, that no person has since attempted to do any thing more than to *carp* at them. The great body of the *learned* of all denominations* acknowledge the *shorter* Epistles, published by Usher and Vossius, to be genuine, and entirely free from those corruptions which were universally admitted to belong to the *larger* Epistles.—(*Bowden*, vol. 1, p. 84.)† Usher's authority is valuable, particularly when we take into account his "enlightened and vigorous mind," and remember that he spent eighteen years in the study of the fathers. The interpolations in the six Epistles, according to Dr. Lardner, an English dissenter, were the work of some Arian, so that they are in no way connected with Episcopacy. "Indeed the passages respecting the three orders of ministers are so numerous in these Epistles, are so completely interwoven with their whole substance, and arise so naturally out of the subject of the Epistles, that it is impossible to separate these passages from the rest without utterly destroying the whole structure and tenor of the Epistles.—(*Dr. Cook's Inval. of Pres. Ord.* c. 110.) The following you quote from Cook's *His. View of Christianity*, vol. 3, p. 23—"Admitting that all this, as it has been stated, is the genuine composition of Ignatius, it must be apparent that it presents a *most decided contrast* to what is taught in the New

* Usher, Vossius, Grotius, Petavius, Bull, Wake, Cave, Cotelierius, Grabe, Dupin, Tillamont, Le Clerk, Bochart, Fabricius, and many others have borne testimony to the genuineness and authenticity of the *Epistles of Ignatius*.

† See further remarks by this excellent author, who shews the gross absurdity in which they are involved who deny the genuineness of the *shorter* Epistles.

Testament, or that it teaches respecting the constitution of the Christian Church, what, had nothing been preserved to us, *but* the sacred volume, would never have entered into the imagination of any man as prescribed by that volume." Pray, Sir, did Dr. Cook's Bible contain the Epistle of Timothy and Titus, or the Book of Revelations, or did he ever give them a perusal? Does he find presbyter ordination recommended or *even countenanced* in the New Testament? Had he carefully examined the arguments derived from Scripture, in favour of Episcopacy, and compared these with the writings of Ignatius, bearing in mind that the term Apostle was no longer used, but the name bishop applied to their successors, he could not have concluded that there was a most decided contrast between the Scriptures and the Epistles of that devoted servant of Christ, who died a martyr to the cause of religion? If nothing had been preserved to us but the sacred volume, how could we explain many passages in it, which can only be determined by our knowledge of customs and manners and laws, which knowledge we can only obtain from books—how would we determine its genuineness and authenticity, and learn so correctly which were the apocryphical writings. If you will and *do* receive the testimony of the fathers on these points, the most important of all others, how is it that you refuse their testimony respecting Episcopacy? Is it not, because they are clearly and decidedly against you? Infidels and Deists no doubt rejoice to find that professing christians call in question the authenticity of the writings of these primitive men—it emboldens them to do the same, and confirms them in their infidelity. They know that from the testimony of the fathers we believe the book of the New Testament to be handed down to us from the days of the Apostles—and glad are they to have any help in crying down those writers—which testify against them. To deny, or to cast a doubt upon the genuineness of these writings, does lead, as you may perceive, to fearful consequences. I have not the works of Dodwell, and therefore cannot refer to them, but in Dr. Bowden's, 1 vol., p. 64, I find a quotation from Dodwell's *discourse* concerning the *one priesthood and the one altar*, in which he speaks of the bishops being over the clergy by *divine institution*. "He repeatedly declares, that the first bishops were ordained by the Apostles; that every bishop in his diocese, was what the high priest was in the Jewish Church; and that as the high priest was a type of Christ, so the bishop, in the Christian Church, is his representative. And from this principle, he argues against

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presbyterian ordination." "Mr. Dodwell also supposed, that as this *general* establishment of Episcopacy by the Apostles, acting under the influence of the Holy Ghost, did not take place till all the Epistles were written, we are not to look for a particular and explicit exposition of this ecclesiastical regimen in the New Testament; but that, as the whole Church of Christ, in every age subsequent to the Apostolic, bears testimony to the *divine institution* of Episcopacy, the fact is thereby as fully ascertained as the canon of Scripture, the institution of the Lord's Day, and the practice of baptizing infants; and this he maintains is as complete proof as can be produced for any matter of fact whatever."—(p. 230.) It is pretty evident then, that you have not clearly understood Mr. Dodwell; how far you were then guided by prudence in asserting, as from him, that Episcopacy commenced A. D. 106, I will leave for others to determine. You say that the Epistles of Ignatius are silent on the divine institution of Episcopacy—have you read them? I think that some very clear and decided passages can be produced to shew that he believed in the divine appointment of bishops. To the Magnesians he says, "It is therefore fitting, that we should not only be called christians, but be so. As some call indeed their governor, bishop, but yet do all things without him. *But I can never think that such as these have a good conscience, seeing they are not gathered together thoroughly according to God's commandment.*"—(Sec. 4.) Here he expressly states that they are not gathered together thoroughly according to God's commandment, who do all things without the bishop. Does he not consider obedience to the bishop agreeable to the command of God? He certainly then considers them to be divinely appointed; for if appointed contrary to God's will, to obey them would not be acting according to God's commands. In the address of the Epistle to the Trallians, he speaks of that Church "*continuing in the Apostolical character*," and then mentions distinctly, bishop, presbyter, and deacon. What other meaning can we attach to this than that he knew the three distinct orders in this Church, together with its Scriptural doctrines, constituted its Apostolical character. The Trallian Church having a bishop, and possessing the Apostolical character, it is evident that the Apostles appointed bishops, and as they acted under divine inspiration, their acts must have a divine sanction. But if the Apostles did not appoint bishops, then the Trallian Church had departed from the apostolical character. Ignatius was acquainted with some of the Apostles, was a disciple

of St. John, and therefore could not be ignorant of the apostolical character of the Church. It is beyond contradiction, then, that Ignatius believed the three orders, bishop, presbyter, and deacon, to be of apostolic appointment, and consequently *divine*. "Ignatius writes thus," says Grotius, "to the Church of Antioch about Evodius, *who was first ordained by the Apostles your bishop*." "This is that Ignatius *who saw Christ in the flesh, lived with the Apostles*, and obtained the episcopate in the Church of Antioch after Evodius."—(Chap. 11, sec. 6.) Can any thing be plainer than this? You know that he applies the term bishop to the first order, and this Evodius, he says, was ordained by the Apostles. He certainly then was fully satisfied that the appointment of a superior order was apostolic. How then could you say that he was silent respecting the divine institution of Episcopacy? In his Epistle to the Philadelphians he writes—"The Spirit spake * * do nothing without the bishop." You do not seem to know whether this was a true or false spirit. Really, Sir, I am astonished at your boldness. In your determination to oppose Episcopacy at all hazards, when the strong testimony of a holy servant of Christ and a martyr declares that the supervision of bishops was by the direction of the Spirit, can it be doubtful to what Spirit he referred? and can you in your eagerness to destroy his testimony, presume to approach so near to what I cannot help thinking the confines of fearful presumption, as to intimate a doubt to what Spirit the aged martyr alluded? Would a *false* spirit teach us to love unity—flee divisions and *be followers of Christ*? You know that a *false* spirit *delights in divisions*, and hates the followers of Christ. Long after the time of Ignatius, Dr. Bowden, speaking of the christians and their persecutions, adds, "they had also extraordinary communications of *God's spirit*, and miracles had not yet ceased," and refers for full proof of this to Church against Middleton.—(p. 31 *Bowden*.) What charity then, Sir, is there in this your remark? You tell me that "charity thinketh no evil"—are you willing to be tried by this Scripture test? "If this spirit," you add, "was the good spirit, it is rather strange it did not speak as plainly in our Lord, and through his Apostles." Does our Lord, I ask, or do his apostles speak as plainly respecting the Lord's day, &c., as do the primitive fathers? Are you really, Sir, searching after *truth*, or will you *content* yourself with *cavilling*, when argument fails you? One quotation from Ignatius I will give you, from the concluding part of which you will see that we do *not* rest merely "upon the testimony of Je-

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rome, a presbyter of the fourth century," for our views respecting the right to baptize. In his Epistle to the Smyrnaeans he writes—"Let that Eucharist be looked upon as well established (or valid) which is either offered by the bishop or by him to whom the bishop has given consent. *It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or to celebrate the feast of charity.* It is a principle in which all true Churchmen agree, that none have authority to baptize but those who have received Episcopal ordination—that all other baptisms are, at least, irregular; and that they who baptize without Episcopal authority, as also those who are thus baptized (except on the plea of unavoidable ignorance or involuntary error) incur *great guilt*. The true Churchman feels assured that the laity have no *right*—nay that it is presumption in them to exercise those powers which belong exclusively to the "ambassadors of Christ;" and seeing from the Scriptures, and the records of the primitive Church, that a certain *individual* was *always* set apart to invest others with ministerial powers—the true Churchman, though he will exercise charity towards others, yet cannot so far *depart* from the Scriptures and antiquity, as to allow that persons can be admitted into the ministry in any other way. He denies, therefore, to all who have not received Episcopal, or in other words Scriptural ordination, the *right* to baptize. To depart from this, is to depart from Church principles conscientiously adopted, as being in accordance with the pure word of God; and this you call illiberal and uncharitable. But the question is, can they *truly* be called illiberal and uncharitable who will not allow, or admit any thing which the Scriptures do not *sanction*? I think not. Now the Scriptures do not sanction, or even countenance ordination by presbyters, it is *not* then being either illiberal or uncharitable to say that such ordinations are not *valid*. But let those who are continually advocating these liberal views take heed lest they be found acting in opposition to the word of God. We may speak and write on this subject, mildly, yet firmly, without the least wish or desire to give offence. Truly and sincerely can the writer of these pages say, that he has no wish to offend any of his dissenting brethren; but at the same time he is constrained to add, that for the sake of being called "liberal" he cannot depart from what he fully believes to be the will of God; nor can he think that the truly christian dissenter, with all his love for his own party, would demand such a sacrifice. He will acknowledge that we *must obey God*, rather than be *guided by the caprice* of this dangerous age.

LETTER VI.

REVD. SIR,

WE come now to consider the testimony of Polycarp. He speaks of Ignatius the "blessed," as he calls him, as not having run in vain. He writes thus to the Philippians. "The Epistles of Ignatius which he wrote unto us, *together with what others of his have come to our hands*, we have sent to you according to your order, which are subjoined to this Epistle, by which you may be *really profited*, for they treat of faith and patience, and of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus." Now, Sir, I ask, if there had been any thing contrary to his views in these Epistles, would he not have pointed it out—would he have given such a testimony of their value? No. But as he has written so favourably of them, we may be sure that he fully concurred with Ignatius in his sentiments respecting Episcopacy. Suppose, Sir, that you received a number of letters containing a variety of matter on doctrinal points—you forward these letters to a number of your friends, stating that by these epistles they might be greatly profited, for they treat of all things that pertain to edification in the Lord Jesus. Would you not by thus writing make the sentiments contained in those letters your own? and would not your friends, if they possessed common sense, consider them entirely agreeable to your views? Surely they would. And as Polycarp has thus written respecting the Epistles of Ignatius, there can be no doubt but that they met with his full approbation. But then you say we cannot prove that these very words we quote, contain the genuine sentiments of Ignatius. Read, Sir, Pearson and Hammend's vindication of these Epistles, and then perhaps you will acknowledge, that *that* work has been accomplished which you would fain hope was too difficult to be performed. There is no reasonable doubt, but that these Epistles of Ignatius which we now have are genuine—are his own. There is much in them, no doubt, which is not very pleasing to our dissenting brethren—but the candid reader, will, I think, allow, that there is nothing which is not in harmony with the Scriptures. There are indeed false Epistles added to the true ones, from which you appear to have quoted, I know not from what other motive, than that you might bring the *genuine* Epistles into contempt; but, to say the least, there

is not much of fairness or candour in such a course. Your remarks upon the bishops being said by the fathers to stand in the place of God, and that such expressions are calculated to do injury, appear to me to be in contradiction to the Scriptures; for in them the Apostle declares that he, and those with him, as ambassadors for Christ, besought mankind "*in Christ's stead.*" And our Lord expressly tells his disciples, "he that receiveth *you* receiveth *me*, and he that receiveth *me* receiveth *him that sent me.*" This no doubt was the same sense in which the primitive fathers intended to express themselves, and your remarks upon *them* fall upon the *Scriptures*. In his note on the first of the passages just quoted, Dr. Adam Clarke says—"Christ while on earth represented the person of the Sovereign of the World, his Apostles, and their successors represented the person of Christ." Polycarp, by the testimony of the ancients, is declared to have been bishop of Smyrna. *He* does not mention this because there was not an occasion for it. Why he did not mention his deacons with his presbyters is not at all necessary for us to inquire. He speaks of deacons in his Epistle, and that too as being the "*ministers of God in Christ and not of men.*" There is no doubt that there were deacons in the Church at Smyrna, for Ignatius speaks of them. "But," you say, "does he (Polycarp) speak of *three orders.*" He speaks of *himself*; and the ancients style him *bishop of Smyrna*—he mentions *presbyters*, and tells us what *deacons* should be; now this looks very much like the *three orders* for which we contend. But if he did only *mention* two orders, that does not prove that there were not three. Instances of this kind are frequent in the Scriptures—"Even those (the ark, &c.) did the *priests* and the *Levites* bring up."—(1 Kings, 8, 4.) "And the *Levites* and the *priests* praised the Lord day by day."—(2 Chron., 30, 21.) "And this is the record of John when the Jews sent *priests* and *Levites*, &c."—(John 1, 19.) "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and *chief priests*, &c."—(St. Matt. 16, 21.) "And the Pharisees and the *chief priests* sent officers to take him."—(St. John, 7, 32.) Were there but *two orders* in the Jewish Church? Was there more than *one chief priest*? Dear Sir, will you confine yourself to something like reason and *solid argument*, and no longer resort to cavilling? If Polycarp's testimony had been as plain and express as that of Ignatius, you would not have received it; for it is evident you are determined not to admit any thing which makes

against your cause. All the Epistles of Polycarp are lost except the one addressed to the Philippians. Had they all been preserved, there is little doubt but that we should have found him as clear and decided as any other writer respecting the divine institution of Episcopacy. St. Ignatius bears ample testimony to the existence of the three orders by divine right; but in his Epistle to the Romans he does not mention them—the term bishop is only used once, but neither presbyter nor deacon are named. Now if all *his* Epistles but this one to the Romans had been lost, we should not have the testimony of Ignatius to which we might refer. That Polycarp does not particularly enumerate the three orders in his only remaining Epistle, can no more be admitted as an argument *against* the existence of these orders, than the silence of Ignatius in his Epistle to the Romans. Ignatius having written so plainly and forcibly on the subject, it was not necessary that Polycarp when sending these Epistles to the Philippians should do more than express his agreement with him. We only see by this to what subterfuges our opponents are driven in their endeavour to support and uphold their cause. You speak of *ruling* presbyters,—what did they rule? Their *flocks only*, as we learn from Scripture. But *Timothy* and *Titus* and the *angels* of the seven Churches of Asia ruled the *clergy and their flocks*; and if we may credit the testimony of the fathers, Epaphroditus, Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp, like the Apostles, did the same. It is not necessary to say who was bishop of the Philippians at the time Polycarp wrote, nor can we assign his reason for addressing the Church of Philippi instead of the bishop. In those days of fierce persecution against the Church, the *bishops* or *governors* were always exposed to the *greatest* danger—the popular fury was directed against *them* especially, and they were either driven from their dioceses, or put to death. The Church at Philippi may at this time have been, in this way, deprived of its bishop. The question is, how was the Church at Philippi governed? Now when we remember that the Church at Jerusalem, the Church at Crete, the Churches at Rome and Antioch, and the seven Asiatic Churches, were governed by Apostles and their successors, as is abundantly testified, and that the Epistles of Ignatius so full on this subject were sent by Polycarp to the Philippians, we may reasonably conclude that the Church at Philippi was governed as all those other Churches were, for if not, they would at once have inquired, why send the Epistles of Ignatius to us? we own not this government of which he writes. Is there a word of this? Is there a word in all

the writings from the time of the Apostles to the Reformation, to shew that the Church at Philippi was governed differently from the rest of the Churches? if not, then it is folly to suppose that there was a difference. A Church can be under Episcopal government, although the bishop does not reside amongst his clergy. If they who minister at the altar have Episcopal ordination—acknowledge a superior, and have their acts sanctioned by him, then they are truly Episcopal. The Church in all the British colonies was under the control of the bishop of London for many years. Would you say then that there was no Episcopal Church in the colonies, because there was not a resident bishop? You would not venture to assert this. Tertullian, however, may decide the point respecting the government of the Church at Philippi. To secure the Christians in his day in sound and Scriptural doctrine he recommended them to consult the *Apostolic Churches*. Amongst others which he thought proper at that time to mention, he names the Church at *Philippi*. And as, according to Tertullian, the Apostolic character of a Church depended upon its being able to trace the *succession of its bishops from the Apostles*, we shall have no difficulty in determining the character of the Church at Philippi. Your arguments then may please and perhaps satisfy those of your way of thinking, but they will not bear investigation. You will please refer to what has been said respecting the community of names in Scripture, and then you will, I think, see more clearly the force of the remarks made by Clemens Alexandrinus. He speaks expressly of the *three orders*, and speaking of presbyters he mentions them as not being *honoured with the first seat here on earth*. This plainly shews that he does not give *precedency* to them. Your remarks on the quotations which I made from the writings of Clemens, Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Origen and Cyprian, have very little bearing on the subject before us. Pray, Sir, for what purpose did I quote from these authors? Was it not to shew that there were three distinct orders in the ministry, and that the bishop was superior. Have you then fairly met the argument? No. You are pleased to *dissent* from Tertullian's testimony respecting baptism. Does not Ignatius give the same testimony, and Jerome also, who, you say, being a man of profound erudition, *could not fail* to be acquainted with the opinions of those who preceded him with regard to Ecclesiastical polity? Why not then receive *his* testimony on this point? It certainly is not *opposed* to the Scriptures. Will your *dissent* influence or satisfy the intelligent reader? You look for too

much if you hope for this. You in fact evade the subject, and endeavour to draw off the attention of your readers from the point in question. In evasion and confusion of terms your strength lies. I need not tell you that these are not arguments. Will the testimony of the fathers satisfy you that Episcopacy is of *divine appointment*. In my next letter I will endeavour to lay before you their testimony on this subject. You no doubt have met with the following passages from the word of God, though perhaps at the time you wrote you did not recollect them, "*He that despiseth you despiseth me.*"—(Luke 10, 16.) "*Obey them that have the rule over you.*"—(Heb. 13, 17.) These portions of Scripture we may fully believe were in the minds of Origen and Cyprian at the time they were writing. Bishops being overseers of the clergy and people by divine right, presbyters are just as much bound by the word of God to obey the bishop, as the people are to obey the presbyters placed over them. Cyprian expressly states that no presbyter ever attempted to act contrary to this rule under any of his *predecessors*. Cyprian you may be aware is clear and decided as to Episcopacy being of *divine appointment*, as I will presently shew. I am really astonished at the strange method you take to get over the difficulty presented to you in the case of Ischiras, who was not allowed to exercise any of the duties connected with the ministry, *because he had been ordained by a presbyter*. Do you attempt to shew that this statement is not correct, or that Ischiras was indignant at this treatment, and that he accused the bishops of presumption—of usurping an unscriptural power in the Church? Do you give us any testimony that he insisted upon the *right* of presbyter ordination? Not a word—not a line from you, although this is the *very point* on which this controversy hinges. History too, is silent as death upon this point. Ischiras is degraded, and *the whole Church* concurs in the justice of his sentence. No voice is heard against it—no pen is wielded in his defence. How can we account for this? In one way only; and that is, that *presbyters never had the right to ordain*. That right *always* has been confined to a superior order in the ministry—to apostles and their successors the bishops. Now, Sir, did you not perceive the difficulty? Surely every intelligent and reflecting methodist must see that the difficulty has not been met at all by you—has neither been overcome by opposing testimony, nor combated by a shadow of reasoning. Testimony, such as you would wish, you cannot produce, and reason is against your cause. A few other attempts of the like kind were made by

presbyters with the like success. "In the 4th century, Colluthus, a presbyter, ordained Ischiras to that office. Ischiras was reduced to lay-communication by the Synod of Alexandria; and in the Synodical Epistle of the bishops of Egypt, Thebais, Lybia, and Pentapolis, and in the joint letter of the clergy of the province of Mareotis, both preserved in the works of Athanasius, it is declared that *the ordination was null, because it was performed by a presbyter*. Maximus, another presbyter in the same century, ordained some persons to the same office, and all his ordinations were pronounced null and void by the council of Constantinople. In the same century Aerius maintained that presbyters were equal to bishops, and had a right to ordain; for which, and some other doctrines, he was condemned as a heretic. In the 5th century, Musteus and Eutychianus ordained some clerks, themselves not being bishops. The council of Sardis refused to consider them as clergymen, because they were not 'ordained by them who were bishops verily and indeed.' The following is yet a stronger case than the preceding. The bishop of Agabara being blind, his presbyters read the words of ordination while he laid his hands upon the candidate. *This ordination was pronounced invalid by the first council of Seville.* "These cases are so known, says bishop Taylor, I need not insist on them." Before the *fourth* century, such a thing does not appear to have been thought of."—(*Dr. Cook's Essay*, sec. 360.) An excellent comment, says Dr. Bowden, upon Jerome's assertion, "What does a bishop do which a presbyter may not, excepting ordination." Irenæus, however, expressly states that *they* (the bishops) also governed the Church. "The decree of the fourth council of Carthage was the first that licensed priests to *assist* bishops in ordinations, yet was not obligatory in the West; but for almost three hundred years after, ordinations were made by bishops alone."—(*Dr. Cook*.) "I am therefore driven to the conclusion, that presbyters have no authority to ordain. I am well aware that this opinion is offensive to those who have no other than presbyterian ordination. But *truth* is what we ought all to seek; particularly in so essential a concern as that of the true ministry of the Church of Christ. There is no one thing more frequently urged on christians, than the obligation to "flee divisions," to "speak the same things;" and how is this to be done but by a fair and candid discussion of points on which we disagree? No one then has a right to complain that his opinion is questioned. Every one who is of a *right spirit* would rejoice to have the truth clearly made out and

embraced by all. This question is the more important, because if the conclusion we have drawn be just, all other than Episcopal ordination is necessarily invalid. This declaration, although it follows as necessarily from the premises as the conclusion of any proposition ever stated, has been reprobated in the strongest terms, because it involves an exclusive claim to the ministry. It is, however, far from being the desire of those who believe that Episcopal ordination *alone* is valid, to prevent any qualified person from entering into the ministry. They only wish to convince those who believe themselves called to minister in holy things, and who are, from early prejudice, or misinformation, or *not investigating the subject*, content with authority derived from presbyters, that *this authority is not valid*, and to induce them to obtain that which is. The doctrine ought not to be rejected because it involves an exclusive claim; for there must necessarily be a right in the *truly authorized*, to the exclusion of those who are not; and the question at issue ought to rest on its merits. But how does this matter concern private christians, if they are truly religious? and why should a man leave the Church to which he has been attached, when the ministers are good, religious men? These singular questions have been frequently urged, with great earnestness, upon myself. But few words, however, are sufficient to show their absurdity. We are commanded to be baptized, and to receive the sacrament in memory of our Lord. We cannot obey these injunctions in sincerity unless we are satisfied of the validity of the authority of the minister; and to receive these mysteries at the hands of those we are persuaded are not authorized, is a profanity *in us*; though it may not be *in them who minister*, provided they are conscientiously persuaded of their authority, *after full investigation of the subject*. But this proviso includes a great deal more than may be supposed at first view. A man who makes up his mind from reading an ordination sermon, and does not even take the trouble to see that the quotations are correctly made, although he has spent years in learning the classical languages for the very purpose, avowedly, of fully informing himself on all doctrinal points, cannot pretend to have a clear conscience in this matter. And if it be urged that the authors quoted are rare and not easily to be met with, it is answered, that a man's duty is to inform himself, and not to talk of the difficulty of doing it, &c." "But what necessity for leaving the Methodist Episcopal Church? Professing with all sincerity very high esteem and affectionate regard for a number of the ministers of that soci-

ety, I must nevertheless say, because their ordination is only presbyterian. Mr. Wesley was no more than a presbyter, and therefore had no *authority to ordain*; much less to ordain a bishop.”—(*Dr. Cook's Essay*, sec. 367, 370.) Dr. Cook had been a Methodist, but united himself to the Church from a full conviction that Episcopal ordination was necessary to constitute a valid ministry. His reasoning is so good and so much to the purpose, that I am led to adopt it in preference to anything which I might here advance. To me it appears proper to be firm and decided as to the *necessity* of Episcopal ordination to render it valid. To say the least, it is far better to be under a ministry whose authority has never been doubted, than to be under one whose validity has *always* been questioned—may I not say denied. But while I assert this, I should not feel justified in entertaining hostile feelings towards those who are not with us.

LETTER VI.

REV. SIR,

I WILL now make some quotations from the primitive Fathers, from which it will be seen that they entertained no doubt as to the *divine institution* of Episcopacy. I give them not as their *opinion*, for they were fully persuaded that infinite wisdom so ordained it—that it was of God. The testimony of Ignatius has already been adduced; I will, however, quote one passage from the address of the Epistle to the Philadelphians in connection with the first section of that Epistle. “Ignatius to the Church of God, &c., which I salute, &c., especially if they are at unity with the bishop, and presbyters who are with him, and the deacons appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ; whom he has settled according to his own will in all firmness by his holy spirit. *Which bishop* I know obtained that *great ministry* among you, *not of himself, neither by men, nor out of vain glory*, but by the love of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ. The following is from the third section of his Epistle to the Ephesians—“For even Jesus Christ, our insuperable life, is sent by the will of the Father; as the bishops, appointed unto the utmost bounds of the earth, are by the will of Jesus Christ.” I trust that these will satisfy you that Ignatius is *not silent* respecting the *divine institution* of Episcopacy, but that his

testimony is clear and decided on this point. Polycarp, who was himself a bishop, having presbyters and deacons under him, fully concurred (as has been shown) in these sentiments of Ignatius. He therefore doubted not but that the *superior rank* which he held in the Church was by *divine right*. Hegesippus, born at the beginning of the second century, was, as Jerome states, "near the times of the Apostles." "According to the fragments in Eusebius, he declares of himself, that as he had made it his business to visit the bishops of the Church, so he had found them all unanimous in their doctrines; and that the same books of the law, the same gospel and faith, which God had revealed both before and by Christ, had been *constantly preserved* along with the *succession of the bishops in all the Churches*."—(Bowden, 1 vol., p. 83.) Here he speaks of the *Apostolic succession*, and of its universality, that it was preserved in all the Churches. He could not have declared, with truth, that the Gospel and faith of Christ *were preserved*, if the supremacy of bishops was an usurpation and contrary to the will of God. I have already observed that as the Apostles acted under the immediate influence of the spirit of God, their acts had the divine sanction.—(Matt. 18, 18.) Irenæus who also flourished in the second century thus writes—"It is, therefore, with all in the Church, who wish to hear the truth, to understand fully the tradition of the Apostles *published* through the whole world; and we can enumerate those who were *appointed by the Apostles bishops in the Churches*, and their successors even to us, who have taught no such thing; neither have they known what is idly talked of by these (viz. the heretics.) For if the Apostles had known hidden mysteries, which they taught apart and secretly to the perfect, they would have delivered them to those especially to whom they committed even the Churches themselves. For they wished those to be very perfect and irreprehensible in all things, *whom they left their successors, delivering (to them) their own place of government*." "The blessed Apostles, therefore, *founding and instructing the Church* (at Rome) *delivered to Linus the bishopric* to govern the Church. Paul makes mention of this Linus in the Epistles which are to Timothy. To him succeeded Anacletus; after him, *Clement obtained the bishopric*." "By this ordination and succession, that tradition in the Church which is from the Apostles, and the doctrine of the truth, hath come even unto us. And this is a most full shewing that there is one and the same lively faith which has been preserved in the Church from the Apos

tles until now, and *handed down in truth.*"—(Iren, book 3, chap. 8.) Here we have the direct testimony of Irenæus, that to *one* individual the care and government or mastership of the Church at Rome was committed by the Apostles—that this *one* individual had *his* successors in governing the Church, and the names of *twelve* are given. He only mentions the *Apostolic succession* of the Church at Rome, because, as he says, "that it is very long in such a volume as this (his book against heresies) to enumerate the *succession of all the Churches.*" This shews that *all the Churches* were alike governed by *one* superior officer set over them by the Apostles, and therefore their appointment had the *divine sanction*. The next testimony which I adduce is that of Tertullian. He calls upon the heretics to "produce the originals of their Churches, and show the order of their bishops so running down *successively* from the beginning, as that every first bishop among them shall have had for his author and predecessor some one of the Apostles or Apostolic men who continued with the Apostles. For in this manner the *Apostolic Churches bring down their registers*; as the Church of Smyrna from Polycarp, placed there by John; the Church of Rome from Clement, ordained by Peter; and so do the rest prove their Apostolical origin by exhibiting those who were constituted their bishops *by the Apostles.*"—(Tertullian *de præscript.* c. 32.) Tertullian, as you are aware, places bishops, the successors of the Apostles, in the first rank, without whose authority neither presbyter nor deacon has a right to baptize. You are not pleased to agree with him, but your *dissent* will not invalidate his testimony, which is in full agreement with other primitive writers, in accordance with sound reason, and by fair inference can be gathered from the word of God. Firmilian, a distinguished bishop of Cesarea and contemporary with Cyprian, after having shown from Scripture that the Church was founded upon the Apostles, in his 75th Epistle thus writes, "When we may observe, that the power of remitting sins was granted to the Apostles, and to those Churches which they, *when sent forth by Christ*, formed and founded, and to those bishops who *succeeded them in a due and regular course of vicarious ordination.* Under what other notion can we, therefore, consider these adversaries of the one Catholic Church, whereof we are members, these enemies of ours, of us I say, who are *successors to the Apostles,*" &c. Here we have diocesan bishops the successors of the Apostles, retaining, by vicarious ordination, the very commission which the Apostles held, having received it

from Christ. It is clear then that Episcopacy was of *divine appointment*. We have also the testimony of the learned and pious Origen, who, though "fond of allegorizing," did sometimes speak very plainly. In his 20th Homily on St. Luke, he has these words: "If Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is subject to Joseph and Mary, shall not I be subject to the bishop, *who is of God ordained* to be my father? Shall not I be subject to the presbyter, who, by the divine vouchsafement, is set over me?" Here, the bishop, as distinguished from the presbyter, is said to be *ordained by God*; the presbyter also, according to him, holds a divine commission; and this we most readily grant, and contend for. Another testimony to this purpose, is that of Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem. It was the general belief of that time, as we learn from Eusebius, that Alexander was made bishop of that city by extraordinary designation. The historian says, *it was God's special care for his Church that did it*; that there was something peculiar to God in the matter. Alexander himself believed it; he must, therefore, have believed the Episcopal office to be of *divine appointment*. This appears, also, from his congratulatory Epistle to the Church of Antioch, when Asclepiades was promoted to the chair of that diocese. He tells them that "his bonds turned light and easy to him, when he heard that such an excellent person was made their bishop *by the special favour of God*." Alexander was as well qualified as any man then living, to determine what was the government of the Church in the Apostolic age. It was about the year 212 that he was made coadjutor to Narcissus in the see of Jerusalem. Narcissus was, at that time, aged 116 years, and, consequently, was born before the death of St. John. Alexander, then, must have had it from the mouth of Narcissus, what the government of the Church was in the very age of the Apostles. I cannot conceive anything more to the point than the testimony of such a man."—(Bowden, vol. 1, p. 54, 55.) Come we now to the decided and express testimony of Cyprian. In his discourse at the opening of the Council at Carthage, he says "that our Lord Jesus Christ, and he alone, has power of setting bishops over the Church to govern it." In his Epistle to Florentius Pupianus, he says, that "it is God that makes bishops," and that "it is by the *divine appointment* a bishop is set over the Church." Again, he says, "Yea, it is not a matter left to our own free choice, whether bishops shall rule or no, but the will of our Lord and Saviour is, that every act of the Church be governed by her bishops."—(Hooker, vol. 2, p. 259.) Let us now see

what Cyprian's contemporaries say. "In the council of Carthage, which was holden in the year 256, Fortunatus à Thuchabori, Venantius à Tinisa, and Clarus à Muscula, expressly say, that "*our Lord left the care of his spouse to the bishops.*" And we may reasonably believe that all the other bishops of the council were of the same opinion with these three, and with Cyprian, their president; especially when we consider that it is fully attested by other African synods, as appears from their Synodical Epistles. Thus, the 57th among Cyprian's, is a Synodical Epistle, written by forty bishops, in the year 252. In that, they consider themselves as Christ's *Generals*, having a *commission from heaven* to animate his soldiers under their command—as "the pastors to whom the sheep are entrusted *by the chief shepherd.*" The 61st seems to be another Synodical Epistle, congratulating *Lucius* upon his return to the see of Rome. In that, we have bishops of *divine ordination*. The 67th was written by thirty seven bishops, giving their resolution of the case proposed to them, concerning *Martialis* and *Basilides*, two Spanish bishops, who had lapsed in the persecution. Now the *divine right* of Episcopacy runs through the whole Epistle. The 70th is another Synodical Epistle, signed by thirty two bishops, in which they expressly say, that "it was by the *divine* vouchsafement that *they* administered God's priesthood in his Church." The 72d is another Synodical Epistle, written to Stephen, bishop of Rome, in which it is expressly affirmed that the Episcopal authority is of *divine appointment*; and that the *one altar*, (which is a figure for the bishops' communion,) is *divine*; and that the setting up of *other altars* in opposition to it, or independent of it—(mark this)—is to counteract a *divine ordinance*. Nothing can be more expressive of the belief of that council. Here, then, we have the opinion of, perhaps, all the bishops, certainly of a great majority of them, in Mauritania and Numidia, "an opinion concerning a matter of fact," that Episcopacy is a *divine* institution; and, I think, nobody can, with any show of reason, doubt, that they were full as able to give a correct opinion upon this subject, as the same number of our adversaries are in the present day. To these testimonies from the African bishops, may be added those of Cornelius, the clergy, and the people of Rome. Let us begin with the testimony of those Roman confessors, who had joined in the schism of Novatianus, but soon became sensible of their fault, and returned to the communion of the Church. Cornelius, satisfied of the sincerity of their penitence, convenes his presbyters,

before whom the associates of Novatianus make the following confession : " We know that Cornelius is chosen bishop of this most holy catholic church, *by the omnipotent God and by our Lord Christ* ; we confess our error. We have been imposed upon—we have been abused by treachery and ensnaring talk. For we are not ignorant that there is one God, and one Lord Christ, whom we have confessed, and one Holy Ghost ; and that there ought to be but one bishop in a Catholic Church." This also was the belief of Cornelius and all his clergy. Cornelius says expressly that " Novatianus usurped, and by force seized the bishopric, when it was not given him from above." And the Roman presbyters and deacons were as fully persuaded that Episcopacy was a *divine institution*. This appears from " a letter " written to Cyprian, during the vacancy in the see of Rome. Having told him how far they had proceeded in the case of the lapsers, they say that they " can proceed no further *till God shall give them a bishop*." Thus we have the sentiments of the bishop and clergy of the Church of Rome, when she was as pure a church as any upon earth."—(*Bowden*, 1 vol., p. 53.) Eusebius declares that the bishops of his time derived their authority by uninterrupted succession from the Apostles, and the Apostles theirs from Christ ; he consequently makes the Episcopal office to be of *divine origin*. Athanasius, the illustrious champion of the Trinitarian cause, in his Epistle to Dracontius, a presbyter who was elected to a bishopric, but declined the office, thus writes, " But if you think there is no reward allotted to the office of a bishop, you despise the Saviour *who instituted that office*. I beseech you suffer nothing of that kind to enter your mind ; for what the Lord instituted by his Apostles, that is good, and remains firmly established." We have also the strong testimony of Hilary, whom you would gladly enlist as advocating your cause, but his testimony is decidedly against you. He affirms that " the bishop is the vicegerent of Christ, and represents his person ; " and that " *he decreed every church should be governed by one bishop, even as all things proceed from one God, the Father*." Jerome, addressing the Church, says, " The apostles were thy fathers, because that they begat thee. But now that they have left the world, thou hast *in their stead* their sons, the bishops," (in Psal. 44.) " In his 54th epistle, he mentions this difference amongst others, between the " christians " and the montanist heretics : " with us, the *bishops hold the place of the apostles*, (that is the first rank) with them, the bishop holds the *third place*." They placed him: below a

deacon, and this was one mark of their being heretics ; for it was contrary to apostolic truth and institution." (*Bowden* p. 5.)

Now, Sir, I have adduced an abundance of testimony from the primitive writers in proof of the divine institution of episcopacy—testimony which, taken in connection with the Scriptural proofs of the three distinct orders in the ministry, in the time of the apostles, must remove all doubt from the minds of those who are not determined to shut their eyes against the truth. Can you shew by their express language, or even by fair inference, that the fathers did not believe in the divine right of episcopacy ? You cannot. And as I have shown you that this divine right is stated by them not as mere opinion but as matter of fact, and you cannot overthrow their testimony, reason and propriety dictate the course which you should pursue. The superiority of Bishops over the other orders has clearly been shewn, a few additional quotations, however, may here be made. Cyprian says, "What greater and better thing can I wish for, than to see the flock of Christ illuminated by the honor of your confession ? For as it is the duty of all the brethren to rejoice on this account, so particularly the bishop's portion of the common joy is greater, inasmuch as the glory of the Church is the superior's glory." (*Dr. Cook's Essay*, sec. 153.) "Cyprian in his epistle to Rogatianus, who complained to him of a deacon who had abused him, his bishop writes, "*Exercise the power of your office upon him, and either suspend him or depose him.*" He likewise commends Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, for driving Felicissinus, the schismatic, from the church, "*with full authority as becomes a bishop.*" Jerome calls presbyters *priests of the inferior degree* and deacons the *third degree*. He also states, that "it was determined through the whole world, that one of the presbyters should be set above, (or over) the rest, to whom all care of the Church should belong, that the seeds of schism might be taken away." (*Dr. Cook's essay*, sec. 239.) Again he says, "I marvel that the holy bishop, under whom Vigilantius is said to be a presbyter, doth yield to his fury, and not break that unprofitable vessel with his apostolic and iron rod." (*Ibid*, sec. 266.) Tertullian says, "The highest priest who is the bishop, has the right of baptizing," &c. (*Tertul. de Bap. Lib. Cap. 17.*) Eusebius in his 3d book of the Life of the Emperor Constantine, speaking of the Nicene Council, called to settle the dispute respecting the feast of Easter, writes,—"*The heads of all the churches through all Europe, Lybia and Asia, and of the ministers of God, were gathered into one or together.*"

" *There is but one bishop in a church.* In the many hundred instances which Eusebius relates of bishops being ordained to office, there is no case in which it is not obvious that he was the *only bishop* in that church," (*Dr. Cook, sec. 341,*) except where the bishop from extreme age required an assistant. — *Bishops received the episcopal office by a new ordination.* "When a *see* was canonically vacant, an election was made, differently, indeed, as to the mode, in different churches. — The bishops of the province, at least a number of them, met, for the purpose of ordaining the bishop elect. *His orders as a presbyter, were not sufficient* ; he received a *new ordination.* Thus, Cyprian was first a presbyter, and afterwards ordained bishop of Carthage, according to his deacon Pontius, Eusebius and Jerome. Thus, Cyprian tells us, that "Cornelius had advanced, gradually, through all the inferior stations ;" and, consequently, had been a presbyter before he was a bishop. Yet we find, when he was promoted to the see of Rome, he was ordained by sixteen bishops. Thus we find, also, in the promotion of Sabinius to the bishopric from which Basilides had fallen, that he was ordained by the imposition of the hands of the bishops present. Thus Fortunatus, Achimnius, Optatus, Privatianus, Donatulus, and Felix, six bishops, ordained a bishop at Capsis. Nay, says Sage, "this necessity of a new ordination for raising one to the episcopal power, was so notorious then, that the schismatics themselves believed it *indispensable* ; and, therefore, Novatianus, though formerly a presbyter, (as Cornelius expressly says, in his epistle to Fabius,) when he contended with Cornelius for the chair of Rome, that he might have the *show*, at least, of a *canonical* ordination, got three inconsiderate bishops to come to the city, and then forced them to give him the episcopal commission, *by an imaginary and vain imposition of hands*, as Cornelius expresses it. Thus, also, when Fortunatus, one of the five presbyters who joined with the schismatical Felicissimus against Cyprian, set himself up as an anti-bishop at Carthage, he was ordained by *five false bishops.*" (*Bowden, 1 v. p. 48.*) We see then from the *Scriptures*, Acts 20, 17, Ep. to Tim. and Tit. and from the history of the *primitive church*, that the orders of a presbyter did not enable him to perform those especial duties which exclusively belong to the chief officer in the church. It is most manifest when we compare St. Paul's advice to the presbyters of Ephesus, with that given to Timothy and Titus, and Christ's reproof to the *angel* of Thyatira. St. Paul tells the presbyters of Ephesus, that from amongst their

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body of presbyters some should arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. But what does he say to these presbyters whom he was addressing? He bids them take heed to *themselves* and their *flocks*; he exhorts them to *watch*—to be upon their guard lest they fall into the snare. But Timothy and Titus were to *command* and teach—to *rebuke sharply*—to rebuke *with all authority*—to *charge some* that they teach no new doctrine, 1 Tim. 1, 3, and to *silence* perverse teachers, Tit. 1, 11. And the angel of Thyatira is *reproved* for not having *silenced* that false prophetess Jezebel, Rev. 2, 20. Can any thing be plainer? The candid, unprejudiced, and humble searcher after truth will answer, no. But allow me to ask, are your chairmen set apart for their especial duties by a *new ordination*, and are they ordained by those who are in full exercise of those especial duties, having *themselves* received authority by a *new ordination*?—No. Why then compare them with the bishops of the primitive church. "*Bishops had the sole power of confirmation.*" For this we have Cyprian's express testimony in his epistle to Jubaianus. It was the custom "to offer such as were baptized to the bishops, that, by their prayers, and the laying on of their hands, they might receive the Holy Ghost, and be consummated by the sign of our Lord,"—and he expressly founded this practice, upon Acts 8, 14, &c. Cornelius also, in his epistle to Fabius, makes it an argument against Novatianus, that though he was baptized, yet he was not confirmed by the bishop. Firmilian also, in his epistle to Cyprian, says, "The elders" (meaning the bishops,) "who govern the church, possess the power of baptism, confirmation, and ordination." (*Bowden*, 1 vol. p. 49). Jerome says, "It is the custom of the church, for *bishops* to go and invoke the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands, on such as were baptized by *presbyters* and *deacons*, in villages and places remote from the mother church."—"Do you ask," says he, "where this is written? In the Acts of the Apostles"—referring to Acts 8 & 19. (*Dr. Cooke*, sec. 247.) The bishop, or the chief officer of the church, *had the sole power of ordination*. This, we learn from Scripture. We have also the testimony of Chrysostom, Cyprian, Cornelius, and Jerome, in the primitive church. There is no instance of presbyter ordination in the *Scriptures*. It was not *sanctioned* by the primitive church—but *always pronounced invalid*. I have now shown that the Scriptures plainly point out to every unprejudiced mind the *three orders* in the ministry under the names apostle, presbyter, bishop, or el-

der, and deacon. That the first alone ordained and governed both clergy and people. I have shown from the testimony of the primitive writers, that these *three* distinct orders were continued in the church, the term apostle being no longer used, but the term bishop being applied and *confined* to the *first* order—while to the *second* order the names presbyter and elder have been appropriated, and the term deacon to the *third* order. The superiority of the first order is clearly maintained in the epistles of St. Paul; and St. John gives a strong intimation of this. It is also abundantly testified by the primitive writers. I have shown you that in the Bishop *alone* was vested the power of confirmation and ordination, which power the *apostle alone* exercised in their days; and by this it must be manifest to all, that bishops were ever considered as the successors of the apostles. I have shown you that three or four presbyters in the *fourth* century, (not an instance, I believe, is recorded before that period,) did ordain several persons, who were all degraded, while individual bishops, and whole councils, condemned the usurpation. I have further shown you that there was but one bishop in a church, while there were, as is well known, a number of presbyters and deacons. And that bishops were admitted to the rights of their high office by a new ordination. Surely, Sir, this ought to satisfy the most sceptical and incredulous; and instead of contending against the decided and concurrent testimony of ages, they ought to yield to that testimony in full accordance with the word of God, and renounce their error. If the Apostles committed the government of the Church to presbyters alone, how are we to account for the silence of all the primitive writers upon so important and interesting a subject to the Church. Such a complete change in the government of the Church could not possibly be effected *instantly*—be adopted *universally*; and *all history* be silent as the grave respecting this change. Changes in government, whatever their nature or tendency may be, are not so easily accomplished. Is it possible then, that the government which Christ and his Apostles established; could so soon be abolished? Is it at all likely that in so short a period bishops could usurp so great authority, and bring the whole Church in subjection to them? Is it credible that the directions and appointments of Christ relating to his Gospel Church could so soon be forgotten? That at the expiration of one hundred years after the Apostles, his Church should be governed in a way entirely different from that which he intended—that not a single voice should be raised in its defence

—no advocate should be found to support it—to exhort the christian world not to forsake the *good old way*—not to give up that liberty wherewith Christ had made them free? Is it possible that Episcopacy could then be universally adopted, and that not an individual writer could be found to notice this great change, and to declaim against the unscriptural authority of bishops—their bold and cruel usurpation? It would be unreasonable and absurd even for a moment to suppose this. The piety of the primitive Church, on the one hand, and the insuperable difficulties in the way of such a change, on the other hand, render it impossible that it could be effected. But again—it is admitted that for 14 centuries the Christian Church was altogether Episcopal, that this form of government was *universally* received, and that none other was acknowledged. If therefore the Apostles left to presbyters *alone* the government of the Church, and not to bishops—then for 14 hundred years the *original* institution of the Church of Christ was laid aside—then during all this time there could have been no Church according to Christ's appointment; and consequently there was a failure of that promise of the Saviour to his Apostles and their successors, "*Lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world.*" But can any be found who dare to assert this of the unchangeable God? I trust not, Sir, for we are assured that he keepeth his promise for ever. We are therefore certain that the government which he established, and which he blessed, has always, from its first establishment, continued and will continue to the end of the world. "The Apostles," says Dr. Hobart, "certainly constituted a ministry in the Church, the supremacy of bishops, therefore, must have been either of apostolic institution, or it must have been an innovation or usurpation. If it had been an *innovation* or *usurpation* on Apostolic order, it could not have received universal sanction so near the Apostolic age, without *opposition*, and without the most explicit and marked *record* of so extraordinary a change or usurpation. *But no such record appears—no tradition even*, of any such event is mentioned in any of the writers of the first three centuries. No such change or usurpation, therefore, could have taken place in the constitution of the primitive Church. The supremacy of bishops, therefore, which *universally prevailed* (in the primitive Church) could not have been an innovation or usurpation. It must, therefore, have been an Apostolic institution." Yes—and this power of setting apart persons for the sacred ministry, which power is vested in the *bishops alone*, has been conti-

nued by an uninterrupted succession from age to age to the present day, as I will more fully show in my next letter; and by having full faith in the Saviour's promise that *he will always be with his Church*, we may confidently assert that the same power will continue to the end of time. Suppose that the Church in the present day were under the sole management of presbyters, is it, I ask, within the bounds of probability, that such an extraordinary revolution in the government of the Church, could, as it were by magic, be effected—that in every part of the christian world, at one and the same time, some hold usurping presbyters would arise and assert their exclusive right to govern the Church and clergy. Would all bow to their authority by common consent, and think so little of it that they would not even record the event? No. I hesitate not to say, when I consider the nature and constitution of man—this is impossible. Why, dear Sir, an humble country Rector cannot now assert that Episcopal ordination is necessary to constitute a *valid* ministry, without having a hundred pages written against him for his boldness in asserting the *truth*. It is evident then, that *no* change took place in the government of the Church. Now, Sir, when I turn to your defence of the Methodist ministry, I perceive that your whole argument is built upon the *community of names*—that when argument fails, you content yourself with bold assertions, or entirely evade the subject. You are contending for *names*, we contend for *things*. Deprive you of the flimsy and weak arguments which you derive from the interchangeable use of names in the Scriptures, and confine you to things—to *official powers*, and then you cannot pretend to make even a specious defence against the overwhelming testimony which flows on all sides to the aid of the advocates for Episcopacy. Had only a few of the Apostles established Episcopacy according to circumstances, while the others *rejected it*, then certainly we could not maintain that it was essential to the ministry. But when we find from the clearest evidence, that it was the universal practice of these holy men inspired of God, so far as we know any thing of their ministrations, we cannot doubt as to the necessity of retaining it, unless we should set ourselves up to be wiser than the Apostles. We cannot but look upon it as essential to the ministry. We cannot but be convinced that it is of *divine institution*, and therefore obligatory and binding upon all who profess to be Christians. “The truth is, the divine commands are all obligatory. All comparison of the relative importance or obligation of these commands, in order to de-

termine which we may with impunity neglect or violate, is criminal and impious." "Bishop Butler, in his "Analogy," thus settles the point of the comparative obligation of the commands of God. "Our obligations to obey *all* God's commands whatever, are absolute and indispensable, and commands merely positive, admitted to be from him, lay us under a moral obligation to obey them—an obligation moral in the strictest and most proper sense." Yes, Sir, "he who keepeth the whole law, and yet" habitually and wilfully "offends in one point, is guilty of all. And were the whole world laid at my feet, it should not tempt me to run the hazard of that believer, however much he may boast of the assurance of his faith, who *habitually and wilfully* violates "one of the least commandments" of his divine Lord: even though it be that" of "external order."—(*Hobart's Apol.*, p. 75.) The words of our Lord should not be forgotten. "*These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.*"—(Matt. 23, 23.) That the Apostles governed the Church none will deny—that they were appointed by Christ himself is certain—that they appointed others in their place when they were about to leave the world, as Timothy and Titus, directing them to appoint others, 2 Tim., 2, 2, cannot be denied—that there were three distinct orders in the Church from the time of the Apostles, and that the *first* order ruled, ordained, confirmed, and that his office is to continue to the end of time, according to the promise of our Lord, admits not of a reasonable doubt. If, however, there should be a doubt on the mind with respect to the meaning of the Scripture relating to this subject, (and here dissenters tell us there is a doubt,) the interpretation of the ancient writers and the *universal practice* of the Church in the *purest ages*, should be regarded for the purpose of removing this doubt. "When Scripture is quite clear," says Dr. Hook, "then all parties are agreed. But the question must often occur—(else whence comes dissent? whence disputes in the Church itself?)—the question must often occur, what is proved thereby? The Trinitarian tells us that *his* doctrine is proved thereby; the Socinian says the same of *his*; so it is with the Papist, the Independent, the Anabaptist, the Churchman. Now, it is in these disputed questions that the Churchman refers, not to the opinion of this reformer or that—not to the conjecture of one doctor or another doctor—but where it can be ascertained, to the practices of those first Churches which were instituted by the Apostles themselves; and the universal practice of those early Churches is taken into account, as throwing light

upon a litigated scripture ; not, observe, as superseding Scripture, but as indicating, when two or more meanings may be attached to one and the selfsame passage, which is *the* meaning, as enabling us to ascertain, not what the Scripture can be made to say by ingenious men, but what actually is the mind of the Spirit. For example, when texts are adduced to prove the doctrine of the Trinity, the Socinian has recourse to his lexicons, and says these texts may by possibility receive another interpretation. Our answer is, the meaning that *we* attach to those passages, is precisely the meaning attached to them by the early christians, who certainly held the doctrine of the Trinity, and therefore we conclude that the plain literal meaning in which *we* understand them, is exactly the sense in which they ought to be received. The ‘Romanist’ then advances with his doctrine of transubstantiation, and quoting the words of Christ’s institution, claims the literal meaning as being on his side. We can silence him at once by showing that this doctrine of transubstantiation was not heard of till the ninth, nor authoritatively received till the 13th century. Here again then we have antiquity assisting us in our interpretation of Scripture, as is the case also with respect to the change of the Sabbath day, the rite of infant baptism, and other doctrines or practices of importance. But does the English Church speak slightly of the Scriptures, because she adopts this mode of interpretation when the meaning of a scripture is ambiguous ; because she thus looks to the Fathers as to lighthouses, for guidance when the sun of revelation happens not to be shining in its meridian of brightness ? No ; in one of the homilies she appropriates the words of one of the ancients whom she delights to honour, and says, that “these books, the books of Scripture, ought to be much in our hands, in our eyes, in our ears, in our mouths, *but most in our hearts,*” &c. See also 6th Article of the Church of England. I conclude this letter with a quotation from the judicious Hooker, and before you venture again to call the Episcopal government “unscriptural,” be pleased to give a satisfactory answer to his challenge : “We require you,” says he, “to find out *but one Church upon the face of the whole earth*, that hath been ordered by your discipline, or hath not been ordered by ours, that is to say by Episcopal regimen, since the time that the blessed Apostles were here conversant.”

LETTER VII.

REV. SIR,

THE opponents of Episcopacy acknowledge in one breath the succession of ministers from the Apostles, but in the next breath ridicule the idea of the uninterrupted Apostolic succession, and call it a whim—a dream—a fable. 'This is being admirably consistent!—but it is all of a piece with their whole management of this controversy. If the succession failed, or was lost, how was it to be renewed? Could laymen invest their brother laymen with the sacred office? Were this attempted, we would say of them as Ambrose, ages since, said of presbyters, "*They gave nothing because they had nothing to give,*" that is, in other words, that their ordinations were not valid. But Mr. Wesley says the "uninterrupted succession" is a fable. Well, then, you pin your faith to the opinion of the "Apostolic" Wesley—his asseveration is a law binding upon your conscience, and you cannot depart from it. But has Mr. Wesley attempted to prove that the uninterrupted succession is a fable? I have never heard of his doing so. The assertion is a bold one, and it is astonishing that men of sense can bring themselves to believe a thing so unreasonable—so contrary to the express promise of Christ himself. A testimony so clear and decided can, I think, be given on this point, that it will not admit of a reasonable doubt that the succession has been preserved uninterrupted and unbroken. In proof of this, in addition to other authorities, will be given the words of the excellent and pious bishop M'Ilvane, whose arguments and illustrations will, I doubt not, be admired, even by our bitterest opponents. As this pamphlet may fall into the hands of those who might not see the bishop's sermon, I will quote largely from it, and glad am I to have it in my power to call to aid so learned and truly pious a divine of the Church. He is not ashamed to engage in the subject—he does not consider it incompatible with true religion to uphold Episcopacy, and to give undeniable proof that the succession is not a fable. Strongly and beautifully does he impress upon all under his charge the necessity of genuine piety and devotedness to God, while at the same time he is far from considering the subject before us as unimportant. So many in the present day are dazzled and misled by the popular spirit of liberality, that if a clergyman of the

Church be so bold and fearless as to deny to any but those who have Episcopal ordination, the right to assume the ministerial character, the most odious epithets are heaped upon him, and they who are most forward to accuse him of a want of charity, are themselves found to be most uncharitable. It is to be hoped that the day is not far distant, when these advocates of liberality will show that they themselves are, in *the true Scripture sense*, liberal, and will come to a better mind, for the *false liberality* of the present day can have no support from the word of God. But let us hear the bishop—"The Apostolic commission"—"*What was the peculiar characteristic nature of the office which the Apostles were commissioned to exercise?*"

"The authentic voucher of office is the *commission*. To the commission of the Apostles then we must refer you for the distinctive peculiarities of their office. Whatever is not contained therein, either expressly or by necessary inference, must be considered as not pertaining to the characteristic duties and powers of the Apostles.

"Now the Apostles were distinguished by certain circumstantial peculiarities, and certain miraculous gifts. Were these so connected with the Apostolic office as to constitute in any sense its distinguishing features? *They are not mentioned in the commission*, as found in the text. For example, the Apostles were distinguished by the fact that they had seen Christ in the flesh after his resurrection, but so had many others, "even five hundred brethren at once."—1st Cor. xv. 6. Thus were the Apostles *qualified* to be "witnesses of his resurrection;" but this *qualification* was not their *commission*. It was part of their furniture, but no part of their office. Again, they had been set apart to their office *by the immediate and visible act of the Saviour*. But Matthias was afterwards numbered with the Apostles; and Barnabas, and Timothy, and Epaphroditus, were Apostles, to whom belonged no such distinction; so that eminent as was this personal honour, it was not necessary to the designation or place of an Apostle. Again, the Apostles were possessed of miraculous powers; but so were divers others, as Stephen and Philip, to whom the name of Apostle was never given. It follows, that such endowments were not peculiar features of the Apostolic office. Essential to its success in those days they undoubtedly were; but essential to its nature they certainly were not. We must not confound *authority* to act, with the *means* of acting successfully; the *office* of an ambassador, with the force of mind or the personal endowments

with which he sustains his embassy; the *commission* of one whom the king despatches to subdue and govern a distant province, with the array of martial force with which he marches to the work. No more must the essential office of the Apostles, sent to subdue, and establish, and rule, as ambassadors of Christ, be confounded with those extraordinary endowments, and all that striking array of miraculous powers, with which they were furnished for their enterprise. Such endowments were needed for the first propagation of the Gospel. They have not been needed since,—they have therefore ceased. But the essential commission of the Apostles, to which they were appended, has not ceased, nor can cease, while the world lasts; for Christ has promised that he will be with that office to the end of the world. That commission was complete as soon as delivered; and from that moment its recipients were invested with all the functions of the Apostolic office; but not so with regard to miraculous gifts and qualifications. These were not bestowed till many days after the delivery of the commission. It was before the ascension of Christ that the full *authority* of Apostles was bestowed. It was not till the Pentecost that they received “*power from on high*” for the support of that authority. Thus are we brought again to the question, *What was the peculiar and characteristic nature of the Apostolic office?* They themselves applied to it a name which will aid the answer. Peter, in addressing his brother Apostles concerning the filling of the vacancy caused by the death of Iscariot, expressly styles the office which the traitor had vacated, *his bishopric*, or *his episcopate*, as the original reads. The same is also called, in the same transaction, *his Apostleship*. Hence in the writings of the Fathers, the names of *apostle* and *bishop* are used as pertaining essentially to the same office. But the word *bishopric* or *episcopate*, in the abstract, only means an office of *supervision* in general; and this supervision may be either of single congregations, as in the cases of “the elders” of Ephesus; or of many congregations, with their *overseers*, as in the case of Paul, who assembled and charged those elders. What, then, was the peculiar nature of the supervision or episcopate exercised by the Apostles; that *name*, of itself, does not indicate. Whither shall we go to ascertain whether it was a particular or a general supervision—congregational, or the contrary? Their commission decides,—“Go and teach all nations,” &c.—Therefore, whatever powers their *apostleship* or *episcopate* embraced, were not limited to any particular congregation of

the Church, but extended to the whole Church; in other words, the "bishopric" in the hands of the Apostles, was evidently *general* as distinguished from *congregational*.—What particular functions belonged to that general oversight or episcopate, their commission leaves no room to doubt. First, "Go and teach all nations;" or, as the more accurate and universally preferred translation is, "Go and make disciples of all nations." Thus was given authority to propagate the Gospel, "Baptising them in the name of the Father," &c. Here was authority to administer the Sacraments of the Church, and by the Sacrament of Baptism to open the doors of the Church and of its privileges to disciples out of all nations. Finally, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." These words conveyed to the Apostles the authority *to rule the Church* after they had made disciples by preaching, and members by baptism. An essential part of the government of the Church consisted in seeing to the *succession* of its ministry. That the authority to do this, to ordain successors in the ministry, was included among the powers of the Apostles, is not only necessarily implied in their authority to govern, but also in those impressive words of the Saviour, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." For as it was part of the office on which Jesus was sent, to institute the ministry of his Church, so it follows from these words, that it was part of the sending of the Apostles to continue that ministry, by the ordaining of others to its functions. The conclusion then with regard to the characteristic nature of the Apostolic office is, that it was one of a *general supervision or episcopate*; and embraced essentially the authority to preach and propagate the Gospel; to administer the Sacraments of the Church; to preside over its government, and, as a chief part of government, to ordain helpers and successors in the ministry. All these powers the Apostles held, *not as a collective body or college*, but *severally and individually*. Hitherto we have been, as far as I know, upon undisputed ground. Let us proceed. *This Apostolic office was intended by the Saviour to be continued*; in other words, *the first Apostles were intended to have successors to the end of the world*.

This is undeniably manifest from the promise of the Saviour annexed to their commission—"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Now, if neither the *persons* of the Apostles were intended to remain to the end of the world, nor their *miraculous endowments*, nor their *distinguishing office*—if all have passed away, we are quite unable

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to comprehend how that promise is fulfilled, or what it could have meant. But *the persons* of the first Apostles do not remain. Their *miraculous gifts* have not continued in the Church. It follows, then, that their *distinguishing office* must remain; that it was to this office, and to those who should hold it in succession, that the Saviour promised his presence "to the end of the world." No other sense can possibly be put on his words. If, then, the office of the Apostles, as learned from their commission, and interpreted by all the acts of their ministry, was an episcopate—an office of supervision, and that of a general kind—and if *each* Apostle did embrace in his *individual* office the right to preach, administer the Sacraments, exercise supreme jurisdiction in the Church, and under the head of jurisdiction, to ordain and rule ministers of the Gospel; it follows that an office of precisely that description was intended to continue, has continued from that time to this, and will be continued in the Church by the will of its divine head, to the end of the world.

But where shall we find this office in the present Church? this union of authority to preach and administer Sacraments, *with this individual right to ordain, and this presidency over clergy*, this original Apostolic episcopate? Evidently there must be somewhere in the Church at the present time, unless the Lord's word has failed, officers of whom it may be said, without arrogance, and in simple deference to the promise of Christ, that in all essential features of the Apostolic office, they are *the successors of the Apostles*. Where are they? The question we have no right to treat as unimportant. Whether a most solemn promise of Christ has been fulfilled or not? and if it has, where its fulfilment appears? Whether an office intended by the head of the Church to continue therein, and as its chief office to last to the end of time, has continued to the present time; or whether it has been dropped and some other placed in its stead? is surely a question of no ordinary importance, by no means of a merely incidental consequence, but, on the contrary, of vital connection with the permanent interests of religion, and not by any to be passed over "unadvisedly or lightly," but considered "reverently, discreetly, soberly, and in the fear of God." But before I put this question, it is well to remove the idea which so commonly starts up in the minds of those who hear or read on this subject, when any persons holding office in the Church of Christ, in the present day, are termed *successors of the Apostles*—are said to have *succeeded to the Apostolic office*; as if there were some exceeding arrogance and pre-

sumption in the claim. Whether it be arrogant or not depends entirely upon whether it be true. Nothing is so humble and unpretending as truth. Did any one claim to have succeeded to the *personal* distinctions and endowments—the *inspiration and divers miraculous gifts* by which the Apostles were qualified for their extraordinary circumstances, he would indeed be chargeable with arrogant presumption; because concerning these things there was no promise of the Lord that they should continue in the Church to the end of the world. But in relation to the *office* of the Apostles there is the plainest promise of such continuance, however the assertion may sound; it must be true that somewhere in the Church at this time there are office bearers, either bishops, presbyters, or deacons, who *severally* and in virtue of their office are successors of the Apostles—occupying *individually* just that relation to the present Church which the Apostles by virtue of the essential feature of their office, sustained *individually* to the Church of their days. The prejudice that arises against such an idea will not bear a moment's reflection. If it spring from a comparison *as to personal character and fitness* of the modern successors with the first in the chain, be it remembered that Judas Iscariot was numbered with the Apostles by the Saviour himself—and Judas was a traitor. If the prejudice from the consideration that the commencement of the Apostle's office was miraculous; that it was under the immediate and extraordinary designation of the Son of God; whereas the continuation of the Gospel ministry is, by the ordination of men, an ordinary designation by fallible instruments; we answer by referring you to the analogy between the new creation and the old, in regard to origin and succession. The beginning of the grass of the field was miraculous—by the instant and immediate mandate of God. It was created in full maturity, but its succession was provided for by no such measure. The grass, and the herb, and the fruit tree, were furnished by the means of a succession by ordinary laws, and having "seed in itself after its kind." Thus also with man. The head of the human race was created by the immediate hand of God; but the succession from that moment to the end of time was provided for by the laws of ordinary nature. But we hold it to be no arrogance to say of any man, though the lowest of his kind, that he has succeeded to the nature of the miraculously created first man; nor to say of the herb of the field that though it be but the offspring of the little familiar seed in the ground, which sprang and grew by an ordinary law

and a human planting and rearing, it is, nevertheless, in all the essentials of its nature, the successor, in an unbroken line of descent, of the herb which on the third day of the world sprang into maturity at the wonderful fiat of the Almighty. I know not that the man or the herb is any the less a man or an herb, or any the less descended from the miraculous beginning of the creation, because the laws of growth were but ordinary, and the intermediate agency of production was but human. And so I know not that a minister of the Gospel is any the less a successor of the first Apostles, because instead of receiving his authority, like them, immediately from CHRIST, it has come to him by the intermediate communication of a chain fastened, at its beginning, upon the throne of God, and preserved as inviolate as the line of the descent of Adam, or the succession of seed time and harvest, of day and night, of summer and winter. I know not that this day is not a true day, and strictly a successor of that very day when first the sun appeared, though *that* you know was made by the sudden act of God, suspending the sun in the skies, and *this* arose by the ordinary succession of the evening and the morning. The beginning of every institution of God must of necessity be extraordinary, its regular continuance—ordinary. So with the course of Providence in all its branches. What is now an ordinary Providence was once an extraordinary—what began with miracle is continued by laws of familiar nature. And so it is with the ministry of the Gospel, what was created by the direct ordination of God, is propagated and continued by the authorized ordination of men. Its "seed is in itself after its kind," and at every step of the succession, it is precisely the same ministry, and just as much of God, sanctioned by his authority and sustained by his power, as if it had been received from the laying on of the hands of CHRIST himself. And so with the office of the Apostles. It was the promise of CHRIST, the Lord, that it should continue to the end of the world. It is not more sure that the sun and moon, seed time and harvest will continue to the end of the world; and though its succession be now in the hands of very feeble and fallible men—of men unspeakably inferior to the Apostles in every personal and official qualification—yea, though many Iscariots' be found under its awful responsibilities, the integrity of *the office* as essentially identical with that of the Apostles, is in nowise affected.—That the office of the Apostles *did* descend from them to successors—that it *was* communicated to others by the hands of those who received it from the Lord is manifest. For not to

mention Matthias and Barnabas, who were Apostles, we find Timothy, who was ordained by St. Paul, not only called an Apostle by that writer, as he is called bishop by writers of the next century, but actually charged by St. Paul with the exercise of *all the authority we have mentioned* as contained in the Apostolic commission. The first Epistle to Timothy is the plainest evidence that he was put in trust with the government of the Church of Ephesus; which all that time, as the Acts of the Apostles declare, contained a *plurality of presbyters*; that over those *presbyters*, as well as over the deacons and laity, he was invested with the personal charge of discipline and government; and that, in discharging such government, the *authority to ordain* was distinctly in his single hands. The same is evident concerning Titus, from the Epistle of St. Paul to him. It was his charge from St. Paul to "set in order" all the Churches of the large island of Crete, and "ordain presbyters in every city." Thus we see the office of the Apostles handed down by a succession of hands to one of the latest dates of which the Scriptures speak. It certainly continued in the world as long as the lifetime of the Apostle St. John, and he lived to the hundredth year of the christian era. Did it continue any longer than that hundredth year?—We ask who were those "*Angels*" or messengers of the Seven Churches in Asia, to whom the seven Epistles of the Book of Revelations were addressed; called also "*the seven stars*" in the right hand of the Lord; held responsible for the whole Church embraced within the limits of those several extensive cities, with their suburban dependencies? Of one of them, Ephesus, we know from Acts xx, 17, that *some forty years before the Book of Revelations was written*, it had several presbyters, and of course several congregations. Who then was the angel of that Church of Ephesus? What was his office? Evidently it was one of *presidency*, and that over clergy as well as laity. The most learned and noted non-Episcopal writers contend that it was the office of *president for life*.

The learned Blondel, whose authority on this subject is not excelled by that of any non-Episcopal writer, contends that the angels of the seven Churches were "*exarchs*," or chief governors, "*who were superior in office to the other clergy of those Churches*; held their *places for life*, and were so superior that "*the acts of the Church, whether glorious or infamous, were imputed to these exarchs*." And this, he says, is necessary to be maintained, otherwise the difficulties are insuperable. If such were the office of the angel of one of

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the seven Churches, it must have been that of the angels of all the others; and as we have no reason to suppose that the government of those seven Churches was not similar to that of all others, such must have been the office of the chief ministers of the whole christian community, in the latter days of the Apostle St. John. This leaves us but little to contend for. But it is not disputed that to those angels was appropriated during their lifetime the title of *bishops*, as a distinctive title of their special office. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who personally knew and conversed with St. John, writing to the Church of Ephesus not more than twelve years after St. John had addressed the angel of that Church in the Book of Revelations, expressly says that "Onesimus was then its bishop." "*Who* (he says) *according to the flesh is your bishop.*" So that not only did the essential *presidency*, but the *name* also of bishop belong to the chief officers in the Church of that early period. It is beyond question that the Fathers regarded those angels of Churches as having been diocesan bishops. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, who wrote about the year 178, speaking of Polycarp, his own teacher and a disciple of St. John, and certainly the angel of the Church of Smyrna, calls him bishop of that Church; and that he used the title as designating a bishop *in the strict sense*, is manifest from the fact, that by almost universal consent, diocesan Episcopacy, in the strict sense, was general in the time when he wrote. And could Irenæus be mistaken as to the office of Polycarp, *whose disciple he was*? But that these presidents for life, entitled angels of Churches in the Scriptures, and bishops by contemporaneous ecclesiastical writers, who dwelt in the midst of diocesan Episcopacy, were regarded as *successors of the Apostles* by the christian ministry of their own age, we have the plainest and most unquestionable evidence. Irenæus, we have said, was a disciple of Polycarp, who was the angel and bishop of the Church of Smyrna, and a personal disciple of St. John. Thus was Irenæus too near the Apostles to be mistaken as to their successors. "We can enumerate (he says) those who were appointed by the Apostles bishops in the Churches, and to be *their successors* even unto us—leaving them *the same power and authority which they had.*" This same primitive writer has left on record the succession of those who had been bishops of the Church of Rome down to this time of writing, viz., about seventy eight years from St. John. The first named is Linus; the last whom he calls "*the twelfth in order from the Apostles,*" is Eleutherius." He calls both by the same name of

bishop, without the least indication that the office of the one *whom Paul instituted*, was in the least dissimilar from that of the other, who was *twelfth* in the descent. Now it is generally granted that the office of the latter was that of a diocesan bishop in the present customary sense. What then are we obliged to infer as to the office of the former; and consequently as to the nature of the office received by the primitive Churches from the hands of the Apostles? We might exceedingly multiply quotations to the same effect. But it is sufficiently shown that in the age next succeeding that of the Apostles, there were officers called bishops in the Church, who were considered then as *successors of the Apostles*, and as having received from them *the same power and authority that they had*. And how those officers came to have appropriated to them exclusively the name of bishop, which at first was not peculiar to the highest grade of the ministry, instead of the older name of Apostles, Theodoret, a christian writer, who flourished only about two hundred years after those times, informs us,—“Those now called bishops (he says) were anciently called Apostles; but in process of time, the name of Apostle was left to them who were truly Apostles; and the name of Bishop was restrained to those who were anciently called Apostles.” Thus we learn that a special reverence for the first Apostles was the cause of the leaving of that name to them, and calling their successors by another.

I cannot take time to proceed any further with a quotation of testimony. We have found the promise of the Saviour as to the continuance of the Apostolic office, evidently fulfilled in the age next to that of the last of the Apostles. The facility of proving the same of subsequent periods, rapidly increases as we descend the enlarging tide of Christian men and things, till we come to the period of only one hundred and fifty years from the death of St. John, (the age of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage,) when non-Episcopal writers, who concede the least, acknowledge that the Church, without a known exception, was presided over by diocesan bishops, who exercised the prerogatives, and were then considered, without a question, to have succeeded to the full office of the Apostles. Whether it be left for the *nineteenth* century to correct the universal belief of the Church, in an age so soon after the last of the twelve Apostles, on a matter of plain historical tradition, concerning which it is quite unintelligible that the learned should then have been ignorant, I must leave others to decide.” The bishop proceeds to inform us that, in the present day, about eleven twelfths of

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those called Christians in the world, are under the spiritual jurisdiction of an order of ministers, called bishops, whose individual office embraces the essential particulars of that of the Apostles, and whose succession they regard as derived by an unbroken chain from Apostolic times—that the most eminent non-Episcopal writers acknowledge, that within *sixty* years of the death of St. John (you, Sir, allow within *six* years !) such was the government of the Church. He has shown from the testimony of the writers who then lived, that bishops were *then* exercising the jurisdiction of the Church, and were considered, without the moving of a question, as having succeeded to the office of the Apostles. Now, supposing this to be a mistake—he tells us that such a mistake, in so important a matter, could not occur *so rapidly* and *powerfully* as to have revolutionized the government of the Church in so short a period ; nor so *silently* that history should preserve not the slightest trace of its beginning and progress ; nor so perfectly and universally, that though the Scriptures were read dail/ in the Churches, and presbyters and laity were made of the same materials as they are now, none should perceive the usurpation, but all take it for granted, without a question, that such had been the government of the Church from the beginning. If such a mistake could be made—if such a complete revolution can be believed to have taken place in the priesthood of the Christian temple, and so secretly that neither friend nor foe, advocate nor complainant, heathen, heretic, or Jew, is known to have observed it, what change may not as well be supposed to have occurred, quite as silently and unobserved, in the Scriptures themselves, entrusted to this very priesthood. If the former has been done, how do we know that the latter has not been also ? We know it has not by the testimony, unbroken, of the Church from century to century. But why not believe that testimony as well when it proves the unbroken descent of the Apostolic office, as when it witnesses to the canonical books of holy Scripture—can we suspect their testimony in one point without destroying its validity—in the other ? “ The care of the Church to preserve the Scriptures inviolate, is no more manifest in the history of Christianity, than her watchful care, in all ages and countries, and now, even among the long wasted and oppressed christians of oriental nations, to guard the descent of the Apostolic office. This unsleeping watch over the preservation, in each diocese, of an original independent Episcopacy, wanting and allowing no common and infallible head, but the chief shepherd and bishop of souls,” “ *who is*

God over all," has been the chief barrier that has prevented in the ancient Churches of the East, and elsewhere, the entire ascendancy of the papal usurpation." "As long then as the Scriptural history of the Church continues, that is, during the first century, we find the succession of Apostles continuing, and their number increasing. We find also, that including the seven angels and the traitor Judas, no less than *twenty eight Apostles* are mentioned in holy writ." In short, Apostles alone are the sources of all government under Christ, and of every ministerial office among christian people. If it could be shewn that the Apostolic succession has been lost or interrupted, it would also follow that the ministry has become extinct, and that no authority remains on earth to beseech men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God."—(C. C. no' 13.) "Whatever ridicule may be cast on the doctrine of uninterrupted succession, Presbyterians as well as Episcopalians should cling to it as the sheet anchor that is to prevent the Church from being overwhelmed by secular encroachment. It is the only rampart against those assaults of self-constituted teachers, which would strip the Church of her divine authority, shake her from her foundation on the rock of ages, and place her on the tottering basis of popular caprice, of human authority."—(Dr. Hobart.) The testimony and the lucid reasoning which have been given in this letter should be sufficient to convince every candid inquirer after *truth*, that the succession could *not be broken*. Should you be desirous of making further inquiry into this part of our subject, I would refer you to the celebrated Law's first letter to the bishop of Bangor. He considers, and very justly, that "the administering of a sacrament is an action we have no right to perform, considered either as men, gentlemen, or scholars, or members of a civil society; who then can have any authority to interpose, but he that has it from Christ? And how that can be had from him, without a succession of men from him, is not easily conceived." "It is a plain and obvious truth, that no man, or number of men, considered as such, can any more make a priest, or commission a person to officiate in Christ's name, as such, than he can enlarge the means of grace, or add a new sacrament, for the conveyance of spiritual advantages. The ministers of Christ are as much positive ordinances as the sacraments; and we might as well think, that sacraments not instituted by him, might be means of grace, as those pass for his ministers who have no authority from him." "To make a jest" (as some very *thoughtlessly* and *improperly* do) "of the uninterrupted succession,

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prevented the entire when as the during the continuing, including an *twenty* port, Apostler Christ, ple. If it een lost or as become to beseech (C. C. no' doctrine of Episcopate to prevent encroach- mts of self- h of her di- the rock of lar caprice, imony and etter should *truth*, that be desirous ect, I would the bishop "the admi- ight to per- scholars, or y authority d how that n from him, vious truth, ch, can any officiate in e means of ce of spirit- much posi- ight as well ht be means e no autho- ery *thought-* succession,

is, he says, to make a jest of ordination, to destroy the sacred character, and make all pretenders to it as good as those that are sent by Christ. If there be no uninterrupted succession, then there are no authorised ministers from Christ; if no such ministers, then no christian sacraments; if no christian sacraments, then no christian covenant, whereof the sacraments are the stated and visible seals." There can be no reasonable doubt, Sir, as to the succession being uninterrupted, and as it has been shown that presbyters *had not* the right of ordination vested in them, but that there was a *higher grade*, who *always* exercised, in succession, that right, it is evident then that this power must remain *exclusively* with that *higher grade*, till it is taken from them by the same divine authority that gave it at first.* In the words of Dr. Miller, a presbyterian writer, I will conclude this letter, and trust that the arguments contained in it, and the preceding one, will be attentively and duly considered by you. "If all the interests of the Church are precious in the view of every enlightened christian, it is evident that *the mode of its organization* cannot be a *trivial* concern; and if the Saviour, or those who were *immediately taught by his spirit*, have laid down any rules, or given us any information on this subject, it behoves us carefully to study what they have delivered, *and to make it our constant guide.*" "We unite with such of them as hold the opinion, *that christians in all ages are bound to make the Apostolic order of the Church with respect to the ministry*, as well as other points, *the models as far as possible, of all their ecclesiastical arrangements.*"

* "No man," says Bishop Horne, "can administer to effect the ordinances of God, but by God's own appointment; at first by his immediate appointment, and afterwards by succession and derivation, from thence to the end of the world. Without this rule we are open to imposture, and can be sure of nothing. *We cannot be sure that our ministry is effective, and that our sacraments are realities.* We are very sensible the spirit of division will never admit this doctrine, yet the spirit of charity must never part with it. Writers and teachers who make a point to give no offence, treat these things very tenderly; but he who, in certain cases, gives men no offence, will for that reason give no instruction. It is by no means evident that the Church hath ever recommended itself the more, by receding from any of its just pretensions. Generosity obliges and secures a friend; but an enemy construes it into weakness, and then it never does any good."

LETTER IX.

REV'D. SIR,

WE now come to examine the testimony of the Fathers, which you advance in favour of your mode of Church government. I have already given you their testimony respecting the superiority of bishops by *divine right*. At the very commencement I find you building upon *names*, regardless of *things*. What if a bishop is sometimes called an elder or presbyter—does that prove that he is not a bishop, in the strict sense? Will you not allow a bishop to be of the sacerdotal office? Is not the high priest frequently called in Scripture a priest; and will you then bring him upon a level with those who are *always* designated by that name? Does not the Apostle Paul call himself a deacon, but yet you will not deprive him of his apostleship, and make him only a deacon? Neither when the Apostles call themselves presbyters are they to be deprived of the high and sacred office with which they were invested by Christ himself. It is wonderful then, that men of sense, in their eager desire to pull down Episcopacy, should yield to that puerility of catching at every passage of the primitive writers in which bishops are styled presbyters. "Ignatius (says Dr. Cook, from whom you quoted) certainly had no conception that a bishop was invested with powers over which the presbytery had no *control*." Well, this is a bold beginning—a round assertion, but not followed up by proof. Ignatius exhorts to *do nothing without the bishop*—"be subject to your bishop." "It will become you, to yield all reverence to him (your bishop) according to the power of God the Father; as also I perceive that your holy presbyters do."—(*Ep. Mag.*) He states expressly that it is not lawful to baptize or celebrate the feast of charity—the holy communion, *without the bishop*.—(*Ep. Mag.*) These passages must certainly have escaped the notice of Dr. Cook. If it be not lawful to baptize without the bishop, (and these are the words of Ignatius,) then the bishop was considered by him to be invested with powers over which the presbyters had no control. Further Dr. Cooke says, "In one passage he enjoins those to whom he was writing to follow the *presbyters* as they would do the Apostles." Why did not Dr. Cook give the first part of the section, and then all could judge for themselves as to the meaning of Ignatius?

It runs thus, "see that ye all follow your bishop as Jesus Christ, the Father; and the presbytery, as the Apostles—and reverence the deacons as the command of God. Let no man do any thing of what belongs to the Church separately from the bishop." Ignatius certainly does not intend here to put the bishops on a level with the presbyters—the contrary is evident. We nowhere find, and it is beyond your power to prove, that presbyters had equal rights with the *first order*. Dr. Cook, by *omitting an important part* of the section, has *inferred* what he was unable to *prove*. That the people should be subject to the bishop and *his* presbyters, is what every Episcopalian will subscribe to. It is strange that our opponents would quote this passage; for if the bishop has *his* presbyters, they must be subject to him, and he is, consequently their superior. Do you ever speak of your chairman in this style? "The chairman and *his* presbyters." It will now be seen that you derive *no support* from the testimony of Ignatius; but there is much which is decidedly against you, which has been shown. Why you should here introduce Justin Martyr, I know not. The extract makes neither for nor against Episcopacy. Justin does not use the term "bishop," and you have taken a liberty unwarranted, in giving it as from him. He uses the word "president," which I have already sufficiently shown is not a definite term. Every clergyman *presides* in his respective congregation; but the bishop *presides* over the whole body of his clergy. How exceedingly puerile to advance the silence of a single author, as an argument against Episcopacy. With much reason we bring forward the silence of *all* historians, up to the reformation, if you please, as an argument against your bold assertion that Episcopacy was a usurpation. This, however, does not suit you, but when you find an author who is silent, and there are very few such, respecting the three orders, then you triumph, and think that you have given the death blow to Episcopacy. Surely, Sir, the silence of *all* historians on a subject so vitally important to the Church, is more conclusive than the silence of one or two. *All are silent* as to Episcopacy being a usurpation. Many expressly state it to be apostolic. Here then we have *decidedly* the advantage of you. Irenæus is the next writer whom you quote, and here *again* your attention is fixed upon the *name*, while the *official power* is disregarded. "Wherefore it is necessary to obey the *presbyters* who are in the Church, those who have their *succession* from the Apostles, as we have shown." And who were these? He tells us, "The blessed Apostles therefore founding and

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(716) 482-0300 - Phone
(716) 288-5989 - Fax

instructing the Church, delivered to *Linus the bishopric to govern the Church.*" He mentions that the bishopric was delivered to one person at a time, and gives the names of twelve successive bishops. These appointments he tells us were made in all the Churches. No bishop surely would deny that he was a presbyter. The word "presbyter," as you must know, means in the original an *old man or elderly person*,—and old experienced men were chiefly chosen as bishops or governors of the Church. These bishops, then, who governed the Church, one at a time in a diocese, are the persons of whom Irenæus speaks. He could have no hesitation in sometimes styling them presbyters, when from the New Testament he saw that the Apostles called themselves presbyters. Irenæus then means that they were such presbyters as the Apostles themselves were—presbyters of a *superior order*, governing the Church—possessing the sole power of confirmation and ordination, having the Apostolic succession. This *singular* succession, says Dr. Bowden, so universally, without one exception, maintained by the primitive Church, has always appeared to me to be a decisive argument in favour of the superiority of bishops. For upon what principle of common sense, of propriety, of policy, could an individual succession be maintained, if that individual did not possess powers superior to those of the presbyters over whom he held, as Irenæus speaks, a *mastership*? That *mastership* over the clergy, the Apostles held; that *mastership* they committed to an individual in every Church for the same purpose. Does not this necessarily imply a singularity of commission and powers?" "In the very nature of the thing, this *mastership* implies a superiority of dignity and jurisdiction. *Masters*, and yet perfectly on a footing with those whom they govern! The *successors of the Apostles* in the government of the Church, and yet upon a level with presbyters, who never were so distinguished! Always discriminated, in consequence of this succession, by the name of the city in which they resided, and yet not having a single distinctive power from the other presbyters! "These," he says, "are very strange things." And I think you will admit, when you seriously weigh the whole matter, that they are not only strange but *absurd*. Would you say that this bishop might have been a standing chairman? This is too absurd to admit. It matters not by what names the different orders of the ministry are distinguished. The question relates to the *distinctive powers* which they possess. Now Irenæus does not speak of the body of presbyters governing the Church, but

expressly states that by the Apostles that government was committed to *one person only*, at a time, and that after him another succeeded, and another in a direct line from the Apostles. He makes the government of bishops apostolic, and consequently *divine*. The testimony of Irenæus then is unquestionably against your cause. You next call Tertullian to your aid. Let us examine his testimony which you have adduced, and then we shall the better be able to judge how far he supports your sinking cause. But first, Sir, permit me to state that the omission in the quotation from this author was not *designedly* made, as you would uncharitably insinuate. I find that the passage is quoted in the works which I have by me, sometimes in full, and at other times with the omission which I have made. I transcribed it just as I found it; but how that part omitted "puts quite another complexion on his opinion," I cannot see. It certainly is *for the honour of the Church* that we should be guided by her rules and laws, whether they be of *divine appointment* or of *human institution*, provided the latter do not oppose the former. This passage then "for the honour of the Church" is not explicit and clear enough to determine *for or against* the question. "Certain approved *elders* preside." These, without consideration, you take to be presbyters in the strict sense, and then conclude that you have made good your cause. Now see the position in which this testimony, taking your view of it, places you, and the contradictions in which your system continually involves you. According to your own admission Episcopacy began A. D. 105. But let us go even further, and say with Blondel, about A. D. 140. Then, according to the testimony which you produce from Tertullian, Episcopacy only continued about *one hundred years*, and in Tertullian's time presbyters again presided. But alas! for your knowledge of Church history; you have contradicted yourself, and have here opposed to you the *concessions* of the *most eminent* non-Episcopal writers, who admit that the Church was then governed, without a known exception, by diocesan bishops. Besides, would not such changes agitate and convulse the Church? But where is the record of these changes? The Church first ruled by a "council of presbyters," but the Apostles presiding, and governing all! Then immediately after the death of the Apostles, ambitious bishops take the government of the Church into their own hands, the "council of presbyters" not uttering a word of complaint. Then 100 years after, the "council of presbyters" *again* preside, and the ambitious bishops, ashamed of their usurpa-

tion, resign the government of the Church into their hands without a struggle and without a word of controversy ! But again, *three or four years* after, you tell us that Cyprian was one of the principal agents in gaining the ascendancy of the bishops, and they *again* became *supreme* !! Who would believe that these changes could take place in the church *silently* and *unnoticed* ; or that they could take place *at all* in that age confessedly acknowledged to be the purest age of the Church. No reasonable being I feel assured would give credit to such an opinion. The literal meaning of the words of Tertullian is "certain approved *seniors* (or old men) preside." Tertullian is here, if I mistake not, speaking of the whole Christian Church. I have shewn you that he traces *individual succession* up to the Apostles. "For in this manner," he says, "the Apostolic Churches bring down their registers, as the Church of Smyrna from Polycarp, placed there by John—the Church of Rome from Clement, ordained by Peter." Who then were these approved seniors, or elders that presided in the Churches ?—not the body of presbyters ; but bishops such as were Polycarp and Clement ; *one* bishop presiding over his diocese. You have then *here again*, and indeed throughout your whole work, been led astray by *names*, and have entirely mistaken the nature of Tertullian's *presidency*. Cyprian, whom you next mention, was in the habit of consulting his presbyters on all important occasions, as every prudent bishop would do ; and I doubt not, every bishop of the Church does. But Cyprian did this, not by *right*, or of *necessity*, but because he *thought proper* to do so. When in exile he wrote to his presbyters and deacons, informing them that he had ordained Aurelius a *reader* in the Church ; he says in his 38th Epistle, "In all ecclesiastical ordinations, most dear brethren, I *used* to consult you beforehand, and to examine the manners and merits of every one with common advice." He says, "*I have resolved with myself to consult you.*"—(Bp. Taylor's works, vol. 7, p. 225.) Notwithstanding this resolution, when in his absence his presbyters received into communion, without sufficient evidence of their repentance, some who had fallen away in the time of persecution, *he reversed their decision*, and put out of the Church those who had been received by the presbyters, telling them that they should have a fair hearing upon his return. "What reason," says he, "have we to be afraid of the wrath of God, when some *presbyters* neither mindful of *their own station*, nor regardful of the bishop, *their superior*, are bold to assume all to themselves, to the reproach and contempt of their su-

perior, a thing never heretofore attempted under any of my
 predecessors." Again, "Yea, it is not a matter left to our
 own free choice, whether bishops shall rule or no, but the
 will of our Lord and Saviour is, that every act of the Church
 be governed by her bishops." This does not look much like
 government by a "common council." It is evident then, that
 Cyprian did not conceive that he was *bound* to consult his
 presbyters. [See further quotations in a preceding page.]
 Your extract respecting Cyprian's common council, I perceive
 is taken from Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, and as you have else-
 where quoted largely from that work, I will mention it here
 before Hilary's testimony is examined. Stillingfleet wrote
 his *Irenicum* at twenty-four years of age—his "Unreasona-
 bleness of Separation" at forty-five. In his preface to this
 last work he says, "will you not allow one single person who
 happened to write about these matters when he was very
 young, in twenty years time of the most busy and thoughtful
 part of his life, to see reason to *alter his judgments*?" In
 the same he says, "The case of Timothy is an uncontroll-
 able instance of diocesan Episcopacy." In a sermon he says,
 "I cannot find any argument of force in the New Testament,
 to prove that ever the Christian churches were under the sole
 government of presbyters." Again, "This succession was
 not in mere presidency of order, but the bishops *succeeded*
the Apostles in the government over those Churches." Fur-
 thermore, "There is as great reason to believe the apostoli-
 cal succession to be of *divine institution*, as the canon of
 Scripture, or the observation of the Lord's day." He re-
 tracted all his former opinions, and was fully convinced that
 Episcopacy was an *apostolic institution*. Now, Sir, to say
 the least, was it not unfair in you to quote the opinions ad-
 vanced *in his youth*, which, when his judgment became more
 mature, he in the most public manner retracted. You, Sir,
 have written a pamphlet against the divine right of Episco-
 pacy, and ridiculing the idea of the uninterrupted succession
 —calling the one "unscriptural," a "human invention"—
 the other "a dream." If after deep reflection and study,
 when your judgment becoming more mature you should see
 reason to change your sentiments, and should retract your
 untenable opinions, what would you think of the person who
 should quote your first pamphlet, giving as your testimony
 what you had publicly contradicted—would you admire his
 conduct, would you consider it either honourable or honest?
 I think not. Stillingfleet, then, having himself answered his
 "unanswerable reasonings," (see p. 50 of your pamphlet,) I

can only say that it renders it unnecessary for me to take any further notice of the Irenicum. Your next quotation is from Hilary, a Roman deacon of the fourth century. I will here adopt your own language—"In deciding what is really a commentator's opinion on a subject of which he speaks frequently, we must not, in all fairness, form a judgment from one or two isolated sentences, but from the general tenor of his writings."—(p. 71.) The historians of the first three centuries, the purest ages of the Church, give no support to your cause, let us see what testimony Hilary gives in your favour. "However, says he, after a bishop follows the order of a deacon, why, unless because the order of a bishop and of a presbyter is one and the same? For each is a priest, but the bishop is first, as every bishop may be a presbyter, not every presbyter a bishop. He then is a bishop who is first among presbyters." Dr. Hobart says, "Episcopalians consider merely as *verbal* the dispute whether bishops and presbyters are distinct *orders*, or different *grades* of the same order. They conceive indeed, that as *presbyters* are superior in power to *deacons*, and *bishops* to *presbyters*; and as they are advanced to these superior powers by ordination, the Church of England is justified in declaring that there are three "*orders* of ministers in Christ's Church." But still many of the *schoolmen*, and some few divines even of the Church of England, are of opinion, that though bishops are superior to presbyters in the power of ordination, they are, nevertheless, the same order, as having the same *priesthood*. It would be absurd to conclude from hence that these divines believed bishops are on an equality with presbyters. They contend, on the contrary, that bishops are invested by ordination or consecration, with that power of ordaining others which presbyters have not. The only thing, therefore, essential is, that bishops possess, by apostolic institution, certain *powers*, distinct from and superior to the ordinary powers of presbyters. This proved, the question in regard to the distinction or community of order, becomes a mere dispute about words. Bishops and presbyters, with regard to the *priesthood* common to both, by which they were distinguished from deacons and from the people, might be considered as the same order. Still, in regard to authority and jurisdiction, dignity and power, a bishop was above a presbyter." Now this appears exactly to have been the *opinion* of Hilary, for, says he, each is a priest, but *the bishop is first*. That he considered the bishop superior to the presbyter the following testimony will shew. He declares that

“James was constituted bishop of Jerusalem by the Apostles, and that the Apostles were bishops.” He affirms that Timothy and Titus, and the angels of the Asiatic Churches, were bishops”—bishops in the appropriate sense of the word. He says, “in the bishop all orders are contained, because he is the prince or chief of the priests.” He affirms that “the bishop is the vicegerent of Christ, and represents his person ;” and that “he decreed every Church should be governed by one bishop, even as all things proceed from one God the Father.” And in several other places this author affirms, “that in a Church there were several presbyters and deacons, but never more than one bishop even in the Apostles times.” Here he states that the bishop is chief of the priests in whom *all the orders are contained*—that he is the vicegerent of Christ, and his representative on earth. He expressly makes Episcopacy of divine appointment—that there was but one bishop in a Church at a time, tho’ there were several presbyters and deacons—and this in the Apostles time. He plainly also speaks of the Episcopal authority ; “bishops were at first called presbyters.” Do not Episcopalians allow this community of names ? But what do you here gain for your cause ? literally nothing, as I have abundantly shewn you. If you could shew by clear testimony that there was no order in the Church superior to that of presbyter, something then would be done by you, and in favour of your cause ; but this has not and cannot be done. “But because the following presbyters began to be found unworthy to hold the *first* place, the method was altered, the council ordained, or as it is elsewhere translated, seeing that not order but merit should create a bishop.” From me you wish to have *express* Scriptural proof for what I advance, and are unwilling to be satisfied with anything short of this. But here a deacon in the fourth century *intimates*, that when a bishop died the next in order succeeded him, and this which does not in the least make against Episcopacy, is triumphantly quoted and deemed conclusive ! Alas ! ye opponents of Episcopacy, your cause must be desperate indeed, and ready to fall, when you would thus endeavour to prop it up. Now, Sir, the Scriptures say nothing of this method, and there is, I believe, no mention made of it in any ancient author beside Hilary. But why shall we spend time upon this ? his testimony against you is clear and decided, and you were hasty in concluding that Episcopacy is a matter of *human* regulation. Hilary says directly the reverse, “Christ,” says he, “decreed that every Church should be governed by one bishop, a bishop holding

the Apostolic rod, even as all things proceed from one God the Father." He says, St. Paul had ordained Timothy a bishop; "which shows how and after what manner a bishop should be ordained, for it was not proper nor allowed, that an inferior should ordain a superior." He then gives this reason—"No one has the power of giving that which he hath not received." This testimony can never be evaded.

LETTER X.

REVD. SIR,

JEROME is the next author you quote, with a high compliment as to his great talents and profound erudition, and *your opinion* is that he had "no intention to establish with respect to them (the three orders) any particular theory." Be that as it may, there is no doubt but that Jerome wished to lower the bishops and elevate the presbyters as much as possible. He was incensed against bishops and deacons, and though a man of learning and distinguished talent, his impetuous disposition carried him sometimes beyond due bounds. "Though he was very learned," says the impartial ecclesiastical historian Dupin, "yet there is infinitely more liveliness and vehemency in his exhortations and polemical works, than *exactness* and solidity. He knew a great deal; but he never argued upon principles, which made him sometimes *contradict himself*. He often carries *his subject too far*, being transported with his ordinary heat." As he indulges his ordinary heat too much, so he falleth into those *extremes* for which he hath been often blamed." But lest the testimony of Dupin should be impeached, let us hear what Mosheim says of St. Jerome. "His complexion was excessively *warm* and *choleric*; his bitterness against those who differed from him extremely keen, and his thirst of glory insatiable. He was so prone to censure, that several persons, whose lives were not only irreproachable but even exemplary, became the objects of his unjust accusations." You cannot be surprised then, if we receive Jerome's bare *opinion* with caution. The facts which he relates, which are supported by other testimony, we are bound to receive, unsupported opinions and well authenticated facts differ very widely in their nature.

You have introduced your quotations from Jerome, as though he would put Episcopacy to the blush, nay more, give it a deadly wound—you then, who but lately were so desirous of being guided by the explicit testimony of the unerring word of God, since *that word* does not sanction your theory, must at last call in the aid of an ambitious presbyter of the fourth century, to crush this hated Episcopacy. Candid indeed you are to tell us that you are only giving “his sentiments,” that is, his opinions, but then you think that he “most powerfully supports” them—when, or how, you have not condescended to tell us. Well, let us consider his *opinions*. “From Mark, the Evangelist, even to Heracles and Dionysius, the Presbyters gave the name of bishop to one elected from amongst themselves, and placed him in a higher seat, as if an army should create a general.” From “Mark the Evangelist;” this then, being in the days of the Apostles, it must have had the sanction of Apostolic authority,—and the bishop was *elevated* from the rank of the presbyters—placed in a *higher seat*, having distinct powers after his election, as distinct as are the powers of a *general* from those of the army—a general commands the army, and a bishop then must govern the clergy, otherwise there can be no force in the similitude by which he illustrates the subject under consideration. Jerome was anxious to bring bishops down to a level with presbyters; this he found a difficult matter, and was led into a foolish contradiction, for although he compares a bishop to a general, and the presbyters to the army, yet he does not appear willing to ascribe to them the power of government *originally*. In his day he knew that they possessed it, and had he been disposed to be influenced by the *facts* which he states, he would have yielded this power to them from the beginning, for he says “with us bishops hold the place of the Apostles.” That the Apostles governed the Church you will not, I think, venture to deny. Again, he speaks of Timothy as bishop, being set over the Church of Ephesus by the Apostles. Timothy’s power over the clergy we have already considered. The bishop then, had originally the government of the Church, tho’ Jerome does not admit it. But much as he desired to overthrow the authority of bishops, one difficulty, and this could not be overcome, presented itself against his scheme, and this fact proves undeniably the superiority of bishops. In the next sentence of the passage which you have quoted, Jerome uses this strong expression, “For what does a bishop which a presbyter may not do, *excepting ordination*.”—Though you have omitted this passage which makes directly

against your cause, I will not say that it was done "designedly." Here, then, much as Jerome is desirous of giving to presbyters, he never vests them with the *power of ordination*, nor does he venture to declare that they ever possessed that power, which this "man of profound erudition who had devoted his great talents to investigate the history of christianity," would gladly have asserted, could he have been borne out by facts. But he denies to presbyters the *right to ordain*, even when he is examining their original rights. Are you willing to be guided by the express testimony of this talented man? who, you say, "could not fail to be acquainted with the opinions of those who preceded him, with regard to ecclesiastical polity." Then you must acknowledge that presbyters have not the right to ordain, and consequently your ordination must be invalid. This is the author you quote for yourself! But let us proceed—"The presbyters gave the name of bishop to one elected from amongst themselves, and placed him in a higher seat." It seems then, that the name of bishop was at a very early period, appropriated to the first order in the ministry. If the presbyters did elect a bishop from amongst themselves, this circumstance does not operate against Episcopacy. The presbyters did not ordain the bishop, for Jerome tells us they had not the *right*—that was vested in the bishop alone. "The choice of the bishop, the persons by whom he is appointed, and his ordination, and the persons by whom it is performed, may be, and commonly are, in all Episcopal Churches, distinct!" Jerome notes particularly the custom at Alexandria, of the presbyters choosing their bishop, because in his time the choice was generally made by the emperor or by the bishops of the province, by *whom* they were afterwards *ordained*. Jerome nowhere states any difference in respect to their ordination, between the bishops of his day and those of Alexandria. We are at liberty to conclude that these last, though chosen by the Presbyters in like manner "as if an army should choose their general, or deacons an archdeacon," were afterwards ordained."—(*Dr. Hobart's Apology*, p. 188.) You have in a preceding letter clear testimony that bishops were "elevated" to the "higher seat" by a new ordination, not by presbyters, but by men holding an elevated rank. I may be permitted here to repeat Jerome's own words; "James, immediately after our Lord's ascension, having been *ordained bishop of Jerusalem*, undertook the charge of the Church at Jerusalem. Timothy was *ordained bishop of the Ephesians* by Paul, Titus of Crete. Polycarp was by John *ordained bishop of Smyrna*."

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"A presbyter is therefore the same as a bishop." This is the inference which Jerome draws from some previous observations on the Epistle to Titus. He could not have been speaking of the bishops in his own time, for the fact was notorious that they were superior to presbyters. If he were speaking of them in former days, it must rest upon the testimony of some who lived in those former days; but Jerome does not, and could not, produce any such testimony. From a community of names he *infers* that bishops and presbyters were the same, but he himself calls it an *opinion*, and indeed goes contrary to that opinion in another place—"Indeed this error of Acrius was condemned by the whole Church, that he said *that a presbyter ought to be distinguished from a bishop by no difference*. Jerome himself in reply to him, who had written *that there is no difference between a bishop and a presbyter*, answered, *this is unskilfully enough, to make shipwreck in port, as it is said*."—(Dr. Cooke, Sec. 510.) And again, "Speaking of Vigilantius, a presbyter, who propagated false doctrines, he says, I marvel that the holy bishop, under whom Vigilantius is said to be a presbyter, doth yield to his fury, and not break that unprofitable vessel with his *Apostolic* and iron rod."—(Ditto, Sec. 266.) Will you then found your mode of Church government upon the unsupported *opinion* of a presbyter of the fourth century? You are heartily welcome to all the support you can derive from that *opinion*. But the question is, while Jerome acknowledges that presbyters are also called bishops, does he infer or assert that there was no Church officer superior to those presbyters, who were sometimes called bishops? Just the reverse; he speaks of presbyters as holding the *second place* in the Church, and of an order *superior to these*, holding the succession from the Apostles, to whom belongs the right of confirming and ordaining. After this decided testimony it cannot be that Jerome maintains what you would ascribe to him, unless he directly contradicts himself. If he does this, then he cannot be received as a credible witness, and we must both reject him. His testimony as to facts, which alone is to be regarded, is decidedly and unequivocally in favour of Episcopacy. "Before there were parties in religion, and it was said, I am of Paul, &c., the Churches were governed by the common council of presbyters." When, Sir, was this language used? Was it not in the days of the Apostles? Unquestionably.—(1st Cor., 1, 12.) Jerome gives it as his mere opinion, that before these parties in religion, the Church was governed by the "common council of presbyters." The power of ordi-

nation was at this time exercised by the *Apostles*, and the Churches were under their immediate control. St. Paul, who was the Apostle to the Gentiles, speaks of the care of all the (Gentile) Churches devolving upon him.—(2d Cor. 12, 28.) Admitting then that Jerome's opinion was correct respecting the common council of presbyters, these councils must have acted under the control of the Apostles. But as the whole world (from their very commission) was their field of labour, they could not have their fixed residences in any city, at all events not at the commencement of their ministerial labours. The spirit of dissent appearing in the Churches, in the absence of the Apostles, it was found necessary that in *every* district or diocese, one invested with full authority should be raised to the "highest seat," like to Apostles, and presiding over clergy and people should reprove, rebuke, exhort with all authority, and thus check the growth of dissent. This seems clearly to be Jerome's sentiment, and really, Sir, I can see nothing here which militates against Episcopacy,—quite the reverse. Jerome intimates that all this was done in the time of the Apostles, and then we must consider it a divine institution. He says that this was done by a *decree throughout the whole world, (toto orbe decretum est,)* which words you appear to have been unwilling to translate, though they are very important—shewing that this was the universal practice of the Apostles. That this was their practice we have Jerome's express and direct testimony, as I have shewn. If you are disposed to give him credit for a contrary opinion, then you make him flatly to contradict himself; you must not then oppose a few ambiguous sentences to words which are clear and decisive, for this is treating an author unfairly. "As therefore the presbyters know that by the custom of the Church they are subject to him who is set over them, so let the bishops know that they are greater than the presbyters, rather by custom than the truth of the Lord's disposition and ordering." By what custom? The universal practice of the Apostles, and Jerome has told us that *in the whole world it was decreed* that bishops should be set over the presbyters. Jerome can only mean then, in the passage which you have quoted, that according to his idea our Lord did not *order* an Episcopal government. But when he himself asserts the fact that this was an Apostolic institution, and we know that the Apostles acted under a divine impulse, we can with all propriety *reject* Jerome's *mere opinions*, which he does not venture to support either by Scripture or antiquity; while we receive the *facts* which he relates, strengthened by the testi-

mony of all the writers before his time—his *individual* testimony we could not receive. Suppose that all the ancient writers advocated the cause of presbytery as strongly and clearly as they do that of Episcopacy, and that Irenæus and Eusebius, instead of giving, as they have done, catalogues of individual bishops presiding in the Churches from the time of the Apostles, had declared that presbyteries had been organized in all the Churches, and that all writers were altogether silent as to any innovation in the government of the Church, what would you think of that Episcopalian who should attempt to prove that his mode of Church government was Scriptural, from the *opinion* of a presbyter in the fourth century, an opinion which under all circumstances could not be free from prejudice? Would he receive credit for supporting a good cause? I feel assured that he would not. But this is exactly your condition. Judge then impartially of the real merits of your case, and you have nothing to boast of but every thing to fear. A little scrap of doubtful import from Jerome, and a shred or two from a few others of the primitive writers, is all you can find which *appears* to favour your cause; and though you seem to value but little (for a very good reason) the testimony of the fathers of the Church generally, yet you seize upon these scraps and shreds with a wonderful degree of delight, and appear to prize them far above all other ancient testimony—such a *shew of hands* is made upon the occasion, that all who behold it must be amused, and the pointed finger, evidently intimates—there, there, so will we have it. “In relying on Jerome, the opponents of Episcopacy admit that presbytery proved incompetent to preserving the unity of the Church; that so lamentable were its defects and inconveniences, that the primitive christians were obliged to throw it off, and to seek repose for their distracted Church, so long tossed on the tempestuous billows of presbytery, in the peaceful haven of Episcopacy. Yes, as Dr. Maurice shrewdly and keenly remarks, if the presbyterian parity had any place in the primitive times, as some do imagine, it must needs have been an intolerable kind of government, since all on a sudden it was universally abolished. It must have given strange occasion of offence, when all the Christian Churches in the world should conspire to abrogate this polity, and to destroy all the memory and footsteps of it.”—(*Bowden's Let.* vol. 1, p. 16.) You refer me to Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*. I have already informed you that he retracted his reasonings in that work at a period when his judgment was more mature. Speaking of the change to which Jerome refers, he remarks,

"It is hard to conceive how such an alteration should happen, without the *Apostle's act*; for if they had left the presbyters in full power of government, it is not to be imagined that they would so universally part with it, without being obliged thereto by those who had authority over them."—(*Bishop Stillingfleet's Sermon at St. Paul's.*) Again, "As the Apostles withdrew, they did in some Churches sooner, and in some later" (the true meaning of Jerome's *little and little and gradually*) "as their own continuance, the condition of the Churches, and the qualifications of persons were, commit the care and government of Churches to such persons whom they appointed thereto; of which we have an uncontrollable evidence in the instances of Timothy and Titus."—(*Bowden's Let.* vol. 1, p. 10.) We have now examined the opinion of Jerome, and Episcopacy still lives. Unhurt—unsullied it has survived the tremendous shock which we were rather led to expect would be given—the dreadful wound which was to have been inflicted by Jerome's "sentiments" has not proved fatal—the skill of its opponents is baffled, while the testimony which has since been brought forward in its support by champions* in its cause, clearly prove that Episcopacy is the appointment of God, while presbytery is the image set up "by men." You next quote Augustine; but does he say that the practice of the Church was not Apostolic? You know he does not. Why then do you quote this as a testimony against the divine right of Episcopacy? It only shews how desperate is your cause, when you reject the clearest evidence, and cling to a few ambiguous phrases which are to be found in the writings of some of the Fathers. This practice of the Church we are expressly informed was Apostolic. Does bishop Jewel say that this practice or custom was not Apostolic? Let him answer for himself, and then you will perceive that he *does not* take the same view of the subject that you have done. Speaking of the enemies of Episcopacy, he says, "Tell them that *Episcopacy was settled in all Churches in the days of the very Apostles, and by them*, and they reply the mystery of iniquity began then to work, intimating, if not affirming, that this *holy order* was a part of it."—(Preface to his Apology.) It is plain from this that he believed Episcopacy of Apostolic institution. You roundly assert that you have shewn by appeal to the Fathers, that the authority of bishops over presbyters was a mere human re-

* See Potter, Hooker, Hammond, Slater, Bowden, Hobart, Chapman, Onderdonk.

gulation, possessing not a shadow of a claim to divine appointment. Perhaps, Sir, a little further acquaintance with the writings of the Fathers will remove this "confident boasting" of yours, and when you rightly understand them there is a hope that you will come to a better mind. I refer you to a preceding letter for proof of the divine origin of Episcopacy, and then you will see that your quotation from Dr. Cook's view, which is a mere string of assertions, is not in accordance with the views of the ancient writers. You intimate that I "seem not to be fully satisfied with the case I have made out" in my private letter to you. You must allow me to tell you, Sir, that here I think you manifest a want of discernment. Episcopalians well know that the grand argument of their opponents, (puerile tho' it be, and weak in the extreme,) is drawn from the identity of names, and in as few words as possible I wished to set you right on this point. But as I find that a few words will not suffice to convince a prejudiced mind, plain and clear though they be to others, I have in these letters been more full on this part of the subject. To the quotation from Dr. Chapman, you say, "If this be not a contradiction and a giving up of the point in debate, I must own that my understanding is so obtuse as to render me unable to comprehend the meaning of words." As to the latter part of this sentence I will not contradict you, but I ask, in the name of common sense, what have mere terms to do with the divine institution of Episcopacy? Abundantly has it been proved that there is an order superior to presbyters—that this is *Scriptural* and *Apostolic*—and that this order was first called apostle, afterwards bishop. What then has been wrung from Dr. Chapman? Surely, Sir, the passage quoted was exceedingly plain, but yet you do not seem to have understood it. You cannot seem to understand that there was an officer in the Church superior to presbyters, because the terms bishop and presbyter were indiscriminately applied to the same person. They were thus applied *originally*, but when the term Apostle was dropped out of respect for those who were *truly Apostles*, that is the twelve, then the name bishop was appropriated to the superior officer in the Church who held the *office* and *official powers* of the Apostles, but not the name. And this is the difficulty which so puzzled and confused you,—it is now removed, and I trust that you will be so completely ashamed of the fallacy which is so apparent throughout your pamphlet, grounded on this interchangeable use of the words bishop and presbyter, that you will never venture to use it as an argu-

ment in your defence again. Intelligent men of all denominations must see, when they duly consider it, that it is extremely weak, and as an argument, worth nothing. The quotation from Whithy shews that the names of bishop and presbyter were common in the days of the Apostles,—this I have told you Episcopalians generally allow,—but he does not mean to assert that there was not an order superior to presbyters, for he knew to the contrary. Why give us here an opinion of Whithy's, in opposition to the testimony of ancient writers? Is this the method you take to support your claims? All I have to say is, that we depend not upon *opinions* but upon *facts*. That you cannot see that the quotation from Theodoret has a reference to the subject in hand, is indeed surprising. You, however, say, "Had you been striving to prove that bishops were once called Apostles, the quotation would have been appropriate to the subject"—the very thing I wished you to understand by the quotation, for this clearly removes that seeming difficulty from the minds of all unprejudiced persons, and they can perceive that the term Apostle being no longer used, but being left for those who were truly Apostles, that is the *twelve*, the term bishop, by common consent, was applied to the *first* order, and they who once, or at first, were called Apostles, afterwards, by common consent, were called bishops; and this change of terms causes no more confusion in the mind of an Episcopalian, than the application of the term "Sabbath" to the first day of the week; and certainly when the dissenter can perceive no difficulty in the latter, the clearness of his intellect should enable him to comprehend the former. Your sympathy then, for the fate of the three distinct orders, had better be reserved for some *real* occasion, for here it is misplaced. "If," says Leslie, the presbyterians will say (because they have nothing left to say) that all London (for example) was but one parish, and that the presbyter of every other parish was as much a bishop as a bishop of London, because the words bishop and presbyter are sometimes used in the same sense, they may as well prove that Christ was but a *deacon*, because he is so called Rom. 15, 8, *diakonos*, which we rightly translate a *minister*; and *bishop* signifies an *overseer*, and *presbyter* an *ancient man* or *elder man*, whence our term of *alderman*. And this is as good a foundation to prove that the Apostles were aldermen, in the city acception of the word, or that our aldermen are all bishops and apostles, as to prove that presbyters and bishops are all one from the childish jingle of the words." Your strictures on the quotation from

Theodoret, are among the strange things which you have written, and evidently show that you have not a clear view of the subject. What ! Theodoret (whom Presbyterians have always considered a high Churchman) not believe that bishops were superior to presbyters ! Where do you find this ? Oh ! Theodoret says, that the terms bishop and presbyter were originally applied to the same person, therefore *you* conclude he did not think that there was a Church officer superior to presbyters. Excellent logic this—doing credit to the understanding of its author ! No, Sir, does not Theodoret state, that these names were once common to the *second* order, when the *first* order was called “Apostle,” and that when *that* term was left in honour of the *twelve* to distinguish *them*, then the name bishop was appropriated to the first order.* Theodoret makes bishops of his day to hold the rank in the Church which the Apostles themselves held—a rank to which presbyters have never attained. You therefore have done him an injustice by boldly asserting that he did not believe in the original superiority of bishops. The Episcopacy of the Church at Philippi was just what we now contend for as scriptural, and which we possess. Bear in mind then, (and I am sure there is no difficulty in so doing,) that at the time St. Paul wrote to the Philippians, the term Apostle was applied exclusively to the *first* order, and the terms bishop and presbyter applied to the *second*. I am sorry that you have rendered this repetition necessary—then you have Epaphroditus, the Apostle ; presbyter-bishops ; and deacons. Why could you not comprehend so simple a case ? Did prejudice usurp the place of reason, and drive her from her throne ? If so, I entreat you to banish the dangerous usurper without delay. That the term “Apostle” is applied in the New Testament to those who were “expressly sent by the Almighty with the message of salvation,” is not a matter of dispute. But if you would confine the word in the New Testament to those *alone*, you contradict St. Paul, who tells us that there were Apostles ordained by men, as well as those who were immediately sent by Jehovah. The term in the New Testament is applied to the superior order in the ministry, who governed the Church and ordained—and is no where applied to a priest of the second order. The passage of scripture which you have quoted, (2 Cor. 8, 23,) certainly does not say so ; it does not tell us who these brethren and

* The same testimony has Ambrose given in his comment on Epist. to Timothy,—vide Salmas. de Primatu 40.

messengers are. Dr. MacKnight calls them "younger brethren," without knowing who they were. There are only *probabilities* and conjecture, as to the individuals alluded to, and it is weak indeed to build upon these, when you shut your eyes against the plainest facts. That the term bishop was applied to those who were formerly called Apostles, we have direct testimony to oppose to your opinion. Timothy and Epaphroditus are both called Apostles in the New Testament. Chrysostom observes (comm. Ep. Philip.) "Paul saith in his Epistle to Timothy, fulfil thy ministry; being then a bishop; for that he was a bishop appears by Paul's writing thus unto him, *Lay hands suddenly on no man.*"—Again, in his 13th Hom. on 1st Tim. 4, 4, he says, "He (Paul) does not speak of presbyters, but of bishops; for presbyters did not ordain Timothy a bishop. Here he gives the name bishop to Timothy, who in the Scripture was called an Apostle—he makes a plain and marked distinction between the presbyters and bishops, giving to bishops alone the right to ordain, which in another place he expressly states. Jerome, an author on whom you so much depend as being acquainted with "Ecclesiastical polity," says, "The Apostles were thy fathers because that they begat thee. But now that they have left the world, thou hast in their stead their sons, the bishops." Here he makes bishops the successors of the Apostles, and in another place states that Timothy (the Apostle) was bishop of Ephesus, and Epaphroditus (the Apostle) was bishop of Philippi. Hilary, whom you also quote, says that the Apostles were bishops; and that you may know what he means by a bishop, he states, "In the bishop all orders are contained, *because he is the prince or chief of the priests.*" All the art and ingenuity of man cannot evade this testimony. It is given as plain matter of fact, about which, in *their day*, there was no dispute. The voice of antiquity proclaims that bishops *alone* exercised the power which the Apostles held. You are, therefore, far from doing well to "question the propriety" of Theodoret's statements. Epaphroditus is styled a bishop by Jerome, and a bishop is called the "prince or chief of the priests," it follows, therefore, that he was superior to presbyters. But, say you, "Theodoret did not believe in any original difference of order between presbyters and bishops, but the reverse." When I read the quotation which you bring in support of this *bold assertion*, I could not but inquire where is Mr. M'Leod's discernment? And when I observed the pointed fingers, I could not but think this is puerile indeed! It may, Sir, suit vulgar

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minds, but it cannot influence the intelligent. Let us examine the quotation, "There could be but *one* bishop properly so called, in one city." This is just what Episcopalians contend for. What is meant by a "bishop properly so called"? not a presbyter surely, for a populous city with ninety or a hundred thousand inhabitants, would be sadly in want of religious instruction, if they could have but one minister in the city. Can it be possible, Sir, that you could not perceive that this quotation made against the cause you were advocating, and that the *one* bishop *properly* so called, was that superior officer ruling all the clergy in the city? Strange indeed! Again, "The names were common to *both* orders, the bishops being called presbyters, and the presbyters bishops." Then there were two orders, or why speak of *both* orders? But the strength of your round assertion lies in the community of names; deprive you of this fallacy, and bring you from *names* to *things*, and your cause will make a meagre appearance indeed; we depend upon something better. You have twice informed us that Theodoret did not believe in the original difference of order and superiority of bishops over presbyters. All that need be said is, that you have not taken a proper view of the matter. He admits the community of names, but does not speak of the equality of orders; his own words prove that he *did not believe* their powers to be equal, and that he *did believe* the Episcopal government to be Apostolic, and therefore *divine*. "There could be but one bishop properly so called, in one city." As he calls Timothy a bishop, we may know what his idea of a bishop was. Then this one bishop in a city was to reprove, rebuke, commend clergy and people, and to ordain. This one bishop was not merely the pastor of a single congregation, as is evident from the first and most ancient of all the Churches, the Church at Jerusalem, where there were many myriads or tens of thousands who believed in Christ, and the elders or presbyters, with James their bishop. At Rome, also, Cornelius the bishop had 46 presbyters under him, and a number of deacons. Cyprian mentions six of his presbyters as having fallen away, and then names three remaining as the chief presbyters. At Constantinople there were sixty presbyters. The *one* bishop in a city ruled over these presbyters, as Timothy ruled at Ephesus,—this is Theodoret's opinion, and the following which I quoted in my private letter, shews that he believed Episcopacy to be Apostolic. "Epaphroditus was called the Apostle of the Philippians, because he was entrusted with the Episcopal government as

being their bishop. For these now called bishops, were antiently called apostles, but in process of time the name of apostle was left to them that were truly apostles, while the name of bishop was restrained to those who were antiently called apostles. Thus Epaphroditus was the apostle of the Philippians, Titus of the Cretans, and Timothy of the Asiatics."

Enough has been advanced in this and the preceding letters, to prove that Timothy and Titus were bishops in the sense in which Episcopalians understand the term.—You certainly speak without due consideration, when you say that the voice of antiquity is against the original inequality of order between bishops and presbyters, and the *divine institution*. When you pay a little more attention to the voice of antiquity, I think, Sir, that you will form a better opinion. Your *assertion* does not agree with the *facts* which I have given respecting the original superiority of bishops, who at first were called apostles, and the divine institution,—and it will now clearly be seen, that Dr. Chapman is right in asserting, that we have the voice of antiquity on our side, and that seceders can only oppose it by the dictum of the three last centuries, pronounced by a very small minority of the christian world." This quotation from the Dr. you have not given correctly in your pamphlet. You make him to say—a "small majority of the christian world"—his words are, "*a very small minority*." And he shews us that his is a correct view of the case. "Were you" he says, "to divide the christian world into twenty equal parts, eighteen, if not nineteen twentieths, would be found ranged on our side of this important question. The Roman Catholics, wherever situated; the very extensive denomination called the Greek Church in Russia, and Turkey in Europe, and in some parts of Asia, including the Holy Land itself; the Armenians also, of Asia; the Abyssinians of Africa; the Swedish, and many of the German Lutherans; such as belong to the Established Churches in England and Ireland, with a respectable church in Scotland; all these are as much episcopalians as we are: they maintain as strongly the apostolic institution of episcopacy, and reject as openly every other form of church government, because, in their opinion, founded solely upon the basis of *human authority*."

The "positive testimony of Scripture" you say, "is in favor of equality of order between bishop and presbyter." Now, Sir, you cannot bring forward one passage of Scripture to prove this. All that you have said is respecting

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names, but names prove nothing. Timothy was ordained by Paul, not by presbyters of the second order. St. Paul was made an apostle by Christ Jesus, as he himself tells us, and therefore man had no part in the matter. That the primitive Fathers are in your favor so far as their writings are free from interpolations, I have shown to be incorrect. The intimation that all the passages which are directly in favor of Episcopacy are interpolations, is, to say the least, daring and presumptuous. Why, Sir, there is but little in their works which *seems* to favour your cause, while volumes could be gathered in favor of Episcopacy. The voluminous works of the primitive Fathers would be abridged indeed, were you to expunge all that they say respecting Episcopacy, and its divine institution. Episcopacy must either be of divine origin, or of human invention. If it be the former, say what you please, it is sinful to depart from it—if the latter, it should be rejected as not supported by the word of God. In that case the power of the bishops would be a usurpation which ought not to be tolerated. If ordination by presbyters only, be scriptural, (which you assert, and for which you contend,) then the ordination by a bishop alone, is presumption—it is unscriptural. Then we are ordained contrary to Scripture, and are therefore not scriptural ministers. You can come to no other conclusion. If you make Episcopacy of human appointment, then, to be consistent, you must deny the validity of our ordination, because, if it be unscriptural, it cannot be valid. But while you call it unscriptural, you have no doubt as to its validity. Here then you show a great want of respect for the Scriptures. Again, you assert that Episcopacy is of *human origin*, yet you readily allow that we are rightly ordained. Is not this making light of the divine institution, (ordination by presbyters, as you suppose,) for Episcopacy cannot be unscriptural and scriptural. If it be unscriptural, and you allow our ordinations to be valid, which you do, then you allow what, in your opinion, is an unscriptural ordination, and of course show the very low estimation in which you hold the institutions of Christ. But, Sir, the whole christian world, without exception, was for centuries under episcopal government, and if episcopacy were contrary to the sacred Scriptures, then the Church thus governed, could not be called the Church of God—then God's Church was not to be found upon earth, and we would be compelled to conclude that Christ had not fulfilled his promise to his church. "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." You would be compelled to come to a monstrous conclusion,

sapping the very foundation of religion, and depriving every christian of hope and dependence upon the promises of the Redeemer. Whichever way you turn, you involve yourself in difficulties. But with these the Episcopalian has not to contend. He has the Scriptures—the primitive Fathers, and which you cannot deny, the *universal* practice of the primitive church in his favor.

LETTER XI.

REV'D. SIR,

You have a happy way of getting rid of difficulties. When any testimony is adduced which advances the cause of Episcopacy, and places it in a clearer light, you either "cannot see it," or you are at "a loss to conceive" how we can derive benefit from it—and as the easiest and shortest method, you "take the liberty of questioning the reality" of the testimony. This certainly is not the way to make good *your* claims. Why do you not meet the arguments and testimony advanced against your cause with opposing proof. Ah! this is the greatest difficulty of all, for this opposing proof is nowhere to be found, and our opponents must have recourse to fallacies, conjectures, and probabilities; they must plead blindness for not seeing what others contend is as clear as if written with a sunbeam—they must complain that their "understanding is obtuse," or, "declare that they cannot give credit to well known historical facts." How unbending is prejudice—how stubborn is unbelief! You are at a loss to conceive in what manner the existence of the Church in India, can prove the divine institution of Episcopacy. In this way it proves it, Sir. They trace its origin to the Apostles. According to the records of the Syrian Christians their Church was founded by the Apostle Thomas. Now the acts of men inspired with the Holy Ghost must have a divine sanction, unless you can make it appear that men immediately under the divine influence were acting in opposition to God's commands,—this you would not attempt to do. The Syrian Church then, affords strong and convincing proof that Episcopacy is not of human, but of divine origin. For ages its existence was unknown to Christians of the western world, and it was entirely unconnected with them. The mode of government of such a Church then, would tend greatly to

strengthen their claims who held to the same government. Here then is the Church of Christ founded in England, maintaining an Episcopal government, and tracing her origin to the Apostle Paul, as I will presently shew. And the long unknown Syrian Church, separate, distinct, and independent, when discovered is found to maintain the same government, having bishops, priests, and deacons, and to trace her origin from the Apostle Thomas. I am not at a loss to conceive that by this discovery the claims of Episcopacy are materially strengthened. This I know, that if this Syrian Church, so long secluded from the eyes of Christendom, had been presbyterian in its economy, we should never have heard the last of those notes of triumph, which would have been chanted throughout the dissenting Churches. The decidedly Episcopal character it exhibits, is what they cannot endure. It substantiates indeed all that we are in the habit of maintaining; it proves Episcopacy to have been as old as Christianity; but then it lays the axe to the very root of schism, and the tall, umbrageous tree, would still lift up its ambitious head, and interpose a dark shade between the nations and the light of revealed truth."—(*Dr. Chapman's Sermons*, vol. 1, p. 71.) You tell me that I have not connected the Syrian Church with the Apostles, except in my own imagination. It would be better if you were more modest in your assertions, when you have no proof of their correctness, then your errors would be somewhat more excusable. From their own records it appears that the Syrian Church was founded by an Apostle, that the government was from the beginning Episcopal; the same government was established in *all the Churches*, as Irenæus, Eusebius, Hilary, Jerome, and indeed all antiquity testify, so that I have no anomaly to reconcile, but have to exercise my patience, and not a little forbearance. Enough has been said respecting the interchangeable use of terms to shame our opponents, and to convince every candid reader. You say, "According to your account the succession of the (the Syrian) bishops, was not derived from one another, but from the Patriarch of Antioch." My words were, "for thirteen hundred years they had enjoyed a succession of bishops appointed by the Patriarch of Antioch." Now, by appointing them it does not necessarily follow that he ordained them. The Syrian bishops may have ordained the appointed person, and set him apart for his high and sacred office. But admitting that the bishops were appointed and ordained by the Patriarchs of Antioch, how does this circumstance disturb or break the succession? We have here some hint of your

ideas of the uninterrupted succession, and they are queer indeed. We shall henceforth know what a dissenter means, when he tells us that the uninterrupted succession is a "dream." "The office (of Patriarch)" you say, "unless one person had lived all that time, must have been filled by many individuals, and, therefore, the succession of these bishops cannot, properly speaking, be said to be interrupted." What a logical conclusion! Then to preserve the uninterrupted succession it must, according to your idea, be absolutely necessary that one Patriarch should live thro' succeeding ages to ordain all the Syrian bishops. And for the Church of Christ, founded in England, St. Paul should have lived to the end of time to ordain all the British bishops, and because he did not live, therefore the succession "cannot, properly speaking, be said to be uninterrupted." The Apostles are dead, and therefore there is no such thing as uninterrupted succession. 'This is absurd indeed. You think it requisite to "produce catalogues of bishops in every Church that was instituted," and then tell us that *in the nature of the case* such a thing could not be done, because, that during the persecutions against the primitive christians, they were often scattered abroad, and their books and records wrested from them."—You here make a demand which, from circumstances beyond the control of man, you allow cannot be satisfied. This, to say the least, is unreasonable. You want that proof of which you intimate we have been deprived through the malice and rage of the enemies of the Church of God, and you will not be satisfied with any thing short of this,—you deserve then, to be left in your error. But what is the testimony of Irenæus? "But seeing that it is very long in such a volume as this, to enumerate the *succession* (by bishops) of *all the Churches*, by pointing out the tradition of the greatest, * * * which (tradition) it has from the Apostles, and the faith announced to mankind, coming even to us by the successions of bishops, we confound all those who, in whatever manner, either through their evil inclination, or through vain glory, or through blindness and wicked designs, conclude more than is fit. *For, with this Church, on account of its greater pre-eminence, it is necessary that every Church should agree; that is, those which are in all respects faithful; in which is always preserved, by those who are round about, that tradition which is from the Apostles. The blessed Apostles, therefore, founding and instructing the Church, delivered to Linus the bishopric, to govern the Church.*—(3 ch., book 3d.) Here he speaks of the *succession of all the Churches*, and tells us that

it would be too long to give a catalogue of *them all* ; he therefore gives the catalogue of but one, and mentions the necessity of the *faithful* agreeing with that one. But would he have spoken of the succession of all the Churches, if he had not known that there was a succession preserved in them all ? Has his statement been contradicted by any early writer ? No,—it is supported by Eusebius. Jerome, upon whose testimony you rely, says, “It was decreed throughout *the whole world*,” that a bishop should be set over the presbyters, and he tells us that the Apostles set bishops over the Churches, agreeing exactly with the testimony of Irenæus, who says that the Apostles “wished those to be very perfect and irreprehensible in all things, whom they left their successors, delivering (to them) their own place of government, or mastership. Hilary tells us, Christ “decreed that every Church should be governed by one bishop, even as all things proceed from one God the Father.” Here is direct testimony which should satisfy every unprejudiced mind. And after this direct testimony, it is for our opponents, before they assert that we are wrong, to bring direct, positive, and overwhelming proof against us, and not beguile their readers by unreasonable demands, and bold assertions. Reply, Sir, to the challenge which, in the words of Hooker, has been given you in a preceding letter. Come we now to the Church of England, or in other words, the Church of Christ, founded in England, for the words “of England” seem to confuse you as much as the terms bishop and presbyter. You are disposed to ridicule the idea that the Gospel was preached in England, and the Church of Christ planted there by St. Paul, but you may not always be sceptical on this point. I will first mention the great probability of St. Paul’s being in Britain—that there was nothing to hinder his going thither, and then give direct proof. Christ commanded his Apostles, “Go ye into *all the world* and preach the Gospel to *every creature*.” They, no doubt, would make an effort to fulfil this command. Observe then St. Paul’s travels, his “journeyings,” and “more abundant labours.” Consider his great zeal in the cause of his Divine Master—his desire to preach the Gospel where it was *not heard before*, that he might not enter into another man’s labours ; and we have strong reasons for supposing that he would not lose any favourable opportunity to declare to Britons the freeness and fullness of the Gospel. Now he wanted neither leisure nor opportunity to visit Britain. Eusebius, Jerome, and other ancient writers agree that he suffered martyrdom at Rome in the fourteenth year of Nere-

St. Paul was sent a prisoner to Rome when Festus was Governor of Judæa, (Acts 27, 1.) and arrived there about the third year of Nero. St. Luke tells us that he abode there two years. From the fifth year then at which time he was set at liberty, till his return to Rome, which was about eight years, he spent in various parts preaching the Gospel; not in the East, for some time before this he took leave of the Eastern parts, assuring them that "all amongst whom he had gone preaching the Gospel should see his face no more." In accordance with this Scripture testimony, the ancient writers affirm, that during these eight years he preached the Gospel in the *Western parts only*. "There is," says Bishop Newton, "some probability that the Gospel was preached in the British nations by St. Simon, the Apostle; that there is much greater probability that it was preached here by St. Paul; and that there is an absolute certainty that it was planted here in the times of the Apostles, before the destruction of Jerusalem.—(Disser. vol. 2.) St. Paul himself speaks, Col. 1, 6, 25, of the Gospel's being come into *all the world, and preached to every creature under heaven*. And in his Epistle to the Romans, chap. 10, 18, very elegantly applies to the lights of the Church, what the Psalmist said of the lights of Heaven, *Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world*.—(Dr. Clarke Comment., Matt. 24, 14.) "That St. Paul had encouragement and invitation to visit Britain, will not be denied, if we consider not only the vast numbers of people mentioned by Cæsar, and the new settlements that were daily made by the Romans, after their first success under Claudius; but, also, the particular inducements he might have at Rome to come hither, from Pomponia Græcina, and Claudia Ruffino, both christians, and probably converted by himself. These are supposed to be of the saints that were in Cæsar's household. However, we learn from Tacitus, that Pomponia was a christian; and it is more than probable that not only Claudia, but Pudens, her husband, are mentioned by St. Paul.—(2d Tim. 4, 21.) That these two christian ladies would excite the Apostle to come over into this island to preach the Gospel, we have reason to believe, because one of them was wife to Aulus Plautius, the first Roman governor of Britain, and the other a Briton born, celebrated by Martial for her admirable beauty and learning.*

* The learned Archbishop Usher states, that Claudia was the daughter of Caractacus. It follows, says Mr. Hughes, that Claudia was the first native Briton who embraced Christianity; that by her

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'This account of the first planting of a Christian Church in Britain, even by St. Paul himself, appears very probable.'—(*Wood's Parish Church*, p. 60.) "In addition to this, we have the testimony of two curious British Records, from which we may in a great measure ascertain the exact period" of St. Paul's journey to Britain. Gildas, our most ancient historian, says, that the Gospel was preached there in the interval of some public disaster just preceding it, supposed to be the defeat of Caractacus, and that of Boadicea. One occurred A. D. 51, the other in 61; within that period St. Paul was sent prisoner to Rome (according to Eusebius, in 56); and Bran, the father of Caractacus, with his family, were detained there as hostages after the defeat. The British Triads, a very ancient and well authenticated document, says, that the father of Caractacus went to Rome with others of his family, as hostages for his son. . That he remained there seven years, and on his return brought the knowledge of Christianity from Rome, from which circumstance he acquired the name of Fendigaid, or the blessed.* The family of Caractacus go to Rome in fifty one, and remain there seven years. St. Paul goes in fifty six, and remains two years;—the imprisonment of both terminates at the same period. Now is it not highly *credible* that the Apostle would take advantage of the return of the royal captives to their native country, as affording a most favourable opportunity for introducing the Gospel into Britain?"—(*Coster's Inquiry*, p. 29.) The character of St. Paul being known, his zeal for the cause of Christ, and his love for his master, place this matter beyond conjecture, and make it more than probable that he did at this time visit Britain. But "we have the decisive testimony of Eusebius and Theodoret, that Christianity was introduced into Britain in the first century, and that the Britons were converted to christianity by the *Apostles*. Irenæus, a more ancient authority than either, speaks of Churches established by the *Apostles*, and their disciples, among the Celtic nations, of which Britain was one. It will not be difficult to ascertain that it was St. Paul who visited Britain. Clemens

means the rest of her family were converted; and that these, in company with certain other disciples of St. Paul, were the instruments of planting the *Tree of Life* in Britain.

* This also is stated to be an historical fact by Welsh authors of good credit. It is further stated that Bran did not return to Britain alone; but some *Christian Israelites* are said to have accompanied him.

Romanus, Theodoret, and Jerome, relate, that after his first imprisonment at Rome, St. Paul preached the Gospel in the *western parts*; that he brought salvation to the *islands that lie in the ocean*; and that in preaching the Gospel he went to the *utmost bounds of the West*. Now Plutarch, Eusebius, Nicephorus, Catullus, and Theodoret, say, that the British Isles were always designated by those terms, *West, Islands that lie in the ocean, The utmost bounds of the West*. When therefore, St. Paul's cotemporary and fellow-labourer, Clement, says that St. Paul went to the *utmost bounds of the West*, we do not conjecture, but are morally *sure* that he meant Britain, not only because it was so designated, but because without going thither, he could not have gone to the utmost bounds of the West." "In addition to this, Usher has fully proved that St. Paul was accompanied by Philip and Aristobulus, who is mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans; and that St. Paul appointed the latter first Bishop of the British Church, giving him the same commission which he gave to Timothy and Titus—"to put in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city."—(*Coster's Inquiry*, p. 23.) In the year A. D. 314, at least three of the British bishops were present at the council of Arles; the decrees of that council having been signed by Eborius, bishop of York, *Restitutulus*, bishop of London, and *Adelphiuss*, bishop of Colchester. Upon this fact, bishop Stillingfleet remarks that it was customary "to send but one or two (bishops) out of a province where they were most numerous," to attend a council. And that these Churches were acknowledged to be Apostolical, is plain from the fact that the British bishops were admitted to a seat; for according to Tertullian, the Apostolical character of a Church depended upon its being able to trace the "succession of its bishops from the Apostles." "It was not until A. D. 596, that Augustine was sent into Britain by Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome." "Augustine endeavoured to persuade them (the British bishops) to take him by the hand to make one communion, and to assist him in preaching to the unconverted Saxons. But neither his argument, entreaties, or reprimands could prevail upon them. The articles insisted on by Augustine, were, 'that they should keep Easter and administer baptism according to the usages of the Roman Church, and own the Pope's authority.' They replied, that they 'could yield none of these points, and particularly as to the Pope's authority.' What their sense was upon that article, appears by the Abbot Dinot's answer, who spoke the opinions of the rest. The following is the

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substance of the answer :—"That the British Churches owe the deference of brotherly kindness and charity to the Church of God, and to the Pope of Rome, and to all christians. But *other obedience* than this they did not know to be due to him whom they call Pope. And for their parts, they were under the jurisdiction of the bishop of Caerleon upon Usk, who, under God, was their spiritual overseer and director." At this conference there were present no less than *seven* British bishops, together with a number of their clergy."—(*The Old Paths*, by Rev. G. Boyd, p. 40.) You see, then, Sir, that I was not bold without good cause, and that we can advance sufficient proof to satisfy the candid mind, that the Church of Christ was planted in England by St. Paul. You say, or rather Mosheim says it for you—"The Britons also are willing to believe, upon the authority of Bede, that in the 2nd century their king, Lucius, addressed himself to Eleutherus, the Roman pontiff, for doctors to instruct him in the christian religion." Now, Sir, the Britons are willing to believe no such thing; that is, those who are acquainted with the history of the Church, for a British writer, when mentioning this statement of Bede's, says, "It is singular, that neither Ireneus, Tertullian, Eusebius, Jerome, Sulpitius, Severus, Theodoret, Prosper, Orosius, nor Cassiodorus, tho' learned and inquisitive men, who have reported what they knew concerning the propagation of the christian religion; nor even Gildas, though a Briton, who wrote in the sixth century, nor probably any other author, before the eighth century, should mention this circumstance! And the writers who have copied from Bede, differ very much as to the time of his conversion; the Burton annals placing it A. D., 137, being the last year of the Emperor Adrian, and John Harding reckons it to be in the year 190, in the reign of Commodus—a distance of fifty-three years! Neither do they agree as to the person by whom he was converted, nor as to the place where he reigned, whether in the North or South parts of the island. The truth seems to be this, says Dr. Adam Clarke, that although Christianity was introduced into Britain *long before the time of Lucius*, yet he, knowing the christian religion, and finding the means of propagating it in his own district were very inadequate, might send to Eleutherus for additional help; and from this the zealous Romanist might take occasion to say, that king Lucius was converted by Roman missionaries."—(*Woods' Parish Church*, p. 66.) The Britons do, however, believe, whatever Mosheim's *opinion* may be, that long before the time of Lucius, even in the days

of the Apostles, and by the Apostle Paul, the Gospel was introduced into England. "I assert, say you, without fear of successful contradiction, that previous to the Reformation the Church in England was to all intents and purposes an integral part of the Church of Rome." I smile at your fearless assertion, and feel assured that you would not have made it, had you been better acquainted with the history of the Church. The quotation which I have just made from Dr. Boyd testifies against you, and shews that the British bishops *resisted* the power of the Pope. The British Church was then (A. D., 596,) independent, and consequently could not be an integral part of the Church of Rome. In the beginning of the fifth century, Jerome gives his testimony to the independence of the British Church, and shews that salvation could be found within her pale. "The Courts of Heaven, he says, are as open from Britain as from Jerusalem;" again, "all the barbarous nations of Gaul and Britain adore *one* Christ, and follow *one* rule of faith. Wheresoever a bishop is, whether at Rome or at Eugubium, at Constantinople, or at Rhegium, at Alexandria, or at Tani, he has the same merit and the same priesthood, neither the power of riches, nor the humility of poverty, makes a bishop higher or lower, but they are all successors of the Apostles." That the British Church afterwards became subject to the Pope, history declares, and Protestant Episcopalians are not, I think, disposed to fly in the face of historical facts. We are now British subjects, and would, I trust, to the utmost of our power, resist and oppose the invaders of our shores. But suppose that we were compelled to become subject to a republican government, and forced to remain under that government for centuries, but at length were freed from its shackles and joyfully returned to our ancient master; would you not pity the ignorance of that individual who would fearlessly assert that we were always republicans? I leave you then, to enjoy all the pleasure which you can derive from your fearless assertion, and do not envy you. The very passage which you quote from Burnet might have given you better ideas. Does he not there speak of the Church as *subjected* to the see of Rome? How could it become *subject* to the see of Rome, if it were not in existence? If it were founded by Romanists, then he could not speak with propriety of its being *subjected* to the Roman see. Instead of saying that Cranmer is "justly" called the founder of the Church of England, please to say "*most ignorantly*," and then you will have the correct version. It is contrary to direct testimony—it is opposed to his-

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torical fact, and yet you fearlessly assert it. Cranmer the founder of a Church planted by an Apostle!! Do be more careful in future.

LETTER XII.

REV. SIR,

It is not an unusual thing for those who are *really* dissenters, to attempt to justify their conduct by raising the cry against the Church of England, and calling her members *dissenters* and *separatists* from the Church of Rome. There is something plausible in this, which would tend to mislead those who have not been better informed; but when the matter is set forth in its *true light*, it will clearly be seen, that the divines of the English Church, were fully justified in the course which they pursued, and the candid and intelligent will allow that the terms *dissenter* and *separatist*, cannot justly and with propriety be applied to the Church of England. "Can you not reform without annihilating? Can you not correct abuses without destroying the thing abused? If the Bible were now to be printed with numerous corruptions of the received text, could not those corruptions be hereafter expunged, and the inspiration of that Bible be still maintained?"—(*Dr. Chapman*, p. 72.) It is the glory of the Church of England that she was enabled, by the help of God, to break the Romish chains which bound her, and cast them at her feet. But while every effort was made, and we have reason to bless God, successfully made, to cast off *error* and *superstition*, the utmost care was used that nothing *novel* might be introduced, but that all things should be restored to Apostolic and primitive purity. The memorable declaration of Ridley, one of the principal reformers, should ever be remembered,—"*In those matters I am so fearful that I dare not speak further, yea almost none otherwise than the very text (of Scripture) doth, as it were, lead me by the hand.*" And again, "*To dissent from the Fathers without warrant of God's word, I cannot think it any Godly wisdom.*" The Bible then was the guide, and the ancient Fathers the helps of the church in this holy work. She threw off the Romish yoke, and returned to her former state as an independent church. She restored the primitive purity of doctrine, and rejected the errors of the Romish church, while she retained

that government and discipline which she knew to be apostolic. Thus she became in all essential points, the same as she was in the earliest ages of christianity. This was illustrated in a simple, yet distinct manner, by a Churchman. A Roman priest inquired of him, and I regret to say some of our dissenting brethren, very ignorantly, make the same inquiry of us, "Where," says the priest, "was your Church before the Reformation?" "Where," replied the Churchman, "was your face before it was washed?" The face was the same face after it was washed as before. So the Church of England was the same church after being cleansed from superstition and error as it originally was. The wheat was separated from the chaff—the gold from the dross—the former was retained, the latter rejected. And do you condemn the church for doing this, and call her members dissenters and separatists? The charge is unfair and unjust. Your prejudice and party zeal have led you to side with the enemies of primitive purity, against a church whose doctrines you tell us you revere and esteem—strangely inconsistent this. You pass a high and merited encomium upon the Church, and yet reproach her as being a dissenter and separatist, and that too from a Church whose doctrines and practices you would wish us to believe you view with feelings of deep toned horror; this does not come well from a follower of Wesley; this looks like betraying the Church with a kiss. The primitive Church was the pattern of our great and pious reformers, and must continue to be *our* standard. The Church of Rome *departed* from her original and primitive purity. The Church of England has left the errors of Rome and *returned* to primitive doctrine and practice. The Romish Church then is a *dissenter* and *separatist* from the Apostolic and primitive Church, and the Wesleyans and others are dissenters from the divine *government* and *discipline* of the primitive Church. The Reformers of the Church had not the wish, neither did they form new doctrines, or set up a new Church; this is abundantly proved by Dr. Hook, in his sermon entitled "A Call to Union," from which the following is selected, "No view can be more *erroneous* than that which would regard the English reformers as men who, having devised a peculiar system of theology, were determined to supplant the established system, that they might put their own in its place. Their object was simple, intelligible and practical; it was to correct abuses in the *existing* Catholic Church, which had come down to them from their ancestors, and of which they were themselves the bishops and spiritual pastors.

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Those abuses,—deviations from the real principles of the Church,—were gradually discovered, and as from time to time they were brought to light, it was the endeavour of our Reformers gradually, and as opportunity occurred, to supply a remedy *by regular and canonical means*. From the commencement to the conclusion of their holy work, they indignantly repudiated the idea of their wish to overturn one Church and to establish *another*; a charge continually brought against them by *the advocates of Popery*. For example, in the reign of Henry VIII. it was enacted, that neither the king, his successors, nor his subjects, should apply to the bishop of Rome for any dispensation, faculty, or delegacy. This was the first blow at the papal usurpation in this country; but, anticipating the kind of attack that would be made by the partisans of Rome, and to prevent misconstruction and misrepresentation, it is expressly provided that nothing in this act shall be interpreted, as if the king and his subjects intended to decline or vary from the congregation of Christ's Church in any thing concerning the very articles of the *Catholic* faith in Christendom, or in any other things declared by holy Scripture and the word of God, necessary for their salvation.”—(*Collier, Ec. Hist.* ii. 84.) “Tonstall, in his letter to cardinal Pole, explains very clearly the intention which at this period of the Reformation existed. ‘To the charge,’ he says, ‘of the king’s departing from the *Catholic* communion, his highness is much injured by the imputation; for it has all along been his practice to adhere to the unity of the *Catholic* Church, to maintain the ancient doctrine, and to conform to the worship and ecclesiastical government of the rest of Christendom. ‘It is true,’ he continues, ‘that he has rescued the English Church from the encroachments of the court of Rome, but if this be singularity, he deserves commendation, for the king has only reduced matters to their *original* state, and helped the English Church to her *ancient* freedom.’—(*Ibid.* p. 136.) In the spring of 1543, the act for the advancement of true religion, and the abolishment of the contrary, declared it to be expedient to ‘ordain and establish a certain form of pure and sincere teaching, agreeably to God’s word, and the true doctrine of the *Catholic and Apostolic Church*.’—(*Jenkin’s Cranmer*, i. 36.) “We have heard already, the declaration of one Sovereign at the commencement of our Reformation, that it was not intended to set up a new religion, but merely to correct abuses in the Church, and precisely the same assertion was made at its completion by Queen Elizabeth. In her reply to the Roman

Catholic princes she proclaimed, 'that there was no new faith propagated in England; no religion set up but that which was commanded by our Saviour, *practiced by the primitive Church, and approved by the Fathers of the best antiquity.*'—(Coll. ii. 436.) Moreover, the very Convocation of 1571, which originally enjoined subscription to the thirty nine articles, confirmed at the same time the principle of the English Reformation, by decreeing that nothing should be taught as an article of faith except what is supported by the authority of Scripture and catholic tradition, (Can. de Concionatoribus. Wilkins Concilia, iv. 267,) which principle is again authoritatively proclaimed in our thirtieth canon, wherein it is affirmed that "it was not the purpose of the Church of England to forsake or ~~reject~~ the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, or any such like Churches, in all things they held and practised, and that therefore it doth with reverence retain those ceremonies which do neither endamage the Church of God, or offend the minds of sober men; and only departed from them in those particular points wherein they were fallen both from themselves in their ancient integrity, and from the Apostolical Churches which were their first founders."—(Canon 30.) It would be an easy matter to multiply proof on this point, but the impartial examiner will be satisfied with what has already been advanced. To plead that the Episcopal Government is essential to the existence of a true Church, and that an uninterrupted succession of bishops from the Apostles is necessary to give validity to the christian ministry, is right and commendable; but the Church of England maintains, that pure and Scriptural doctrine is also necessary, which Scriptural doctrine you allow she holds. You have done her an act of injustice then, in attempting to place her upon an equality with the Church of Rome. You pass over what you choose to term the opinions of Le Clerk and Grotius, without any opposing testimony, and advance the opinions of others, beginning with Cranmer, of whose early opinions bishop Burnet thus writes,—“In Cranmer's papers some singular opinions about the nature of ecclesiastical offices will be found; but as they are delivered by him with all possible modesty, so they are not established as the doctrine of the Church, but laid aside as particular conceits of his own; and it seems that *afterwards he changed his opinion.* For he subscribed the book that was soon after set out, which is *directly contrary* to those *opinions* set down in those papers.—(Hist. of Ref., vol. 2., p. 128.) He also tells us that Cranmer in his Catechism, compiled in 1548, “fully owns

the *divine institution* of bishops and priests." In Dr. Bowden's excellent letters you will see more respecting Cranmer; to these I refer you.

I will not contend with the reformed divines as to the power of a *rightly* constituted church. You tell us Archbishop Whitgift declares, "that no form of church government is by the Scripture presented or commanded to the Church of God." Why then do you say that Episcopacy is unscriptural, and the government of the Church by presbyters is Scriptural? If the Scriptures point out no form, whence do you derive your information? There is something exceedingly unfair and ungenerous on the part of our opponents, to quote a line or two from an author, and from these to draw an inference directly at variance with the author's real opinions. Dr. Hobart's remarks on Church government are so judicious that I quote them for your information. "Episcopalians do not contend that in an *extensive* and *unqualified* sense there is any form of Church government of *divine right*. Church government is often applied by Episcopal writers, in a *confined* sense, to the *orders of the ministry*, and in this *confined* signification Episcopal government is of divine right. But in a more *extensive* sense, Church government includes the particular organization by which ecclesiastical *power* is exercised, and discipline administered; and the rights and ceremonies by which public worship is conducted. In this *extensive* signification, Episcopalians maintain, that there is no precise form of Church government of divine right. The organization of Ecclesiastical authority, the forms of discipline, the rites and ceremonies of public worship, they maintain are not laid down in Scripture; and, therefore, by common consent and authority, may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended or otherwise disposed of, as may seem most convenient for the *edification of the people*.* The single point for which they contend is, that *Episcopacy* was instituted by Christ and his Apostles; that the three grades of ministers, *bishops, priests and deacons*, with their appropriate powers, are of "*divine and Apostolical institution*."—(p. 130.) You will now not mistake archbishop Whitgift's declaration, and his own words will shew that he does not identify the government of the Church with its ministry. In a letter to Bera he observes, "We make no doubt but that the Episcopal degree which we bear is an institution Apostolical and divine;

* Preface to the Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

and so hath always been held by a continual course of times from the *Apostles* to this very age of ours." And what *Aaron* was to his *sons* and to the *Levites*, this the *bishops* were to the *priests* and *deacons*; and so esteemed of the *Fathers* to be by divine institution.—(*Strype's Life of Whitgift*, p. 460.) The views of Hooker and other divines were precisely the same. Hooker declares, "It was the general received opinion of the ancient christian world, that the outward being of a Church, consisted in the having of a bishop." "That so the ancient Fathers did think of *Episcopal* regimen; that they held this order as a thing received from the *blessed Apostles themselves*, and authorised even from heaven, we may, perhaps, more easily prove, than obtain that they all shall grant it who see it proved." "And shall we think that James was made bishop of Jerusalem, Evodius bishop of the Church of Antioch, the angels in the Churches of Asia, bishops; that bishops everywhere were appointed to take away factions, contentions, and schisms, without some like direction and instigation of the Holy Ghost? Wherefore let us not fear to be herein bold and peremptory, that if any thing in the Church's government, surely the *first institution of bishops* was from heaven, was even of God: the Holy Ghost was the author of it."—(*Hooker's Ec. Polit.*, book vii., sect. 5.) Bishop Burnet says, "Christ appointed a succession of pastors in different ranks, to be continued in his Church for the work of the Gospel, and that as the Apostles settled the Churches, they appointed different orders of bishops, priests, and deacons."—(*Exposition of 39 Articles*, p. 284.) And again, he says, "Whereas by divine institution, all bishops were equal, both in order and jurisdiction," (Preface to *Vind. Ord. Ch. of England*.) You seem to have been led astray by depending too much upon Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, a work which he afterwards regretted he ever wrote. As, however, you appear to evince a partiality for his writings, I would recommend a careful perusal of his *Unreasonableness of Separation*, a work of which his better judgment approved. I do not think it necessary to notice further the individual opinions of the authors you quote. There is one remark, however, which I cannot pass over. Alluding to these divines, you say, "It is evident that the divine institution of *Episcopacy* formed no portion of their belief." Now, Sir, the quotations I have given from Cranmer, Whitgift, Hooker and Burnet, prove directly the reverse of your assertion. Another thing is plain also, that while you recommend me to become more conversant with the writings of these eminent men, you have yet

yourself to give them a careful and attentive perusal. I feel assured that I am at liberty to receive or reject the *opinions* of men, however eminent they may be, just in proportion to the support given to their opinions by the word of God, and by accredited testimony. Taking then the Scriptures as my guide, while I say not a word about *annulling* the baptisms performed by our dissenting brethren, I contend that they have not a *right* to administer that sacrament; and that neither the word of God nor the primitive Fathers bear them out in assuming that right. In your postscript you give a quotation from a bishop Croft, of whom I confess I had never heard till you brought him to notice in defence of your cause. I am indebted to Dr. Bowden for all that I can say of him. "All that I know about him," says the doctor, "is contained in a prefatory discourse to an examination of Burnet's Exposition of the thirty nine Articles. The author says, 'there was a pamphlet in King Charles the Second's reign, called *Naked Truth*, that made a great deal of noise for a while, because it was supposed to be written by a bishop, with whose station and character the scope and design of it did very ill agree; which was to undermine the Church, throw down its walls, and lay all open. What was principally aimed at, and zealously contended for, was liberty of thought and opinion; scarcely allowing it to be fit to tie men up to any sort of doctrine by creeds or subscriptions; much less to confine men to any particular constitution, be it that of Episcopacy, or any other whatever.' " "Whatever prospect the author of that book might have at the time he published it, the opposition which the project of a *comprehension*, scored out in it, met with at that time, quashed all hopes of it during that reign." It appears from this account, says the doctor, that Croft was a man of very *comprehensive* principles, an enemy to all creeds and subscriptions, and disposed to let into the Church men of all principles, both as to doctrine and government. If *doctrine* was not regarded by such a man, certainly *government* would not be. He was answered, I find, by bishop Burnet, and some others.—(p. 244, vol. 1.) You must be badly off when you seek for support from such a quarter. There are a few things in the quotation with which you conclude your letter, to which I shall briefly reply. As to Timothy's ordination by presbyters, enough has been said to show that this opinion is incorrect. That Paul was not ordained by presbyters, I suppose his own testimony will satisfy you. Paul, an Apostle, not of men, neither *by* man, but *by* Jesus Christ, and God the Father.—(Gal. 1, 1.)

"Paul and Barnabas were separated," says Mr. Wesley, "for the work to which they were called. *This was not ordaining them*; it was only inducting them to the province for which our Lord had appointed them."—(*Watson's Life*, note, p. 296.) "The power of ordination which the bishops exercise in this kingdom," you say, "is derived entirely and only from the civil magistrate." You ought to know, Sir, that between the powers of a bishop's office, and the exercise of those powers, there is a manifest distinction. The reigning sovereign may deprive him of his jurisdiction, while he still retains his Episcopal functions. At the time of the Reformation, a clear distinction was made between the *temporal* and *spiritual* powers of the bishops,—the former they derive from the state, the latter from Christ himself. At the Revolution of 1688, when James II. abdicated the throne, and William III. became Sovereign of England, there were, amongst others, some worthy bishops and clergy of the Church of England, who conscientiously refused to take the oath of allegiance to William, because they still considered James as the lawful Sovereign. They were, in consequence, ejected from their preferments, deprived of their livings, and were not allowed the *public exercise* of their functions. But it is well known that these bishops did not, by this act, cease to be bishops of the Church, for they consecrated others, and through them the Episcopal succession has been continued in Scotland. Other cases might be adduced if it were necessary. To say then, "that if Episcopal ordination be necessary to constitute a valid minister, it does not seem to be enjoined by the Church of England," because by the law of the land the power of ordination is derived from the civil magistrate, is absurd. The civil magistrate has nothing to do with the ordination itself,—that is the duty of the bishop, and can be performed by none other. Deprive the Church of Episcopal ordination, and the whole constitution of the Church would be completely and entirely changed. "It was the general received opinion of the ancient christian world," says Hooker, as I have already stated, "that *the outward being of a Church*, consisted in the having of a bishop." The Church of England acknowledges none as valid ministers but those who have received Episcopal ordination. And as she neither recognizes nor acknowledges any other, *she must enjoin Episcopal ordination*. "It is a well known fact," you assert, "that presbyters in the Church of Alexandria ordained even their bishops for more than two hundred years." I observe, Sir, that very frequently you content yourself with making

assertions without producing a single testimony in proof of what you say, and it must be received and be true because Mr. M'Leod says so. I do not see any fairness in this method of conducting a controversy. I deny the correctness of the assertion. Not one writer of the first five centuries gives testimony in your favour. Jerome is directly against you; speaking of the bishop of Alexandria, he says, "he was *chosen* by them (the presbyters) out of their own body." And in the next sentence adds, "What does a bishop which a presbyter may not do, *excepting ordination*." Origen and Clemens, presbyters of the Church of Alexandria, who lived almost one hundred and fifty years before Jerome, say nothing in favour of your assertion. "Bishop Pearson, in his vindication of the Epistles of Ignatius, quotes several authors, who particularly mention that the bishop of Alexandria was always ordained, not by presbyters, but by a bishop. Simeon Metaphrastes says of St. Mark, that "he ordained as his successor, Anianus, bishop of Alexandria, and gave to other Churches, bishops, presbyters, and deacons." Nicephorus Callistus says, (speaking of St. Mark) that "he laboured in Cyrene and Pentapolis, and having founded Churches, he gave them clergy and bishops," &c. The Arabian Martyrology of the Melchites says, "he adorned the Churches of Christ, constituting for them bishops and inferior priests." Severus, in his life of the Alexandrian patriarchs, records, that "St. Mark proceeded to Pentapolis, remaining there two years, preaching, and ordaining bishops, presbyters and deacons in all its provinces." Bishop Pearson also observes, that Rhabanus Maurus, Alfrec, Archbishop of Canterbury, Notkerus, and Ordericus Vitalis, give the same account that Simeon Metaphrastes does."—(*Dr. Bowden*, vol. 1, p. 12.) You have no proof worthy of credit to advance. Eutyechius, from whom you probably derive your information, lived in the tenth century, and is grossly incorrect in many of the statements which he has made, contradicting the best writers of antiquity. The custom is contrary to that of all other Churches, which you may learn by consulting Bowden and Slater. It is unreasonable that presbyters should ordain an order superior to themselves,—the less constituting the greater. And yet this *supposed* practice of the single Church at Alexandria, you receive as a support to your cause, while you reject the concurrent testimony of the Fathers, and the decrees of councils, which testify against the validity of presbyter ordination,—this is truly inconsistent. With respect to ordination by "popish bishops," as you appear to have

such a horrible dread of them, I wonder that you do not reject the Bible because it was handed down to us *through* the Romish Church. If the "popish bishops" have a valid ordination, their Episcopal acts are valid. Although our dissenting brethren may shudder at the idea, and recoil with horror at the thought, yet their ministerial succession, of whatever kind it be, is derived *through* the Church of Rome. The Church of England, however, is not guilty of that weakness to reject Episcopacy, which she feels assured is Scriptural, merely because, when deprived of her independence, the "succession" was continued to her *through* "popish bishops."

LETTER XIII.

REV'D. SIR,

YOUR letter relating to Mr. Wesley, now claims my attention; and I doubt not but that the remarks made by me respecting him, will be found upon due examination to be perfectly correct. To offend, or wound the feelings of any member of the Methodist society, was not my object or desire, in making those remarks. I stated what I believed, and still believe to be facts; they who read this letter may decide the point. I shall endeavour to be as brief as the merits of the case will allow, you will therefore, Sir, pardon me for passing by your personal allusions and harsh expressions, as they deserve;—in silence. You think that Southey was a partial writer and therefore object to him, for a similar reason would I in a great measure object to the author you recommend. Any person who reads Watson's life of Wesley, may see that he is partial—may see his leaning towards John in preference to Charles Wesley, probably because the latter was more desirous of avoiding irregularity, and keeping close to the Church. But even in this work, which I would take to be professedly written to justify Mr. Wesley's acts *indiscriminately*, and to screen those of them which were unauthorized, from censure, a little of which they unquestionably deserved,—even in this work we can see something of his difficulties, and the ambition of those about him. He mentions one of the preachers being "suspended till he came to a better mind,"—he had "fallen under Mr. Wesley's displeasure", but "was supported by many" of the preachers.—"A stormy conference was anti-

cipated." "Wesley was determined to heal the breach by concession."—(*Watson*, page 270.) These passages I only quote to shew that Wesley had, what I should suppose no reasonable man would doubt, difficulties to contend with in regulating and governing his infant society. There can be then, Sir, nothing very offensive in the word "difficulty," which I used in my private communication. But his difficulty connected with inconsistent conduct, may further be seen. Wesley thought it: "a sin" for his preachers to administer the sacraments in particular places, "*because it would be injurious to the work of God, and so, contrary to his word and will.*"—(*Watson*, p. 293.) Now, Sir, what clergyman, deriving his authority from those to whom it was given of God, and keeping in close communion with the Church of God—what clergyman, *rightly* ordained, would think that by administering the sacraments to worthy recipients, he was "acting contrary to the word and will of God"—that he was committing "a sin"? I know of none. There is something so grossly inconsistent in this, that we must leave it to some abler advocate of Wesley's acts than *Watson* has proved himself to be, to clear up the difficulty. If they had authority by Wesley's ordination, to administer the sacraments, then it could not be "a sin" on the part of the preachers to administer them. It is an unheard of thing, except in Wesley's time, that a person should by laying on of hands have authority to administer the sacraments in one place, and because that it would be contrary to the word and will of God, peremptorily forbidden to do so in another. Powers conveyed by ordination cannot be taken away by the caprice of the ordainer; he cannot give them one day and take them away the next, merely at his own discretion—this is exercising more authority, if I mistake not, than ever any pope pretended to possess. It cannot be "a sin" at one time to administer the sacraments, and a Godly and christian act at another. It cannot be contrary to the word and will of God one day, and agreeable to his word and will the next; this then is inconsistent, and say what you please, there are difficulties here, difficulties arising out of the danger of separation which Wesley foresaw and dreaded. But, Sir, if Wesley believed it was "a sin", and contrary to the word and will of God", for his preachers to administer the sacraments when clergymen of the Church were at hand to perform these solemn duties, what has made it less sinful in the present day? Has the evil of separation taken away the sin, and made it agreeable to the word and will of God? This

would certainly make the word of God, which strongly exhorts to unity, encourage discord and disunion. If it were sinful then, and I have no doubt of it, it must still be sinful, and must continue to be so, till by a union the guilt of an unjustifiable separation is removed. Again, if Mr. Wesley believed that bishops and presbyters were but one order, why did he attempt to ordain Dr. Coke?—they were both presbyters or priests in the Church of England, and as (according to Wesley's opinion,) a presbyter is a bishop, they were both bishops—yet Wesley ordains Dr. Coke for the exercise of enlarged powers—then he considered this ordination necessary. But was Mr. Wesley, a presbyter, ordained by any minister for the exercise of these enlarged powers? No.—Then he took upon himself to exercise these without any authority. If it were necessary for Dr. Coke to receive another ordination, that he might exercise superior powers, it was equally so for Mr. Wesley; but not having received that ordination he had not the accompanying powers, and of course could not convey that authority to another, which he did not himself possess, or in other words, he not being a bishop could not invest another with episcopal power. Was he not here also inconsistent? Dr. Coke notices this transaction in his letter; the Dr. having *assumed* the name of bishop after his arrival in America, Wesley wrote to Mr. Asbury, the colleague of Dr. Coke, the following letter, which I give upon the authority of Dr. Chapman. "In one point, my dear brother, I am a little afraid both the Dr. and you differ from me. I study to be little, you study to be great; I creep, you strut along. I found a school, you a college. Nay, and call it after your own names! O beware! Do not seek to be something! Let me be nothing, and Christ be all in all. One instance of this your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you suffer yourself to be called a bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought. Men may call me a knave, or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me a bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! Let the Presbyterians do what they please, but let the Methodists know their calling better." Dr. Chapman adds, "after the recital of language alike perspicuous and emphatic, I ask you, if it can be seriously believed, that its reverend author ever imagined himself authorized, or that he ever designed, to consecrate any man to the episcopal office and dignity? It is impossible. Or, if it be possible, it is at least equally

rational to believe that black is white, and white black.—
 'There is indeed a mystery hanging over this business which
 a divine of the same Church has recently attempted to un-
 fold. But my limits as well as my inclinations, forbid me
 to be more explicit.'—(p. 86.) Wesley was also inconsis-
 tent in another point, and shewed that he was surrounded by
 difficulties. His earnest and urgent cry was, that the people
 under his charge should avoid separation from the Church,
 and yet in direct opposition to the rules and discipline of the
 Church of which he was a member, he ordained persons
 who assisted in hastening on the separation. Even the cau-
 tious and guarded Watson calls this an anomaly. Mr. Wat-
 son speaks of some of the preachers who "began to wish a
 little larger share in the government." Mr. C. Wesley hesi-
 tated not to charge these preachers with "ambition", when
 he observed in them a desire to encourage separation from
 the Church. But Mr. Watson in his endeavour to free the
 latter from blame, accuses the former of a want of candor.
 You say that Mr. Wesley was a man of talent and learning,
 and I have no wish to contradict this assertion; but this only
 goes to prove that he was willing, or in other words was not
 displeased to be convinced that he, as a presbyter, had the
 authority exclusively belonging to bishops. On a subject so
 important as this, which tended to disturb and destroy the
 unity of the Church, and subvert her divine government and
 discipline, one would suppose that a man like Wesley would
 have spent much time,—would have examined it deeply,
 closely, minutely—that having talent, and piety, and abundant
 opportunity, he would have felt it his duty to turn over the
 pages of the early writers, and judge for himself as to the
 correctness of the statements made by Sir Peter King; and
 further, that in a work so important in its consequences and
 results, he would have implored the counsel and guidance of
 Him who cannot err. But if we may judge from his own
 account of the matter, he did not thus act, "I set out from
 Bristol—*on the road* I read over Lord King's account of the
 primitive church; in spite of the vehement prejudice of my
 education (how far this prejudice was removed by circum-
 stances, he does not tell us,) I was ready to believe that this
 was a fair and impartial draught." Now what a place to
 read such a work, *on the public road*, where there was every
 thing to distract him and draw off his attention! This work
 has been completely refuted by Slater, in his "Original
 Draught of the Primitive Church," who exposes the errors,
 points out the omissions, misstatements and incorrect trans-

lations, and we may believe convinced Lord King, who never attempted a reply, but shortly after the publication of Mr. Slater's work, presented him to a lucrative benefice which was at his disposal. If Wesley had taken the trouble to examine ancient writers for himself, being a man of learning and talent, he probably would have detected the error, and would not have been led astray. Again, by reading Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*, (he was not a bishop when he wrote that work, being only 24 years of age,) he (Wesley) "was made heartily ashamed of his former opinions." I think, says he, that Stillingfleet has *unanswerably* proved that neither Christ, nor his apostles, prescribe any particular form of Church government."—Now Stillingfleet, when he had gained more knowledge and more experience, shewed the unreasonableness of his former arguments, and thus *proved that they were not unanswerable*. Mr. Wesley, perhaps, if he had been so disposed, might have done the same. I still continue then to think, that from the circumstances in which he was placed, he had a wish to be persuaded that he possessed the authority which bishops claim. That Wesley, as a presbyter, had not the authority which he arrogated to himself, and therefore had no right to ordain, has been, I think, sufficiently shewn. His ordinations, therefore, are not valid, if we value the Scriptures and regard the fathers. Suppose, Sir, that as a presbyter of the Church of England, I took upon myself to ordain a certain number of individuals, would the ordination be valid? Certainly not—the act would be unjustifiable and presumptuous, and would justly deserve to be condemned, because I have never been invested with the right to ordain. But I hold the same office in the Church which Wesley did, and of course the same privileges which belonged to him as a presbyter of the Church, I can justly claim. As therefore the act of setting apart to the ministry would be presumptuous in me, and the ordinations of such persons would be invalid—equally presumptuous was it on the part of Wesley, and his ordinations are equally invalid. If Wesley had the right to ordain, then every presbyter of the Church in his own parish can claim the same right, and then we should be in danger of having as many schisms in the Church as there are presbyters. I will now make a few extracts from a Wesleyan writer, which I think will shew that it is not Churchmen alone who are of opinion, that it was the ambition of the preachers which led them to desire to administer the sacraments. He tells us, speaking of Wesley, "that wise men are but men, and the truth is the truth."

"It were matter of wonder if a man of considerable powers, natural and acquired, having such incitements to support his own work, could not find out something in the whole scripture that might seem to make divine authority incline to his side." "The first and leading principle in the economy of Methodism, says Dr. Whitehead, was not to form the people into a separate party; but to leave every individual member of the society at full liberty to continue in his former religious connection: nay, leaving every one under a kind of *necessity of doing so, for the ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper*. (Attend to this!) But two or three of the preachers, who had acquired some influence among the people, had for some time (in 1756) been dissatisfied. As soon as these preachers had, by various acts, influenced a few persons in any society to desire to receive the Lord's Supper from them, they pleaded this circumstance as a reason why the innovation should take place; pretending they only wished to satisfy the desires of the people, and not their own *restless ambition*." "The clamour for a separation had been raised so high by a few of the preachers, that the subject was fully discussed for two or three days together, at this conference (in 1756); and Mr. Wesley observes, "My brother and I closed the conference, by a solemn declaration of our purpose, never to separate from the Church." Again, "some of our preachers who are *not ordained*, think it quite right to administer the Lord's Supper. I think it quite wrong; I verily believe it is a sin, which consequently I dare not tolerate." "I am sorry to confess that there are men among the preachers of a most violent, ungovernable spirit. These, if they find it necessary for any particular purpose, to oppose an individual, or any number of individuals, of character and influence in the society, use every method in their power, both in the pulpit and out, to make him appear to the people as bad as the devil. This line of conduct seems to have been taken from the practice of the Romish priests, who represent those whom they choose to call heretics, as guilty of every species of crime imagination can invent; and the Jesuits generally accused their most powerful opponents of heresy. The Romish Clergy call their heretics, enemies of the *Church*; these preachers call those who stand in the way of their *own schemes of ambition and power*, enemies of the work of God, "incarnate devils," &c., and from an affectation of charity, pray for them in a way which only tends to inflame the minds of the people against them, by making them appear more guilty

and to give a greater display of their own goodness, by pretending a concern for them, and for the interests of the people. (*Whitehead*, vol. 2., p. 374.) "Mr. Wesley always claimed the power or right of ordaining to the ministry; but said it was not probable that he should ever exercise it; and it is not easy to assign a reason why he should, in the eighty second year of his age, depart from a line of conduct he had hitherto strictly observed." "September 1st, 1784, Mr. Wesley consecrated a bishop and two presbyters of the new Methodist Episcopal Church in America. It was not long before three more preachers were ordained for Scotland, &c. Since the death of Mr. Wesley still further progress has been made, not only in the practice of ordaining, but in the exercise of their new functions in various societies in this kingdom. But, hitherto, this new order of things has produced the most lamentable effects, having caused contention, and kindled the flames of party zeal."—(*Dr. Whitehead's Life*, vol. ii., p. p. 415, 418.) Wesley asserted, upon the authority of Lord King, that bishops and presbyters are the same order. Upon this principle, a presbyter had as much right to ordain Mr. Wesley, as Mr. Wesley had to ordain the presbyter. Here a breach was made in the Apostolic discipline of the Church which was unjustifiable, and a wide door opened for the admission of schism and divisions; on this practice one of Mr. Wesley's preachers remarks, "I wish they had been asleep when they began this business of ordination; it is neither Episcopal nor presbyterian, but a mere hodge-podge of inconsistencies." "And his brother, Mr. Charles Wesley, exclaimed, "It was age that made the breach, not he;" and in a letter to a friend writes thus, "Lord Mansfield told me last year that ordination was separation. 'This my brother does not and will not see; or that he has renounced the principles and practice of his whole life.'" "In direct opposition to the practice of the primitive Church," says Dr. Whitehead, "the ordinations among the Methodists were performed in secret, and by arbitrary power. Mr. Wesley's Episcopal authority was a mere gratuitous assumption of power to himself, contrary to the use of every Church, ancient or modern, where the order of bishops has been admitted. There is no precedent, either in the New Testament or in Church history, that can justify his proceeding in this affair. And as Mr. Wesley had received no right to exercise Episcopal authority, either from any bishops, presbyters, or people, he certainly could not convey any right to others: his ordinations therefore are *spurious and of no validity*."

"In 1741, Mr. Wesley had separated from the Moravians, upon the following grounds. 1st.—Because their whole scheme is mystical, not Scriptural, refined in every point above what is written, immeasurably beyond the plain doctrines of the Gospel. 2d.—Because there is darkness and closeness in all their behaviour, and guile in almost all their words. 3d. Because they not only do not practice, but utterly despise and deny self denial and daily cross. 4th. Because they upon principle conform to the world, in wearing gold or costly apparel. 5th. Because they extend christian liberty in this and many other respects beyond what is warranted by holy writ. 6th. Because they are by no means zealous of good works; or at least only to their own people." Mr. Wesley thus confesses these persons to be dangerous, whose opinions he had so eagerly embraced, and of whom, writing only three years before (in 1738) from Marienbourg to his brother Samuel, he says, "God has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a Church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ," &c. "Since, therefore, he saw occasion thus suddenly to turn close friendship and attachment into apprehension and mistrust, and to renounce their society, surely we cannot be condemned for entertaining some doubt of the good tendency of his opinions, which are a scion from the same stock, and to which we have never professed agreement."—(*Pref. to Collinson's Analysis of Hooker's Ec. Pol.*, p. 35.) I have no wish to derogate from Mr. Wesley's piety or his merit, but can truly say, that I wish sincerely he had acted with more prudence and discretion. The venerable and pious Charles Simeon, who but lately has been called to his rest, has done perhaps incalculable good to the Church in encouraging and promoting, under God, genuine piety amongst the clergy and people, but in that quiet and judicious way which has led to happy, not dangerous results. Wesley, I know, did not wish a separation from the Church, but strongly protested against it. "When we forsake the Church," he said, "God will forsake us." "They that are enemies to the Church, are enemies to me. I will rather lose twenty societies than separate from the Church. You cannot be too watchful against evil speaking, or too zealous for the poor Church of England." He was a Churchman, because his conscience told him that it was his duty to remain one,—because he *dared not to be otherwise*. "Are we not dissenters?" is a question proposed by him, and thus answered—"No; we are not dissenters in the only sense which our law

acknowledged, namely, those who renounce the service of the Church. We do not, we *dare not* separate from it." In another part of his writings he grapples with the objection that had been urged by some, that, until the Methodists separated, they could not expect to be a compact united body. "It is true we cannot till then be a *compact united body*, if you mean by that expression a body distinct from all others. *And we have no desire to be.*" True it is, that "in a course of years, out of *necessity, not choice*, he slowly and warily varied from it in some points of discipline," but still not to such an extent as to make the slightest alteration in the *principle* of his attachment to the Church. When addressing the assistant preachers he says, "Warn them against calling our society the *Church*, against calling our preachers *ministers*, our houses *meeting houses*; call them plain *preaching houses* or *chapels*." In December, 1789, when death was already hovering over him, J. Wesley wrote a paper, entitled, *Further thoughts on separation from the Church*, which concludes thus, "And this (his determination of adhering to the Church) is in no way contrary to the profession which I have made above these fifty years. I never had any design of separating from the Church,—I have no such design now." Then carrying his thoughts onward beyond his own mortal pilgrimage, which he was fully aware was hastening to a close—"I do not believe the Methodists in general design it, when I am no more seen. I do, and will do, all that is in my power to prevent such an event. Nevertheless, in spite of all that I can do, many of them will separate from it, (altho'. I am apt to think, not one half, perhaps not one third of them.) These will be so bold and injudicious as to form a separate party, which, consequently, will dwindle away into a dry, dull, separate party. In flat opposition to these, I declare once more that I live and die a member of the Church of England; and that none who regard my judgment or advice will ever separate from it." "These last solemn words, says one who knew him, *were the results of long consideration and uniform conviction*. I solemnly aver that in the year 1777 or 1778, I asked him the question, "Sir, in case the Methodists should, after your death, leave the Church of England, what would you advise your friends to do? He answered immediately, I would advise them to adhere to the Church, and quit the Methodists; but, added he, that will never be necessary; for if some quit the Church, others will adhere to it, and then there will be *dissenting Methodists* and *Church Methodists*."—

(Col. Church, vol. iv., nos. 3 & 4.)* From your language one would suppose that you venerated the man, and would bow submissively to his better judgment, while at the same time your views on this point are diametrically opposed to his,—you seem to look upon separation as a blessing more desirable than union,—that it is better the Methodist connection should remain as it is, rather than unite with the Church, (see page 100, your pamphlet.) You fairly prove yourself, Sir, to be a *dissenter* from Wesleyan principles.

LETTER XIV.

REV'D. SIR,

You tell me that you cannot give credit to the sentiments which I ascribe to Dr. Coke, but consider them a fabrication by some evil disposed person. You here show yourself to be ignorant of an historical and well authenticated fact. Perhaps you will be sorry for your harsh and disrespectful language, when I tell you that the venerable and pious bishop White, has given the letter, with some prefatory remarks, and his reply, in his *Memoirs of the Church in the United States*. You surely will not be disposed to doubt his testimony. The whole may be seen by referring to his work, page 168, and the appendix, No. 21. The following are extracts from the bishop's remarks, and from Dr. Coke's letter. "In the spring

* As to my own judgment, says J. Wesley, I still believe the Episcopal form of Church government to be *Scriptural* and *Apostolic*. Mr. Charles Wesley says, "My brother (John Wesley) drew up rules for our Society, one of which was *constantly to attend the Church prayers and sacraments*." He adds, I never lost my dread of separation, or ceased to guard our Society against it. I frequently told them, 'I am your servant as long as you remain members of the Church of England, but no longer; should you ever forsake her, you renounce me.' Some of our lay-preachers very early discovered an inclination to separate, which induced my brother to publish '*Reasons against a Separation*.'—(*C. Wesley's Letter to Dr. Chandler*.) Among these *reasons* Mr. Wesley says, "Many have in our memory left the Church and formed themselves into distinct bodies. And certainly some of them from a real persuasion that they should do God more service. But have any separated and prospered? Have they been either *more holy or more useful than they were before*."

of the year 1791, the author (bishop White) received from that gentleman (Dr. Coke) a letter, containing a plan of what he considered as an union of the Methodistical Society with the Episcopal Church." "Dr. Coke's letter was answered by the author, with the reserve which seemed incumbent on one who was incompetent to decide with effect on the proposal made." "Dr. Coke read a letter which he had written to bishop Seabury, similar to that which he had written to the author ; but with the difference of his suggesting to bishop Seabury as follows. 'That although the Methodists would have confidence in any engagements which should be made by the present bishops ; yet there might in future be some, who, on the arrival of their inferior grades of preachers to a competency to the ministry, would not admit them as proposed in the letter—that to guard against the danger of this, there would be use in consecrating Mr. Asbury to the Episcopacy—and that although there would not be the same reasons in his (Dr. Coke's) case, because he was a resident of England, yet, as he should probably, while he lived, occasionally visit America, it would not be fit, considering he was Mr. Asbury's senior, that he should appear in a *lower* character than this gentleman. 'These were in substance the sentiments expressed.'" "It was evident from some circumstances which passed in conversation with Dr. Coke, that there was a degree of jealousy, if not of misunderstanding, between him and Mr. Asbury." Bishop White, when in England, entertained a desire of seeing Mr. John Wesley ; the latter, however, it would seem, was unwilling to meet him. The bishop had an interview with Mr. Charles Wesley, and conversed with him on the subject of the separation of the Methodist Societies from the communion of the Episcopal Church. "He expressed himself decidedly against the new course adopted, and gave the author a pamphlet published by his brother and himself, in the earlier part of their lives, against a secession from the Church of England ; which, he said, was at that time proposed by some. And he remarked, that the whole of the pamphlet might be considered as a censure on what had been done recently in America."

"RIGHT REV. SIR,

"Permit me to intrude a little on your time upon a subject of great importance. You, I believe, are conscious that I was brought up in the Church of England, and have been ordained a presbyter of that Church. For many years I was prejudiced, even I think to bigotry, in

favour of it ; but through a variety of causes, or incidents, to mention which would be tedious and useless, my mind was exceedingly biassed on the other side of the question. In consequence of this, I am not sure but I went further in the separation of our Church in America, than Mr. Wesley, from whom I had received my commission, did intend. He did indeed solemnly invest me, as far as he had a *right* so to do, with Episcopal authority, but did not intend, I think, that an entire separation should take place. He, being pressed by our friends on this side of the water for ministers to administer the sacraments to them, (there being very few of the clergy of the Church of England then in the States,) went further, I am sure, than he would have gone if he had foreseen some events which followed. And this I am certain of, that he is now sorry for the separation.

"But what can be done for a reunion, which I much wish for, and to accomplish which, Mr. Wesley, I have no doubt, would use his influence to the utmost ? The affection of a very considerable number of the preachers, and most of the people, is very strong towards him, notwithstanding *the excessive ill usage he received from a few*. My interest also is not small, and both his and mine would readily, and to the utmost, be used to accomplish that (to us) very desirable object, if a readiness were shewn by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church to reunite." "But there are many hindrances in the way. Can they be removed ? Our ordained ministers will not, ought not, to give up their right of administering the sacraments. I do not think that the generality of them, perhaps none of them, would refuse to submit to a re-ordination, if other hindrances were removed out of the way." "In Europe, where some steps had been taken tending to a separation, all is at an end. Mr. Wesley is a determined enemy of it, and I have lately borne an open and successful testimony against it. Shall I be favoured with a private interview with you in Philadelphia ?" "We can then enlarge on these subjects." "If you will further negotiate the business, I will explain my mind still more fully to you on the probabilities of success. In the mean time permit me, with great respect, to subscribe myself,

"Right Reverend Sir,

Your very humble Servant in Christ,
(Signed)

"THOMAS COKE."

Before we take leave of this part of our subject, it will be well to subjoin a few of the remarks made by Dr. Lyell at

the last general convention of the Church in the United States. He had been originally a methodist preacher.—“For 12 years he served in that ministry. But in the course of that time he often felt it to be his duty to look towards the Episcopal Church. It will be asked why he did not come into it at once? Because, he answers, reading on the subject of the Church did not then enter into their investigations, but every man ministered as God seemed to open the way.” Again, speaking of the continual applications which are made for orders in the Church, he says, “the applicants tell us not that they do not feel called to minister in the Gospel, but that *they feel they are destitute of a valid authority*. He says again, “there never was a time so favorable to the Church as the present, not only from her own internal prosperity, but also from the internal disquietudes which are agitating other denominations. There are scores of ministers of those denominations now ready to turn themselves towards the Church.” “By their very application they give the most indubitable proofs of their sincerity. They leave a ministry and relations which they have sustained for years. They sever themselves from near connections. They have to endure reproaches and many evils—and for what? Simply that they *may have authority* to minister in holy things.” “Within the comparatively short Episcopate of bishop Onderdonk, now about 8 years, there have been admitted into the ministry of the Church in that diocese alone, no less than forty three ministers from other denominations.” This decided preference given to the Church is mainly attributed, under God, to a candid investigation of episcopacy and the claims of the Church.—You may then be assured, Sir, that Episcopalians do not fear to have the subject thoroughly examined. You quote largely from Dr. A. Clarke. I shall endeavour to be very brief, as I do not consider it at all necessary minutely to investigate the Doctor’s opinions. What he records as facts, “as he was a man of learning and deep research,” I should be disposed to receive with a great degree of credit,—but his *opinions* with a great degree of caution. Who that understands plain English, and reads the passages which I quoted from the Doctor’s writings, would suppose that they could admit of a two-fold meaning? yet your ingenuity has been exercised to give to his plain words entirely a different meaning, and you would almost persuade yourself that you had accomplished the task. The Doctor’s plain words, you think, need *explanation*, else they would be formidable; and you think

if they will not bear the meaning which you choose to give them, then the Dr. "contradicts himself in the most palpable manner." Well, Sir, I believe you have pretty well established that point in your letter. But let us take a view of the facts which the Dr. has recorded. "Episcopacy in the Church of God is of divine appointment." "The state has its monarch, the church has its bishop." "Deacon, presbyter and bishop, existed in the apostolic church, and may therefore be considered of divine origin." "The offices which are of divine appointment, such as bishop, presbyter, and deacon, should be most religiously preserved in the Church." Now, I ask, what meaning can we attach to these unqualified expressions,—what by common consent, in the language of the present day, are we to understand by episcopacy? Nothing else but the government of the Church by bishops. And when a bishop in the Church is compared to a monarch in the state, we must suppose (if we give the author credit for common sense,) that he considered the bishop the superior officer in the Church, holding that office for life, as the monarch is the superior officer in the state, holding his office for life. Pray, Sir, would not a comparison between your chairman and the monarch of a state, be very ridiculous? And when he speaks of deacon, presbyter, and bishop, we conclude at once by his using the terms separately, that he makes a distinction between the three.—Now if this be not the Doctor's meaning, then he is an author upon whom we can never depend, because we can never learn his real opinion. The Doctor in speaking of the Church of England, calls it, "*the purest and nearest the apostolic model* in the doctrine and discipline, of all national churches." (Note on Acts, 6, 4.) In the first epistle to Timothy, he says, "we see more clearly than elsewhere what the ministers of the Gospel should be; and what is the character of the *true Church*. Bishops, priests and deacons are particularly described." Now, Sir, will not any person reading these quotations conclude, that the Doctor in the plainest language intimates, that bishops, priests, and deacons were in the *true Church*, and as we have seen, such bishops, in the Church, as could with propriety of language be compared to a monarch in the state—not temporary superintendants or chairmen? I cannot see that the words will admit of any other conclusion. As then the Doctor calls the Church of England the purest and nearest to the apostolic model in the doctrines and discipline of all national churches, and speaks of bishops, presbyters, and deacons

being in the true church, I still feel persuaded that the Dr. considered the Church of England as the true Church, not however to the exclusion of all others. This was not his opinion, nor would any Churchman be gratified if it were, when he remembers the Protestant Episcopal Church in Scotland, and in the United States, the Syrian Church, and not to mention others, the Moravian, and the Church of the Waldenses, so far as they still preserve the apostolic succession. I do not think it necessary to examine your defence of the Doctor, for it only goes to shew that he does contradict himself, and therefore his testimony in this controversy can avail nothing. I will merely notice a few of his *opinions*, and then take my leave of him. You tell us that from the Doctor's "own statements, it is certain he did not regard deacons as originally sustaining the office of a minister at all." In a note on Matt. 20th, 26th v., he calls the office of deacon "the very *lowest ecclesiastical* office." Again, "in a note on Acts 11, 22, he has the following words. "There must have been, even at this time" (in the days of the apostles,) an acknowledged superiority of some members of the Church beyond others. The apostles held the first rank, the *deacons* (probably the same as those called prophets, as being next chosen) the second; and perhaps those called evangelists, simply preachers of the truth, the *third* rank. The Doctor speaks of rank or order according to the duties performed, and the authority exercised. Then we have the deacons of the *second* order,—of the very *lowest* order—and of no order at all—and although they did not originally sustain the office of minister, yet he states that they received a commission from the apostles to preach. And in another place tells us, that he who is called to preach is called to administer all the ordinances of the Church of Christ. (See page 81 of your pamphlet.)* He considers as an ordination what is recorded in the 13 chap. of Acts, 1 2 3 v. Although St. Paul tells us that he was made an apostle by Jesus Christ—he tells us that the apostle gave to Timothy the form of sound words, he was to commit them to faithful men in the same way that they were committed to him, that the truth might be preserved in the Church, and holy men appointed *successively* to preach it—he acknowledges that these truths are still continued, and faithful men still proclaim them, and yet asks where

* Thus he makes these deacons who (according to him) are no order at all, to be equal with the *highest* order of ministers in the Church of Christ. Is not this truly absurd—palpably inconsistent?

is the uninterrupted succession? If men are appointed successively to preach there must be a succession—and if it be interrupted, how is the ministry to be preserved? Can laymen ordain to the ministry? the truth is that they who deny the uninterrupted succession, must have very low ideas of the ministry, and it will puzzle them to tell whence they derive their authority to minister in holy things. When the learned Doctor informs us that holy men were appointed *successively* to preach, and then ridicules the idea of an uninterrupted succession, he contradicts himself. I oppose to his idle assertion, and to the frivolous assertions of others, the arguments which I have advanced in favour of the succession. You are content, so far as I have seen, to oppose us on this point with unsupported assertions, denials, and ridicule. We come against you with a host of arguments which you cannot overthrow. That the Doctor's opinions are to be received with caution, the following will testify. He argues very strongly in favour of the final restoration of the brute creation to a state of happiness, and declares that "both the beneficence and justice of God are bound to make them a reparation"! He also states that the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship of Christ is absurd, anti-scriptural, highly dangerous and false. And you may remember, Sir, that they who are about to engage in the ministry in the Methodist connection, are required to declare that they do not agree with the Doctor in this opinion. You need not suppose then, that I shall be influenced by his *opinions*, whether they be for or against Episcopacy. Your unbecoming language in this letter I must pass over, as I have neither time nor inclination to notice it. You say that your cause "might be amply supported by references to the writings of many *modern* learned men."—Who attempts to dispute that? But have you many of the *ancient* learned men to support you? Will you be content to confine yourself to the Scripture, and the Fathers of the first three centuries? Another broad assertion we have in a quotation from Dr. Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History. "A bishop, during the *first* and *second* century, was a person who had the care of *one* Christian assembly, which at that time was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house." Indeed! For instance, Jerusalem, where James was bishop, having his presbyters under him, and myriads, or many tens of thousands who were believers in Christ. "At Antioch in Syria, at Joppa, Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica, Berea, Iconium, Derbe, Antioch in Pisidia, at Ludda, Saron, the number of converts is intimated by the

expressions, "a great number—great multitudes—much people."—(Parish Church, p. 52.) Tertullian, who probably wrote about A. D. 190, speaks of the Christians in his day being "so numerous as almost to constitute the *greater part of every city*."—(Ter. ad. Scap., c. 2.) Again, in his apology to the Roman magistrates he says, "We are of yesteday, yet every place is filled with us; your cities, your islands, your forts, your corporations and councils, even the armies, tribes and companies, yea, the palace, senate, and courts of justice; the temples only have we left to you. Should we go off and separate from you, you would stand amazed at your own desolation, be affrighted at your solitary state, the stagnation of your affairs, and the stupor of death which would seize your city." With the Bible in your hand, then, and the testimony of early writers, you might have discovered the unreasonableness of Dr. Mosheim's assertions, and have been saved the trouble of quoting them;—they are bold, but have been refuted. He says that "Cyprian was one of the principal authors in the change of the government of the Church," and that we may not let this pass unnoticed, we have the fingers pointing at Cyprian, as if to shame him for his ambition. Now, Ignatius flourished at least one hundred and twenty years before Cyprian, and you tell us in page 33 of your pamphlet, after endeavouring to depreciate his testimony, that the utmost it does is to shew that there *was* a distinction between bishop and presbyter in *his day*. This is wonderful indeed, that there should be a distinction between bishop and presbyter in Ignatius' time, and that Cyprian, one hundred and twenty years after, should be "one of the principal authors in effecting this change." Again, you tell us in page 87, "Here commences your divine institution of Episcopacy, in the *second* century, as admitted by Mr. Dodwell." And in the following page make Cyprian, who lived in the *third* century, to be one of the principal agents in the change! So great, Sir, is your desire to do away with the divine right of Episcopacy, that in endeavouring to effect your purpose, you seem not to care how inconsistent you appear. Such conduct should shame our opponents, and serve to awaken suspicion as to the real merits of their cause. Allow me to tell you, Sir, that you did not take time to understand what Mr. Dodwell says upon this subject. Mosheim, as quoted by you, tells us that "by degrees (bishops) divested even the presbyters of their ancient privileges and their primitive authority." In what ancient history does he find this. Why did he not quote largely from early writers, the remonstrances

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of these injured presbyters? For the best of reasons, because they are not to be found. No cause for remonstrance existed. The Apostles, in accordance with their Master's will, established the government of the Church, and the presbyters out of reverence and respect for the authority of these inspired men, submitted to it as being divine. The primitive Church was disordered, and a schism was occasioned between the Eastern and Western Churches, because of the controversy respecting the day on which the festival of Easter should be kept. Is it credible then, that a circumstance so comparatively trifling, should occasion a tumult in the Church, should cause a schism, and be carefully and particularly recorded; and yet so important a circumstance as a complete change in the government of the Church should take place, the presbyters one and all instantly agree to it, and that it should not be considered worthy of record. Anxious as you are to establish your theory, you cannot believe that such a change could be effected without a very great struggle, you cannot believe that it would be passed over in silence. As we have no record of it then in the early writers, such a change could never have taken place, and consequently the Church has always been governed by bishops, and this government is of divine appointment. I must not pass over a quotation made by you from page 98 of 2d Apol. of Justin Martyr, "The prayers, &c., were repeated by the people after the bishop or presbyter who presided in the service." Justin Martyr is here speaking of the Church generally, not of one bishop or one presbyter. And it is quite in accordance with a Churchman's views, that in whatever Church a bishop officiates, he there presides for the time. In his absence the presbyter who has charge of the flock, presides. The people then repeated the prayer after the bishop or presbyter, whoever presided in the service. Or, even on the supposition that it referred to the same person, the mere interchangeable use of the names, as I have before abundantly shewn, proves nothing.

LETTER XV.

REVD. SIR,

I HAVE already, by a quotation from Dr. Hobart, shewn you that the government of the Church is not to be identified

with its minister. "It is a principle strictly Episcopal, received by all Churchmen, that the *particular organization of Church Government, matters of discipline, rites and ceremonies*, are not unalterably determined in Scripture. In this extensive sense, and this alone, there is no particular form of Church Government of divine right." Rites and ceremonies may be altered by human authority. But the *ministry*, consisting of bishops, priests and deacons, "can only be altered by that divine authority which originally instituted it." To preserve the unity of the Church then, the Apostolic and primitive Church must be taken as our standard and guide, both as regards the ministry and the doctrines; and they who depart in either respect from the apostolic and primitive Church, must be charged with making a breach in the unity of the Church, —you do yourself no credit by losing sight altogether of the primitive, and bringing forward the Roman Church. How can the unity of the Church be preserved, when there are denominations of professing christians, directly opposed to each other, and altar is set up against altar? Christ prayed for the unity of the church "that they all may be one,"—and deeply is it to be regretted that so many are divided and opposed one to the other. That the members of the visible Church of Christ were to be under discipline is evident from Christ's own words, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, &c., tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.—Matt. 18th, 15, 17. That is in other words, let him be excommunicated. Now, suppose that in the town or village in which the offender resides, there are three or four places of worship, each of course claiming to be a branch of the Church. The offender then, is excommunicated from the Church, he crosses the street to the next place of worship, and is received into the Church, and despises the discipline of the Church. Is there union here? Is it not just the reverse of union? How then the unity of the Church can be preserved by separation and dissent, we have yet to learn. In speaking of the Church you always add the words "of England," as if they were necessarily connected with it. Now this I call unbecoming sophistry. The Protestant Episcopal Church in England, Ireland, Scotland, the British Colonies, the United States, is one and the same, because it is under the same apostolic and primitive government, and holds the same primitive doctrines. Allow me, Sir, to give a definition of the Church, and this will prevent confusion in future. The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of professing

christians, in the which the *pure* word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, *by those who have authority being rightly ordained*, (Vide 19th and 23d Art. of Church of England.) This definition agrees with the primitive church, it agrees also with the Church in the places just mentioned,—here then is agreement and unity amongst themselves, and they are compelled to keep aloof from those who have departed from the primitive standard. Here then, at least, is one temple and house of God, one fold, one faith, one baptism, administered in the same way, and by those having authority, one body whose members generally agree in all things essential to salvation and to the ministry, while their differing opinions do not break the existing unity. Most cordially do I agree with bishop Porteous, with respect to religious liberty. There is to me something cruel and revolting in the idea of *compelling* a man to unite himself to any particular religious body. Do to others as you would they should do to you, is a rule which should be the guide of every christian. I regret to see divisions in the religious world and so great a want of unity. I would implore all to lay aside their prejudices, with earnest prayer for direction from above,—I would exhort them to examine for themselves, and to conform as nearly as possible to the apostolic and primitive church in all things; then we might hope for a greater degree of harmony, unity and peace, than exist at present in the professing christian world. If such a method will not prevail, and persons will love their prejudices more than unity, then I say, leave them in the hands of God. The Judge of all the earth will do right—I never would be an advocate for compulsory measures, though I should from my heart rejoice to see one and all turning their eyes towards the primitive church, and taking that as their standard and their guide. But, Sir, if the Church of England, being the national church, advocates so strongly the “most noble system of religious liberty,” with what justice and fairness do our opponents charge her with being intolerant and dominant. To be consistent, *you*, at least, must allow that there is more of prejudice and sectarian feeling, than truth in the charge. All that I have to say to the latter part of the quotation from bishop Porteous, is, that I believe it was the prayer, the desire, and the intention of Christ, that his visible Church should be united. And the apostles and early christians followed this up by their earnest appeals to the people to avoid division. I quote for your consideration the words of irenæus, “The spiritual man,” says he, “will

judge, or discern those who make schisms, who are inhuman, not having the love of God, but preferring their own advantage before the unity of the Church, for trivial and slight causes, rend and divide the great and glorious body of Christ, and as much as in them lies, destroy it; who speak peace, but wage war, truly straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel." (Iren. l. 4. cap. 53 and 62.) Now do tell me, Sir, were the Methodists justified in separating from the Church? Was there so great a departure from the true faith in the Church; had she become so completely corrupt in doctrine and practice, that it would have been sinful to continue in communion with her? This cannot be, for Methodists generally profess to have a great veneration for the doctrines and articles of the Church, and Wesley, your founder, condemned the separation and exhorted to unity. You have then gone contrary to the express wish of your founder, and to use his own words, have become "dissenters," and cannot with propriety claim the name "Wesleyan." Some very substantial and important reason must be assigned for your separation, or the Methodist body must stand guilty of a breach of the unity of the Church, which however lightly it may be thought of in the present day, cannot be justified by Scripture, but is directly opposed to it, and is therefore sinful. Charles and John Wesley, and Dr. Coke, were all truly desirous that the breach should be healed. Why then were the anxious wishes of these venerable and good men disregarded? Venerable and good I believe them to have been, though the two latter were unquestionably imprudent. But why was not their advice followed? Can you fully satisfy your conscience that this step was in full accordance with the word of God, and met his approbation? Then these good men must have had but little idea of God's will concerning the people under their care. Can you fully justify the measure? Then you condemn these good men for opposing you. Now as you publicly acknowledge our doctrines to be scriptural, claim our articles as your own, study and admire the works of our divines, and are fully persuaded that our ministry is valid, the least I can say is, that the separation of the Methodists from the Church is unreasonable in the extreme, and when the Church disowns Wesley's ordinations and declares them to be invalid, we must proclaim the truth, and declare that the separation is unwarrantable. "Nothing," says Chrysostom, "provokes God more, than to divide his church; nay, the blood of martyrdom will not wash off the guilt of it. The mischief the Church re-

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ceives by it, is greater than it receives from open enemies ; for the one makes it more glorious, the other exposes it to shame among its enemies, when it is set upon by its own children. This, I speak to those, who make no great matter of schism, *and indifferently go to the meetings of those who divide the Church.* If their doctrine be contrary to ours, for that reason they ought to abstain ; if not, they ought to do it so much the more. Do not you know what Corah, Dathan, and Abiram suffered ? And not they only, but those that were with them. But you say, they have the same faith, and they are very orthodox ; *why then do they separate ?* If they have the same doctrine, the same sacraments, for what cause do they set up another church in opposition to ours ? *It is nothing but vain glory, ambition and deceit.* “ I speak these things that no man might say, he did not know it to be such a sin. I tell you, and testify this to you, *that separation from the Church, or dividing it, is no less a sin than falling into heresy.*” Upon this bishop Stillingfleet, whose writings are so much admired by our dissenting brethren, remarks, “ I do desire our brethren, as they love their own souls, and would avoid the guilt of so great a sin, impartially, and without prejudice, to consider this passage of St. Chrysostom, and how parallel it is with their own case who separate from us, and set up other churches in opposition to ours, which yet they acknowledge to be very orthodox, and to agree with them in the same doctrine, and the same sacraments.” You have said much about the word schism, and now you may be able to answer a very simple question.—Was not Mr. Wesley the means of creating a schism in the Church, which eventually, though contrary to his wishes and desires, led to estrangement and separation from the Church ? They *who take the pains* to learn the opinions of the early writers will, I think, easily discover that the unity of the Church was preserved through the bishops. The doctrines and ministry were the same throughout the christian world, and though the rites and ceremonies were not precisely the same in all the churches, yet the unity of the Church was not affected or endangered thereby. So strictly was it guarded, that if persons were justly censured in their own Church, such were the laws of the Church universal, that they were denied communion in any part of her. “ So that a contentious member of any particular Church, says Slater, might find himself wholly cast out from the Catholic Church, though it were for mere non-conformity to indifferent rites and customs in his own.” Each bishop watched over his own par-

ticular church, while he would naturally feel an interest in the Church Universal. In the earliest age of the Church it was recorded by Ignatius, that no man should "*do anything of what belongs to the Church separately from the bishop.*"—(Ep. Smyr. sec. 8.) Cyprian says, "The Catholic Church, which is one, is not rent nor divided, but knit and coupled together by the cement of her bishops united to one another." (Cypr. Ep. 69.) He "exemplifies the *unity* of the Church in the words of St. Paul, *one body and one spirit*, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, adding as parallel to the rest, let no man deceive the brethren with a lie, let no man corrupt the truth of our faith with any treacherous prevarication, *the episcopacy is one*, making it a treacherous corruption of the truth of the faith to deny that." (Slater, p. 286.) Of the advantages of episcopacy, Grotius thus writes—"But moreover we may lay down this, that great advantages redounded to the Church from the episcopate. The history of all ages proclaims this; but I will again use that witness, *who of all antiquity least favoured bishops*, that is Jerome; he says, 'it was decreed through the whole world, that one chosen from the presbyters should be *set over* the rest, *to take away schisms and dissensions.*'—The same elsewhere says, '*the safety of the Church depends upon the dignity of the chief priest, that is, of the bishop, to whom if a certain independent power be not given, and by all, there will be made as many schisms in the Church as priests.* Neither is that different which Cyprian so many times inculcates: 'Whence have schisms and heresies arisen, and whence do they arise still, unless when the bishop, who is one and presides over the Church, is despised by the *proud presumption of some?*' And elsewhere: 'Neither indeed have heresies arisen, or schisms sprung, from any other quarter than this, that obedience is not paid to the priest of God, neither is there chosen one priest and a judge in the place of Christ, at a time in the Church.' Neither, indeed, are single churches only fortified against schisms by the presidency of one, but, as the same Cyprian says, 'the whole Church is connected together by the chain of priests adhering to one another.' For the concord of the whole world was kept up by the correspondence of the (churches) built up through the bishops. And so much for episcopal eminence."—(Grotius, ch. 11, sec. 9.) If the contentions and divisions of the Corinthians were so great evils, that St. Paul pronounced those who were under their influence to be yet carnal, though they had not destroyed the unity of the

Church, the evil of separation from a true and orthodox Church must evidently be greater. Here a new priesthood is formed in opposition to the old, altar is set up against altar, and the peace, harmony, and unity of the Church is disturbed. I know not how you can justify this, or reconcile it to your conscience. You may, Sir, take shelter under the wing of the *law*, but your separation is not supported by the authority of the Gospel. You say, however, that "God places the mark of his approbation" on the ministrations of dissenters. But God has made children instruments in his hands to bring conviction to deists and infidels. Men and women who were not holy in their lives have sometimes by some strong expressions, convinced others of the necessity of conversion. Mimics are even said to have done the same, and would this justify them in the belief that they had a right to assume the ministerial character? Certainly not. The truth is, that God's word, by whomsoever spoken, shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases. (Isai. 55, 11.) Now the question is not have dissenters been the means of doing *any* good, but would not *more* good have been done if all the Protestants had united in one body, and continued so? They who will only read the passage which I have just quoted from Grotius, and will notice the sad declension from the true faith amongst the opponents of Episcopacy, and the evils which arose in Cromwell's time when Episcopacy was abolished, will, I think, be forced to conclude that *more* good would have resulted from union under Episcopal government. Where was Episcopacy first abandoned? Was it not in Switzerland and Germany? And what is the faith of these Churches? Alas! how is the gold become dim! how is the most fine gold changed. Truly may it be said, in the language of the Indian missionary, "Wo to the declining Church that hath no Gospel Liturgy." In Switzerland the ministers are almost to a man Arians and Socinians. In Germany the opponents of Episcopacy have left their first love, and have embraced the Unitarian doctrine; their brethren in the West of England have in like manner been led astray,—and the Puritans of the United States are following in their footsteps.* Are not these great and lamentable evils, exercising a deadly influence over tens of thousands of our fellow beings. Evils against which our Episcopal regimen and almost inspired Liturgy have, under God, been instrumental in guarding the Church of our Father-land. What is the heathen cry and

* See Dr. Chapinan's 18th Sermon, Vol. 1.

the infidel sneer? Go, ye Christians, and heal your own divisions,—be united amongst yourselves, and then we may give heed to your persuasions. With whom shall we unite? One sect bids us follow them, and another entreats us to be guided by them. All profess to be right, while each is divided against the other. Now, Sir, you must admit that this ought not so to be, and the conviction must, I think, force itself upon your mind, that greater benefits would result to the Church of Christ, from the united efforts of Protestants, than could possibly be realized by the present divided state. You must admit that in religion, as well as in matters connected only with this world, that ‘union is strength.’ “Mr. Rogne, the French ambassador, said, at the time of the conference at Hampton-court, that if the other reformed Churches had kept the same orders amongst them that we have done, he was assured there would have been many thousands of Protestants more than there now are.” I will now make a few quotations to shew the state of religious disorder, confusion, and tyranny, which followed at the time Episcopacy was abolished in England by the usurper Cromwell. “It is observable, says our learned Dr. Maurice, that in these last ages there have been no heretics, who have not likewise been anti-Episcopal; and at the same time that they have become enemies to the truth, they declare war against the bishops, who are the guardians of it. And there were more heresies started here in the space of four years, after bishops had been laid aside, than there have been known in the Universal Church, from the foundation of it to that time. And this is acknowledged by Mr. Edwards, a presbyterian teacher, who (in his *Gangræna*, dedicated to the parliament, 1646) says, “We in these four last years have surpassed the deeds of the prelates, and justified the bishops, in whose time never so many nor so great errors were heard of, much less such blasphemies and confusions; we have worse things amongst us than ever were in all the bishop’s days, more corrupt doctrines and unheard of practices than in eighty years before.” The bishops and their chaplains, (who were accounted time-servers,) opposed the errors of the times; but the presbyters suffered all kind of errors and schisms to come in when *they* were in place; certainly the bishops and their chaplains shall rise up in judgment against the ministry of this generation. And Salmasius ingeniously confesses, that although he was no friend to bishops, yet, considering that the abolition of Episcopacy (in England, A. D. 1646) was followed by an horrible confusion and disturbance of religion; sects without

number, which before were confined to hell, and covered with darkness, suddenly breaking forth on all sides by the gate which was then opened, viz., the taking away the fear of bishops, by whom they were formerly suppressed; which would never have happened if bishops had governed the Churches as formerly; and that being taught by that experience, as the last day is master of the former, *he changed his opinion*, and pronounced that bishops were to be preserved, especially in England, seeing so many evils followed after they were overthrown." And the author of the Turkish Spy, who, under the disguise of a Mahometan, has taken occasion to undermine Christianity in its most fundamental articles, plainly shows that there is no subverting Christianity, till Episcopacy be abolished."—(*Barwick's Treatise*, p. 53.)

"As long as the Presbyterians held the reins of ecclesiastical affairs, they presented a strange sight to the world by following the very footsteps of those whom they had denounced as frequenters of evil paths. Although they had decried the prayer book, they enforced the use of the directory; although they had made such a stir about their scruples of conscience, they had no tenderness for those of others; their assembly of divines voted that the Presbyterian form of Church government was of divine right; and much as they had decried pluralities, they took possession of all that they could grasp. By such conduct Milton was provoked to use his powerful and caustic lash. He pronounced that the assembly of divines was "neither chosen by any rule or custom ecclesiastical, nor eminent for either piety or knowledge, above others left out; only as each member of parliament in his private fancy thought fit, so elected, one by one. The most part of them were such as had preached and cried down, with great show of zeal, the avarice and pluralities of bishops and prelates, and that one cure of souls was a full employment for one spiritual pastor, how able soever, if not a charge rather above human strength. Yet these conscientious men, (ere any part of the work was done for which they came together, and that on public salary,) wanted not boldness, to the ignominy and scandal of their pastor-like profession, and especially of their boasted reformation, to seize into their hands, or not unwillingly to accept, (besides one, two, or more, of the best livings,) collegiate masterships in the universities, rich lectures in the city, setting sail to all winds that might blow gain into their covetous bosoms; by which means these great rebukers of non-residence, among so many distant cures, were not ashamed to be seen so quickly pluralists and

non-residents themselves, to a fearful condemnation, doubtless by their own mouths." He then inveighs against their tyrannical conduct, and declares that their disciples did manifest themselves to be no better principled than their teachers ;" seeking "gainful offices," which they discharged "unfaithfully, unjustly, unmercifully, and where not corruptly, stupidly. So that between them, the teachers, and these, the disciples, there hath not been a more ignominious and mortal wound to faith, to piety, to the work of reformation, nor more cause of blaspheming given to the enemies of God's truth, since the first preaching of reformation."—(*Hone's Life of Dr. Hammond*, p. 133.) From these quotations, and from all that has been said, it will be seen that the evils arising from a separation from Episcopal authority, which authority has clearly been shown to have a divine sanction, are great indeed ; and I have no doubt that upon a close and fair comparison of these extensive evils, with the blessings which attend the ministrations of dissenting preachers, the evils would be found greatly to preponderate. It would be well for the pious dissenter deeply to consider this. He must not confine his views merely to the spot where he resides, or to the people who surround him—but must take a wider range. He must view the broad field of the Christian world, and consider the melancholy condition of tens of thousands, which is chiefly owing to this want of union. A confined view is unquestionably a mistaken one, and tends to keep many in the dark as to the real state of the case. But by your saying that a blessing attends dissenters, do you mean to infer that the curse of God would rest upon them if they *united* with the Church, and became one temple—one body,—that over the blooming and flourishing field of their labours, the angel of desolation would pass, and convert it into a barren wilderness, in token of God's displeasure ? Surely this cannot be your meaning. Surely the pious and zealous dissenter could bring his piety and zeal along with him, and unite with others in spreading the Gospel, and establishing the kingdom of Jesus upon earth. But should his piety fail, and his zeal languish, as the effect of an union, then, I fear, we should have to pronounce that his piety was not built upon the rock of ages, and that his zeal was without knowledge. Look not, then, *only* to the *blessings* which follow the dissenters' path, but deeply and prayerfully consider whether these blessings would not, in a ten-fold degree, be increased, and greater glory redound to God, by a union of Christians in *one body*. If the dissenter *really desire* to pro-

mote the glory of God, and the eternal welfare of immortal souls, and I should be extremely sorry not to give him full credit for the best intentions, then he should well consider the best method which can be adopted for accomplishing so desirable a purpose, and this he assuredly will find will be by a union of strength. *United hearts—united efforts—united prayers*, would meet with the fullest approbation of the God of peace and concord. His rich and heavenly blessing would descend upon his *united Church*, and like the “dew upon the hill of Hermon,” would cause it to flourish. We may believe, too, that the Spirit of the Lord would then abundantly be poured out upon his *agreeing* people, and make their labours to prosper, and it would again be said of believers, as in days of old, “See how these Christians love one another.” “If any thing less than *sinful terms* of communion can justify a separation, then there can be no end of separations, and catholic communion is an impossible and impracticable notion; that is, the Church of Christ neither is one body, nor ever can be. Reasons for separation are *not to be determined by men’s fancies, which they call the dictates of conscience*, but upon plain and evident grounds, manifesting the repugnancy of the things required to the laws and institutions of Christ, and that they are of *that importance*, that he allows men rather to divide from such a communion, than join in the practice of such things. The sin of schism, says John Ball, an old non-conformist, if unjust, is so heinous, the ill consequences and mischiefs so many and fearful, that all Christians should be well advised neither to lay stumbling blocks before the feet of others, which might occasion their turning aside, nor to seek occasions of departure, but rather to wait and tarry till they be *assured* that the Lord goeth before them. The faithful have ever tolerated weaknesses and infirmities in each other, and abuses in the Church, so long as the *foundation* was held, *and they agreed in the main*. It was never, as dean Sherlock remarks, till of late days, thought lawful to separate from a lawful communion, though, as the state of the Church in this world is, it were subject to some defects; and therefore the Brownists, who separated from the Church of England, pretended that her worship and government was idolatrous and anti-christian; and the old non-conformists, (one of whom was the above mentioned Mr. Ball,) who thought they could not conform as ministers, yet *very religiously conformed as lay men*, both in prayers and sacraments, condemned this schism, and proved that communion with the Church of England was lawful,

and therefore *separation was sinful* ; and I dare challenge any man to shew me, from the first beginning of christianity, that ever it was thought lawful to separate from a church where we might communicate without sin. (*Barwick's Treatise*, p. 64. You say, "that the Established Church has received material benefit from the operations of Wesleyan Methodism, there is good reason to believe." Now, Sir, I am quite ready to admit, that Wesley was an instrument in the hands of God to bring about much good in the Church. But who and what was Wesley?—The son of a clergyman of the Church of England—himself a clergyman of the Church, who declared, "*I live and die a member of the Church of England*," who advised his friends *to adhere to the Church and quit the Methodists, if the Methodists left the Church*. The Methodists then as they now stand in Nova Scotia, *a body separate and distinct* from the Church, must not speak of this work of reformation in the Church, as if it reflected credit upon them. No—they have *separated* from the Church—they are *dissenters* from Wesley, as I have shewn, and therefore can have no part or lot in the matter. But Wesley was not the first who felt and lamented the spiritual deadness then too generally prevalent in the christian world. About that period there were humble, pious, and devoted men quietly performing their duties in their respective parishes, whose labours of love and whose success, will not fully be known till that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed. The fire, then, was already kindled on the altars of the Church, and the Wesleys' widely and rapidly spread the flame. I take from the *Colonial Churchman*, of December last, the following excellent and just remarks. "The Church of England is a *self reforming* Church. It possesses within itself a principle of vitality always strong enough to preserve it from utter spiritual corruption; and that principle is the word of God, which, Sunday after Sunday, is read from the pulpits of our Establishment—which pervades every line of our 'incomparable' Liturgy—and which seasons with salt that can never lose its savour, our theological literature, 'the richest,' as a Wesleyan declares, 'that any section of the Church of Christ ever produced.' In the history of the Church we shall find that there have been seasons when this principle lay, like grain during winter, inert and unquickened in the earth; but anon a zeal, borrowing its light and warmth from Gospel rays, has penetrated the frozen bosom of the soil, and awakened into life and productiveness the seed which was not dead, but only slept." "In the early part of the last century

a Laodicean lukewarmness had infected the Church of England, and the pernicious growth of the Arian heresy, in addition to the evil under which the establishment laboured, had almost choked the christianity of dissent. 'At this crisis,' remarks the *Christian Observer*, 'from the bosom of the Church of England went out that flame which has warmed and enlightened every other religious denomination.' Then, within our own hallowed precincts, arose Venn, and Grimshaw, Romaine, and Talbot, Walker, Adam, and Conyers,—a body of spiritual labourers, strongly imbued with Evangelical views. Then, above all, arose John Wesley, the son of a clergyman, himself a clergyman, and the fellow of a College. Then, also, Whitfield received his commission to preach, from an Episcopal successor of the Apostles; and quickly following these faithful servants of the Gospel, is to be seen a long array of the established clergy, inculcating those particular views usually denominated Evangelical. Thus did the Church of England, under Providence, reform itself by its own intrinsic means, and through the agency of *its own duly authorised priesthood.*" In alluding to my intercourse with the Methodists here, you say—"Your protestations of friendship and brotherly kindness have been all *insincere*, &c." Here, Sir, you have lost sight of all charity, and before you would take time to consider the real meaning of my words, you hastily passed upon me the sentence of condemnation. Have you not, in your pamphlet, quoted from St. Paul these words, "*Charity thinketh no evil?*" and with such a valuable lesson before you, would it not have been better to give the most favourable construction to my words, or to ascertain my real meaning, and thus to have secured yourself from the discredit of making so *unjust* a charge. What I wished you to understand was this. The Church does not acknowledge the validity of the dissenting ministry,—but they who serve at her altars being well aware that by publicly declaring this, the hostile feelings of their opponents would in all probability be stirred up against them, *for the sake of peace* oftentimes refrained from making known what they fully and conscientiously believed. This I asserted was a *false* peace, which should be broken, because, if we believe men to be in error, it is neither manly nor upright to conceal from them the truth. Could you not understand those plain sentences? Was I not right in supposing that the cry of intolerance and bigotry would be raised against those who would be so bold as to declare *the truth*? Has it not been raised here? And have you not endeavoured (in this page of your pamphlet which now lies

before me) to prejudice dissenters against one who can esteem their virtues, while he is not blind to their errors. There are some, however, I am happy to say, who do not seem disposed to be influenced by a charge which they must know and feel in their hearts to be unkind and unjust in the extreme. You are pleased to consider me a high Churchman, and if the term be properly understood and applied, I esteem it an honour to be placed in that rank. The high Churchman, to merit that title, should, in his life and conversation, be entirely guided by, and diligently and cheerfully promulgate, the Scriptural doctrines of the Church, preaching Christ Jesus, and him crucified. And at the same time he should most carefully uphold and support her apostolic government, which even Methodists have called "*the most excellent*" mode. All this I sincerely wish and desire to do. But being a high Churchman does not prevent me from having charity for my dissenting brethren. The most exalted charity will prompt us to point out to our neighbour his errors, while he has an opportunity of correcting them. "But, as Mr. Daubeny remarks, if a minister of the Church is to refrain from teaching the fundamental principles of Church government, from a consideration of thereby giving offence, by appearing to pronounce sentence against those who separate from it; for the same reason he must refrain from insisting decidedly on any doctrine whatever; for there is no doctrine of the Church which will not meet with parties to whom it is obnoxious. The preaching up, for instance, the being and providence of God, will be offensive to atheists and worldlings, (of whom, it is to be feared, there is no small number,) because they are thereby concluded under damning unbelief. The authority of the Scriptures, and the certainty of revealed religion, are points equally offensive to deists and sceptics. The union of the divine and human nature, as preparatory to the great work of atonement, is a doctrine not to be insisted upon, because of its alarming consequences to Arians, Socinians, and Unitarians. The doctrine of the christian sacraments must, in like manner, be kept out of sight, for fear of giving offence to Quakers. For my part, says Dr. Brett, I cannot but think it the duty of every honest clergyman to preach such doctrines as we have received from Christ and his Apostles, whomsoever the consequences may reflect upon. I can never think it charitable to soothe men in their mistakes, and give them cause to think I believe them in the right, *when I know them to be in error*. I am willing to believe as well of presbyterians abroad, and dissen-

ters at home, as any man, neither will I condemn them; they must stand or fall to him that is the master of them and of us all. But as I think them to be in a dangerous error, I think it my duty to let them know it. I hope and pray that God will have mercy on all of them, who offend in this or any other point, through ignorance, prejudice, or any unhappy education, and not of malicious wickedness. But I conceive the nature of christian charity obliges us, upon catholic principles, to write them up to our Church, and not as the manner of some has been, to write our Church down to them. And I have reason to think, that if Episcopacy had been settled in other reformed churches, as it is in ours, the reformation had made a much larger progress than it has now done. &c."—(See *Barwick's Treatise*, p. 50.) Of the historian Hawers, whom you mention, Dr. Bowden in his letters to Dr. Miller, thus writes. "Did you quote him, Sir, on account of the weight he derives from his learning, or profound knowledge of antiquity, or *consistency of character*? Do you think that a man who despises learning, can be very learned himself? and who abuses all the Fathers of the Church, can know much about them? Do you think that man's testimony is of much weight, who always takes part with heretics and schismatics, and commends Novatians, Donatists, Militians, and Luciferians, while Catholic confessors and martyrs are treated with contempt, because they did not think as he does upon the subjects of *predestination* and grace? Can you think that man's opinion of any consequence, who says, that he "thinks Episcopacy most correspondent to the *Apostolic practice* and the *general usage* of the Church in the *first and generally esteemed purer ages*," and yet can unite with those who have departed from *apostolic practice*, and are the avowed enemies of *primitive usage*?" For further remarks see vol. 1, p. 283. The Dr. proves him to be an *inaccurate historian*. As to the sermon of which you speak, the best way to shew that you have been led into error by your credible witnesses, is to make it public, and then you will know how to appreciate their testimony. You shall see it as it was delivered to the congregation, with the addition only of two notes. I would here inquire, if a clergyman preaches against any particular vice or error, who is most likely to be moved? Is it not he whose conscience tells him "*Thou art the man*." In speaking of ignorant and wicked persons setting themselves up as teachers, the Methodist denomination was not then in my thoughts. I had reference to those who, in this province and elsewhere, have

taken upon themselves, without any *previous preparation*, and without *the shadow of authority*, to be public teachers and spiritual guides to the people,—persons void of good principles, and even immoral in their lives ;—and who was to silence them ? 'This, I contend, is one of the evils which will generally arise, when Episcopal rule is contemned, or lightly esteemed. You, however, did not take time to understand me ; and it is, probably, to this circumstance that we are indebted for the quotations made from bishop Burnet, respecting many of the clergy in his day. Melancholy as the truth is, we shall not find *all* the ministers altogether such as they should be, in *any denomination*. 'The present flourishing state of the Church in England, the increasing piety and zeal, and the successful labours of her ministers, are cause of thankfulness and joy to all those who have a due regard for her prosperity, and to all the lovers of genuine piety. You inquire, "Did the Established Church act the part of a kind and affectionate mother either to Mr. Wesley or his followers ?" I have no doubt, Sir, that if Mr. Wesley had acted with that *care, caution, and prudence*, which the state of the times required, and had not persisted in his *irregularities*, he would not have had more difficulties to contend with than any pious and zealous clergyman must expect, in proportion to his labours, from an ungodly world. Why did not the exemplary clergy of his day (few though they were) meet with the like difficulties ? Fletcher and others. I am very far from being disposed to justify the outrages of lawless mobs against a good man, but I feel assured that the line of conduct pursued towards him, so far as the Established Church is concerned, was, in a great measure, owing to his peculiarities and *irregular measures*, which were contrary to the rules of the Church. "The established clergy began to refuse to lend him their pulpits, of which he had less reason to complain, because, among the orders of his own society, which then met in Fetter Lane, is the following rule, (14th)—'That no particular person should be allowed to act in *any thing contrary to the order of the society* ; but that *every one, without distinction*, should submit to the determination of his brethren ; and that if any person or persons did not, after being thrice admonished, conform to the society, they should no longer be esteemed as members."—(See *Collinson's pref.* p. 22.) As to the followers of Wesley, when we find that amongst the preachers there were men of "a most violent and ungovernable temper," who would very naturally excite angry feelings against themselves ; and a separation from the

Church was in rapid progress, not justified by Scripture, and *against the wish of their founder*, it cannot be a matter of surprise that the affection of the "mother Church" should be somewhat moderated; and it is not an evidence of a noble or charitable spirit, to bring forward this circumstance in justification of a continued but unnatural separation. The separation and the unchristian feelings awakened and kept up thereby, must be a source of regret to every truly pious mind; and as Mr. Wesley was strongly opposed to it, well would it be for those who revere him as their founder, to *respect his wishes, and give heed to his dying admonitions*. You say, "There is historical evidence that it was not until the year 1588 the claim of bishops being a superior order to priests by divine right, was set up by any of the English bishops." It is quite possible, Sir, that you may read history differently from other persons, but that you understand the plainest and simplest language differently, is very evident. In the reign of Edward the Sixth, from 1548 to 1553, bishops were commonly appointed by king's letters patent. Burnet says, "By these letters it is clear that the Episcopal function was acknowledged to be of *divine appointment*."—(*Burnet's Ref.*, vol. 2., p. 128.) He also says, that in 1548 Crammer compiled a catechism, in which he fully owns the *divine institution* of bishops and priests.—(Vol. 2., p. 143.)—Mosheim says of the Church of England, "*It constantly insisted on the divine origin of its government and discipline*."—(*Eccles. Hist.*, vol. 2., p. 231.) You may now, if you please, examine your "historical evidence" again, but first read the following from Burnet,—"*In the ancient Church they knew none of those subtilties which were found out in the latter ages. It was then thought enough that a bishop was to be dedicated to his function by a new imposition of hands, and that several offices could not be performed without bishops; such as ordination, confirmation, &c.*" But they did not refine in these matters so much as to inquire whether bishops and priests differed in order and office, or only in degree. But after the schoolmen fell to examine matters of divinity with logical and unintelligible niceties, and the canonists began to comment upon the rules of the ancient Church, they studied to make bishops and priests seem very near one another, so that the difference was but small. They did it with different designs. The schoolmen having set up the grand mystery of *transubstantiation*, were to exalt the priestly office as much as was possible; for the turning the host into God was so great an action, that they reckoned

there could be no office higher than that which qualified a man to so mighty a performance. But as *they* designed to extol the order of priesthood, so the *canonists* had as great mind to depress the episcopal order. They generally wrote for preferment, and the way to it was to exalt the papacy. *Nothing could do that so effectually as to bring down the power of bishops.*" He adds "*these are the very dregs of popery*;" and concludes with these forcible words, "So partial are some men to their particular conceits, that they make use of the most mischievous topics when they can serve their turn, not considering how much farther these arguments will run, if they ever admit them." (*Hist. of Ref.* vol. 1. p. 366.) I trust, sir, that you will derive benefit from this quotation.— It would be well for you to take heed lest in your hasty zeal to oppose the authority of bishops, you be found to forward a cause directly opposed to protestantism. "Many poor well-meaning dissenters are prepossessed with a false notion, that Episcopacy is a relic of popery, as they are pleased to term it. This indeed is so far from being true, that I look upon episcopal government, as the best way to *keep out popery, or any other error.* For episcopacy as established in its *just rights, utterly destroys* the papal pretences, and one thing pronounced as a ground of our reformation was, the retrieving the *original* rights of bishops, which the pope had injuriously invaded, whilst he challenged the whole power of governing the catholic church, and making the bishops only his curates. The pope used many methods to diminish the power of bishops, such as exempting the monasteries from their jurisdiction, and making them wholly dependent on himself, that the monks might be tools to secure his authority over bishops; in which service the order of Jesuits was chiefly instrumental. For this purpose too, the *schoolmen* were set to work, to level bishops, as near as possible with presbyters, by their subtle and nice distinctions. And it is certain, that in the council of Trent, the Italians made great efforts to have it decreed, that bishops as distinct from presbyters were not by *divine right*; and Lainez, the jesuit, made a long harangue of above two hours, to that purpose. These men were sensible, that the asserting the true original power of bishops, would evince the unreasonableness of the pope's encroachment on their just rights, and show how justly *they* acted who endeavoured to retrench his exorbitances. And as for the objection of a 'Popedom being unavoidable from the episcopal constitution of church government,' it is contrary to matter of fact, and stands now confuted by the consentient testimony and prac-

tice not only of the episcopal churches of England, Scotland, Ireland, North America, Sweden, &c., but also of the Greek and Oriental churches." (*Barwick's Treatise*, p. 52.) You tell us that "Bishop Bancroft widened the breach between the puritan divines and the advocates of church uniformity." It is indeed to be regretted that the puritans should be offended by the plain declaration of a truth "*constantly* insisted on by the Church of England." What many of the puritans are becoming now I have shown you. They would now be as much offended with a plain declaration of the divinity of Jesus, as they formerly were with a declaration of the divine origin of episcopacy. But it would not be proper to withhold this all important truth even though it should be declared at the risk of giving offence to these degenerate puritans. Whatever your *opinion* may be, sir, I think it is plain and clear that Christ instituted one and only one form of church government—(I apply these words in a confined sense to the orders of the ministry.)—The methodists in the United States, call themselves the "*methodist episcopal church*," and they give us to understand that they have adopted the episcopal form of government, as "*the most excellent*." "But if the *most excellent*, we must conclude that it is apostolic and divine; for certainly Christ and his apostles established *some* form of ordination and church government; and if so, it has a strong tincture of irreverence to suppose that they did not choose that which is *most excellent*. It is absurd to presume they established *two different* forms." (Banner of the Cross.) "But then" says bishop Taylor, "are all ordinations invalid which are done by mere presbyters, without a bishop?—What think we of the reformed churches? For my part I know not what to think. The question has been so often asked, with so much violence and prejudice, and we are so bound, by public interest, to approve all that they do, that we have disabled ourselves to justify our own. For we were glad, at first, of abettors against the errors of the Roman church; we found these men zealous in it; we thanked God for it, as we had cause; and we were willing to make them recompense, by endeavouring to justify their ordinations; not thinking what would follow upon ourselves? But now it is come to that issue, that our own episcopacy is thought not necessary, because we did not *condemn* the ordination of their presbytery. Why is not the question rather what we think of the *primitive church*, than what we think of the reformed churches? Did the primitive councils and fathers do well in condemning the ordinations made by mere presbyters? If

they did well, *what was a virtue in them, is no sin in us.*"—(vol. 7. p. 138.) I see nothing more in your pamphlet which needs a reply, and as I have many and increasing duties in this extensive parish to engage my attention, I take my leave of you by requesting you to prove satisfactorily the four following points, and then you will have the honor of doing more for your cause than the greatest champion of presbyterian supremacy could ever accomplish. I must however inform you that the sophistry of names—fearless assertions—bold denials—ridicule and angry feelings will not be admitted as arguments; and the proof must be as clear, positive and decided from the word God, and from the primitive Fathers, as that which Churchmen have advanced in favor of episcopacy, otherwise it will not deserve attention.

1st, Prove that there *was not* an order *superior* to presbyters from the days of the Apostles.

2nd, That the power exercised by Bishops is *actually* a usurpation—name the time in which this extraordinary usurpation took place, and account *satisfactorily* for the *silence of all the early writers* respecting it.

3rd, That there was even a single Church governed *without* a bishop, from the days of the Apostles and a thousand years after.

4th, That Presbyters alone did ordain, and that their ordinations were *universally allowed to be valid* in the earliest ages of the Church.

If, Sir, you cannot answer these questions *satisfactorily, in accordance with the scriptures and antiquity*, you know the course which the pure religion of Jesus points out for you to follow. That we may all know experimentally more of that religion, and be brought more completely under its heavenly influence, is the prayer of

Rev'd. Sir,

Your Servant in Christ,

CHARLES J. SHREVE.

