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The Scripture Bishop,

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OR,  
The Divine Right  
OF  
PRESBYTERIAN  
*Ordination and Government;*

Consider'd in a DIALOGUE

Between

*Prelaticus* and *Elutherius,*

Examined in

*Two* LETTERS

To a

FRIEND

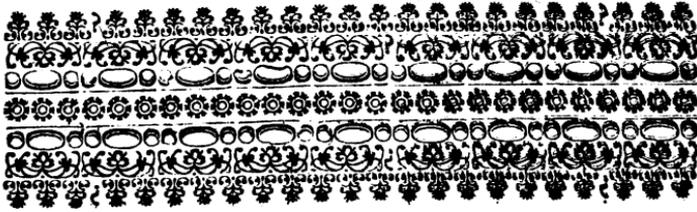
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## Two Letters to a Friend.

*Sir,*

THE high esteem I have of your Abilities, Friend and Fidelity, has encouraged me to send you the following Sheets ( which are a Collection of Arguments extracted from different Authors for the Benefit of such as cannot purchase the Originals ; ) to be communicated to the Publick if you think they deserve it. What occasioned you this trouble was the Appearance of a Pamphlet in Print entitled the Divine Right of Presbyterian Ordination and Government considered, &c.

So

So unexpected a Piece coming in my way, and Publish'd in *New-England*, ( where according to their Platform of Church Discipline, the Election of the Church, and a Compliance with, and an Acceptance of that Election by a Person coming under a Separation, is that wherein lies the Essence of his Call to Minister unto that particular Church. ) You may very justly conclude, excited a Curiosity in me to examine the Contents. An entire Subversion of the Platform might ( for ought I knew ) have been the Authors Intention : But when once the Curtain was drawn, and by a perusal of the Book the Scheme within became visible and open ; that expectation immediately vanished.

ERROR hath so foul and ugly a Complexion, that it makes it need and covet a Vizor to hide its Deformity, and can only be set forth by false and artificial Colours ; the People are to be lull'd into an undisturbed security, and the Errors of the Conventicle disguised.

IT is an obvious Truth, that no Man or number of Men considered as such, can any more Commission a Person to Officiate in CHRIST'S Name, as such, than he can add a New Sacrament for the Conveyance of Spiritual Advantages. The Ministers of CHRIST are as much positive Ordinances as the Sacraments ; and it would be as reasonably concluded that Sacraments instituted by him might convey Grace, as that men should pass for His Ministers without any Authority from him.

OF this our Author is aware ; And because an Authoritative Commission to act in CHRIST'S Name is not in the Peoples Power to grant, a Divine Commission must be pretended, ( in direct opposition to their own Discipline ) to support a Babel of their own Invention. With such untempered Mortar do the Architects of Schism build, laying Hay and Stubble upon the Foundation of Christianity, at once mocking GOD, and deceiving the People.

COULD

COULD Confidence carry the cause for our Antagonists, they are Masters at it, and have that Property to Perfection. Seldom has it failed to accompany inveterate ERROR, when formed into Principle, and confirmed by Practice. Surprising it is to see with what an Air the Publisher to the Reader peremptorily determines ; as if absolute Certainty, and Infallibility itself, was on their side. But if their Fortrefs be really impregnable, why are we discouraged from making any Attempts against it ? Our ill success must undoubtedly tend to their advantage. But neither [ “ The critical Inspection of very capable Judges who have declared their opinion, that there is no Occasion to suspect the present Publication of an unequal or partial Management ] nor the Publisher’s Prologue of Prejudication shall prevent my Animadversions on this very elaborate and highly recommended Treatise. Arguments are not to be measured by the Vogue of Parties ; all Lovers of Truth are willing to hear both sides impartially ; and I despair not of convincing every unprejudiced Reader that this Author has not naturally represented the arguings of both Parties, nor set things in their genuine Light ; as the Publisher rashly enough asserts.

HE begins the Attack with an endeavour to prejudice the unwary Reader, by branding a Church remarkable for her Indulgence to Dissenters of all Denominations, with the hateful name of Persecution : this he roundly asserts, but unauthorized assertions deserve no Confutation.

Is it not however, astonishing, that any considerate Man should furnish his Adversary with a weapon, wherewith to dispatch himself ? This our Author has effectually done. For has not New-England been notorious for her Barbarities and cruel Persecutions ? Does she not still continue to Persecute honest and well-meaning Christians, Members of the true Church, by rob-  
bing

bing them of their Estates towards the Support of Schismatical Teachers ? and does she not yearly imprison their Bodys for refusing to comply with her wicked and unjust Demands ?

Again, It will not I hope be impertinent to ask ; ( supposing the truth of the aforesaid Allegation ) if the Dissenters ever did suffer such Persecution from the Church of England, as she has suffered from them ? has she not by their means been forced to drink the very Dregs of their animosity, whilst like the Children of *Edom* in the Day of her Calamity, they cry'd, down with her, down with her, even to the Ground. Episcopacy they abolished, Murdered two Arch-Bishops, defaced, abused, demolished Churches, the Clergy many thousands in Number, they imprison'd, plundered, ejected and forced them with their Families to wander about in Cold and Nakedness, in Dens and Caves of the Earth, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the World was not worthy, whose sufferings therefore, must entitle them to the Character of the true Church ? Let the World judge, if I have not fairly detected this Gentleman's Partiality, or Ignorance, at his first setting out.

THIS Gentleman " has many Objections against our Ceremonies, especially against Impositions, and making such Terms " of Communion, as Christ never made. These Objections out of his consummate Wisdom he is pleas'd to conceal, and it might possibly have been as much to his, and the worlds advantage had he concealed his whole Book, or never given himself the trouble to write it.

CEREMONIES and Impositions are words of direful Import ; these feigned and imaginary Scarecrows must be continually buzz'd in the Ears of the People to fright them from the Communion of the Church, and the cause deserted in Point of argument, must now be upheld by artifice. But what are those

Law

Laws he fixes this odious Brand upon, and calls by the Nick-name of Impositions ? Why, they the good Orders and Constitution of the Church, appointed only for the external Reverence and Decency of Divine Worship. And as the first Enemies of Christianity arrayed the ancient Christians in Bear-skins and Goat-skins, that they might be the more worried, and baited by the multitude ; So have the Dissenters from our Church affixed this vile title to wholesome Laws, in order to render them more hated and abhorred by the People. And though abundantly enough hath been written by our own and Foreign Divines, to remove this Imputation, yet the Cry must still go on, to continue and propagate the Schism.

We are next, to examine the Gentleman's Reasons for choosing Ordination by a Presbytery, rather than by a Diocesan Bishop.

“ Now one Reason of his opinion is, ( he tells us ) because “ our Lord Jesus Christ has inhibited all Dominion and Supremacy among the Ministers of the Gospel over one another, And again, “ That all Ministers are forbidden to exercise “ Lordship over God's Heritage, 1 *Pet.* 5. 3. Now the Lordship it over God's Heritage is expressly discharged, and all the Bishops of the World, ( except the Pope ) do disclaim it. And yet the Power and Authority of the Rulers of God's Church is expressly asserted in the aforesaid Text of *St. Peter, Eph.* 5. 2, Tho' not such a Dominion as was exercised by secular Rulers, by Force, and for filthy Lucre's sake ; and the whole Chapter is an Exhortation to the Spiritual Guides and Governours of the Church, to discharge their Duties faithfully in feeding and ruling the Flock of God committed to them. And again, Obedience to Spiritual Rulers is commanded ; *Heb.* 13. 7, & 17, Remember them which have the Rule over you, &c. Obey them which have the Rule over you, and submit your selves. *St. Paul* declines not his Authority, when writing to *Philemon*

a Minister of the Gospel, he tells him, tho' I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee, that which is convenient ; yet for Loves sake, I rather beseech thee. The same St. Paul did not Lord it over the *Corinthians*, when he asserted his Power and Authority, and acquainted them of his having in a Readiness to revenge all Disobedience, 2 *Cor.* 10. 6. Neither did St. John Lord it, when complaining of *Diotrephes*, he says, wherefore if I come, I will remember his Deeds, which he doth, prating against us with malicious words, 3 *John* 10. Timothy's was no Arbitrary Authority, and yet he was to Command and Charge the Presbyters of the Church of *Ephesus* to Preach Sound Doctrine ; to judge, correct, and censure Offenders, even Presbyters, and to Ordain Faithful Men to the higher and lower Offices of the Ministry. The Power and Authority therefore of our Bishops, who are the true Successors of the Apostles, is falsely suggested to be Lording it over God's Heritage. They have Enacted no Laws of their own that exceed their Commission, and the Apostolical Rule, of having all things done decently and in order. In a Word, there is nothing enjoined by them contrary to the Word of God, or to Sound Doctrine : and as for those Privileges and Immunities, those secular Honours and Revenues which the Bishops enjoy ; they are derived from the Bounty of Kings, and particular Persons, and from the Laws of the Land, and it is acknowledged and confessed, that a Man may be a Bishop without them. But then we say, that neither the Collation, nor continuance of those Privileges, and Immunities, those secular Honours and Revenues are against Scripture.

But the English Bishops [ " take from the People their Natural Right of committing their most Important Affairs to one they can approve ; and this we are told, is a Lordship the Apostles themselves would not use, in supplying the Vacancy made by the Death of Judas, *Act.* 1. 15, 22, and in the Election of Deacons, *Act.* 6. 3, 5. in both which cases the Suffrage

“ frage of the Brethren was called for ] This Gentleman would do well to consider that we are not now in a State of Nature, but of Grace ; and he would find it perhaps no easie task to describe his State of Nature, and what particular Powers Men in that supposed state have just Claim to. But according to the account of this matter in the Place cited, it is impossible that any such thing should be here intended, as the choosing the Apostle *Matthias* by the Suffrages of the Laity. For (1st) it is manifest, here was no thought of Voting, because upon that supposition there can be no Place for Lots ; and the Prayer used is altogether improper, were this matter to be determined by a Majority of Votes. Again, the proper time for Voting had been before the Lots were cast ; and it sounds odd to talk of Voting after God Almighty had been invoked. It looks absurd, first, to draw Lots in the Presence of Almighty God, and pray him to indicate whom he hath chosen, and after God’s Will is made known in Favour of *Matthias*, then to Vote whether he shall be the Man or no.

But I can’ see the consistency of the Peoples Election of a Person to the Apostleship, with this Author’s own Principles.

For (1st) the utmost he contends for ( I presume ) in the Laity is a right in every Congregation to Appoint or Ordain their own Minister. But his Argument drawn from this Place of Scripture, if it proves this right for which it is alledged, will likewise prove a right in one Congregation to chuse and appoint the Person who shall Govern and Teach in any other, as he himself shall think fit, all over the Christian World ; for such a Power belanged to an Apostle. Now this right of Electing, ascribed to every Congregation, is quite overturned by this Argument, which pleads for a right in the Laity assembled with the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, to impose a Governour & Teacher upon all other Christians which then were, or should afterwards be ; but their Power could extend no farther than themselves ;

whereas the Commission of an Apostle reached farther than those already Converted, even to the whole World ; and consequently they cannot be supposed to have any right of conferring a Commission on such an Officer as this.

AND as to the Election of Deacons, it doth not at all appear, that the Apostles accounted this a Priviledge of the People, but the contrary ; because the People claimed no such right, but did it in Obedience to the Apostles : the number is determined by the Apostles, and altho' the Nomination of Persons is put upon the People, the right of appointing them to that Office is reserved to themselves. Look ye out among you Seven Men of Honest Report whom We may appoint over this Business, *Act. 6. 3.* which accordingly they did at the 6th ver. not accounting the Nomination of the People sufficient, when they were to do something farther. And consistent with this Apostolical Practice, is the practice of the Church of England.

I shall take leave before I conclude this Head, to offer something to the serious Consideration of those Persons, who appear so fond of the Right of the Laity. 'Tis this ; That tho' they want such Precedents as may support it, yet there are two Precedents, which are a strong Prejudice against it.

WE all know, That the Rebellion of *Corah* and his Company was occasioned by *Aaron's* having the High-Priesthood conferred on him, which *Corah* endeavoured to obtain for himself, by that popular Tumult. Now *Josephus* tells us, *Antiquit. Judaic. lib. 4. cap. 2. pag. 103. Colon, 1691.* that the Pretence of *Corah* and his Company was, that *Moses* had injur'd the Congregation, by conferring the Priesthood on *Aaron* without the Peoples choice. I confess the sacred Text does not expressly say thus much ; tho' it manifestly favours, or rather implies this account of the matter. For how could *Corah* seek for the High-Priesthood ( as it appears he did, from *Numb. 16*

3, 8, 9, 10, 11.) by the assistance of the People in opposition to *Moses*, if he did not expect it from his Interest in the People, and hope to be chosen by them? This is the only Fact I can remember, since the very first Foundation of the Jewish Dispensation down to our Saviour's Erection of the Christian Church, which has any appearance of the Peoples claiming a Right to chuse their Priests. And how much Credit it will give to their Cause, let our Adversaries themselves determine.

THE other Precedent or rather Prediction is under the Gospel Dispensation. *St. Paul* tells *Timothy*, that the time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own Lusts, shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears. And they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turn'd into Fables, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4. 'Tis plain therefore, that the Persons here spoken of, did actually chuse their own particular Pastors; and 'tis the only Instance of this kind in the Apostolical times, or even in some following (and those the purest) Centuries. But what sort of Persons were they, who first began to exercise this pretended right? Why, they were such as would not endure Sound Doctrine, such as had itching Ears, such as turned away their Ears from the Truth, and turned into Fables. And what sort of Pastors did they chuse for themselves? Why, Pastors like themselves, after their own Lust. A sad Example! But our Adversaries have no other or better Patterns! Could the Allotment or Imposition of Pastors without the choice of their Flocks, be traced to such an Original, how unmercifully would our Adversaries triumph over us?

BUT it is represented as another great Crime against us, that we don't only maintain the Dominion of Prelates, but arm a Shoal of Inferiour Tyrants, Deans, Chancellours, &c. and to be sure the Spiritual Courts must not be forgot. Now methinks, were this Author less inclin'd to deceive, and impose on his Reader, and more to inform, he would endeavour to prove these  
 Offices

Offices inconsistent with the Word of God. We plead not for the Divine Right of them, yet esteem them of great Antiquity, and Instituted for the better Regulation of Christ's Church. For their Antiquity I must refer my Antagonist to the Novels of *Kalensian* third ; Valent. Novel. tit. 12, to the Council of *Chalcedon*, Anno Dom. 451. Can. 2 and 23. to the Council of *Carthage* Anno Dom. 467. Can. 100. Edit. Oxon. by which he will discern them to have been even then of long and universal standing in the Church. But after all we think the same Hands that set them up, may dissolve and put them down : But until it shall seem meet to our Superiors thus to determine, we think it more consistent with the spirit of the Gospel, to forbear opposing private Opinions to publick Authority, and to endeavour as much as lies in us to live Peaceably with all Men. But if any Man seem to be Contentious, we have no such Custom, neither the Churches of God, 1 Cor 11. 16. But these Reproaches we can bear, because they are owing partly to Envy, and partly to Men's Ignorance of what was formerly done in the Church. But withal, give me leave to inform our Adversaries, that none of the Puritans ever declaim'd against Cathedral Dignities, till by their Schism they had cut themselves off from all hopes and possibility of enjoying them. *Humbreys, Wbittingham, Fox*, chief Men among them, could bear the Inside of a Cathedral well enough, till *Cartwright* made an absolute Defection and Separation from the Church.

Our Author's next step, is to conjure up a Spirit, which it is not in his Power to lay ; No, not with the Assistance of Arch-Bishop *Tillotson*. He furnishes *Prelaticus* with this Argument. [ " Ordination by Bishops is certainly of Divine Institution ; for Bishops are Presbyters, if they have no higher Character : and therefore upon your own Principles, have Power of Ordination ; and therefore ours must be allowed to be the safest side. Now for the Solution, he finds the knot

knor inextricable, and therefore grows Scurrilous : He answers,  
 [ " It is the constant Clamour of your Party. ] This Gentleman  
 has an excellent knack at salving Difficulties, but he betrays his  
 own Ignorance, if he thinks mankind so easily imposed on. But  
 don't the Baptists and Papists make use of the same Plea ?  
 " The Baptists plead that we own their Baptism is valid, while  
 " they deny that the Sprinkling of an Infant is any Baptism  
 " at all ; and therefore they must be of the safer side. —  
 " So the Papists argue after the same manner, that all own Sal-  
 " vation may be Obtained by some in the Communion of the  
 " Church of Rome ; but they deny the possibility of the Sal-  
 " vation of Protestants, and therefore the Papists are of the  
 " safer side.—This is the great and popular Argument they  
 " Assault us with. And for an Answer to it ; we are refer'd  
 " to our own Arch Bishop *Tillotson*. ————— A Person had need  
 be very quick sighted to discourse any Analogy in these cases ;  
 but this Gentleman's positions are decretory. And whence pray  
 received he his information, that the Church of England allows  
 the validity of Baptism Administred by Baptists ? Not from the  
 Articles Canons, and Rubrick of the Church ; for they declare  
 the Baptism of Laicks to be invalid, by requiring a lawful Ad-  
 ministrator : And notwithstanding the great pains taken to prove  
 the Divine Right of Presbyterian Ordinaison, I must still for  
 want of fuller conviction level Dissenting Teachers of all De-  
 nominations in the same rank with Laicks. The reader will be  
 pleas'd to mark the equal and impartial management of our  
 Author so much recommended by the Publisher : He would  
 only impose upon us the imaginations of his own Brain for the  
 Articles Canons, &c. of the Church of England. As to the Pa-  
 pists. — The Argument of the Romanists is this : You acknow-  
 ledge a possibility of Salvation in our Church ; ( i. e. ) that  
 invincible Ignorance joined with true sincerity may be an A-  
 nalogy for the errors of many in it ; which we do not ac-  
 knowledge

knowledge concerning yours. But pray who is so stupid, as not to discover, that this is no Argument, why those who know the Errors and Superstitions of that Church should go over to it? Because, there is no acknowledgment in this, of the possibility of Salvation to such Persons as these. But the Dissenters acknowledge Episcopal Ordination Lawful, and considered by it self safe and secure, they ought therefore to submit to it, because a deviation from it cannot be acceptable to Almighty God. Therefore let any impartial Man judge the equity of the parrellel drawn by this Gentleman: That Arguments stands still unshaken, notwithstanding his Objections; and an insuperable difficulty it is. But our Author " will not rest in " these general remarks, but particularly expostulate the matter.

He asks, " Is it the safest side to acknowledge and submit " to a Hierarchy not Warranted in the Word of God? I Answer, No. But to retort the Expostulation, for I suppose him a Teacher, does he Act by a Commission Warranted in the Book of God? " Is it the safest side for me solemnly to " declare at my Ordination, that I am moved by the Holy " Ghost to take upon me the Office of a Deacon, when I have " no purpose to serve Tables, for which Deacons were Instituted? With submission, we require better Authority than this Gentleman's assertion, that Deacons were Instituted barely to serve Tables: he must excuse me for dissenting from him in Opinion, because in the 8th of the *Acts*, we find that *Philip* a Deacon, Preached and Baptized; and *St. Ignatius* ( full as compleat a Judge, I presume as this Author ) affirms in his Epistle to the Trallians, that Deacons are not Servants of Meats and Drinks only, but Ministers of the Church of God. " Is it the " safest side to take upon me the Order of Priesthood, an Order " Typical of our Lord Jesus Christ, fulfilled in him, and A- " brogated by him? I Answer it is very safe, to sake upon me the Order of Priesthood, when duly called and authoritatively sent ;

sent ; And had this Gentleman been so ingenuous as to have distinguished between the Priesthood of the Aaronical Order Abrogated by our Saviour, and the Melchizedecan restored in its room ; there would be no difficulty in the thing. The eternal Archetypal and Antitypal Melchisedeck going up into the Heaven of Heavens, as it were into a far Country left his Apostles, and their Successors as his Stewards and Vicegerents invested with full Power and Authority to Administrate his Sacerdotal Kingdom ; Is it not reasonable therefore to believe that their Ministry is truly and properly Sacerdotal ? For was Jesus Christ a most proper Bishop over his Church by Commission from his Father, and are the Visible Bishops proper Bishops of it by Mission or Commission from him ? This I suppose our Author will grant ; and if he does, let him give any good reason if he can, why by Mission or Commission from Christ the High Priest of our Profession, they are not also proper Priests.—As the Apostles whom he sent, as his Father sent him, were truly and properly Apostles under him ; so under him truly and properly speaking, were they also Priests.—As he is a Priest, and his Kingdom is a Sacerdotal Kingdom : So his Ministers must be Priests, or Sacerdotal Ministers, as well as Ministers to Govern and Teach his People : According to *St. Paul. Heb. 5. 1.* For every High Priest taken from among Men, is Ordained for Men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both Gifts and Sacrifices for Sin. But for further satisfaction in this point, I refer the Reader to *Dr. Hikes's Christian Priesthood Asserted.* But to proceed, “ Is it the safest side to take upon me the Solemn Charge of the Ministry, and to come under awful Vows to fulfil it : and yet to depend upon the Bishops License to Preach ?

AND pray where is the inconsistency of taking upon one the Solemn Charge of the Ministry, and coming under Vows

to fulfil it, and yet depending upon the Bishops License to Preach ; But an universal Liberty for every Man to Profane the Word of God, and subvert all Order of Government, is what ( I suppose ) this Gentleman would be at. But we have not so learned Christ, we are taught to Obey them that have the Rule over us in all things lawful, and it does not yet appear that receiving License from a Bishop is contrary to God's Word. — But further, “ Is it the safest side to acknowledge “ our Bishops endued with the extraordinary Apostolical Power “ of giving the Holy Ghost by imposition of hands ? I Answer, The Apostles themselves were never endued with the power of giving the Holy Ghost. In procuring the Grace of God's Spirit, Man acts as an instituted means, he prays for it in behalf of others, and helps to create those good dispositions in them which makes them proper subjects to receive it. But the Grace of the Spirits, can upon neither of these accounts be said to be given of Man, but is absolutely and solely the Gift of God. And thus this Gentleman might have found it every where represented in Scripture. When St Paul speaks of the Grace which *Timothy* had received by the imposition of his hands, he calls it not his Gift, but τὸ ἐξ Χριστοῦ the Gift of God. 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. And when *Simon* the Sorcerer offer'd Money to St. Peter, to give him that Power that on whomsoever he should lay his hands, he might receive the Holy Ghost ; the Apostle in effect tells him, that the Power was not in him but absolutely in God. Thy Money says he, perish with thee, because thou hast thought ( not that my Gift but ) τὴν τὸ ἐξ δωρεῶν, that the Gift of God may be purchased with Money. St. Peter by laying on of his hands only did that, in consequence of which, God was pleased to bestow the Holy Ghost ; Nor do I think it can be shewn in any one instance from Scripture, that the Grace of the Spirit is ascribed to any Man as the giver of it. — We therefore trust, that

that God of his goodness will still convey this Gift, through the Prayers and by the imposition of Apostles Successors hands to the end of the World. — And this we think safe and consistent with the Holy Scriptures. “ Is it the safest side to solemnly Promise at my Ordination reverently to Obey my Ordinary, that is, my Bishop : No doubt on't, if you intend to perform your promise, and that in conformity to God's command. Obey them that have the Rule over you, &c. “ Lastly, Is it the safest side to be Ordained to but part of the Ministerial Work, and to be deprived of the Powers of Ordination and Jurisdiction ? Yes, much the safest, because in acting otherwise, you Act in direct Opposition to the Commands of Christ, Usurping Powers that in no measure belong to you. You'l Pardon Sir my Prolixity, for I thought my self under an indispensable Obligation, to give this Author reasons for preferring Presbyterian Ordination, to Ordination by Bishops, a thorough examination ; and flatter my self they will to the candid reader appear to be ill natured Suggestions, not substantial Reasons.

THIS Gentleman out of great Condescension, is pleased to pass a Complement on the Church of England, and some of her Bishops. He tells us, “ he values the Church of England highly as a Protestant Church, and has a just veneration for the Learning and Piety of some of her Bishops. I am sorry we can't return the Compliment,

At length we enter upon the merits of the cause, and his first plea is taken from the Indentity of Bishops and Presbyters. And his Opinion he strengthens with several Texts of Scripture ; from *Phil.* 1. 1. from *Tit.* 1. 5, 6, 7. from *Act.* the 20. 17. 28. It is certainly frivolous to Argue from the Indentity of Names to the Indentity of Offices, for from hence it will follow that every Deacon is an Apostle ; because the

Apostles call themselves Deacons, 1 Cor. 5. 5. and as their Ministry is termed a Deaconship, *Act.* 1. 25.

BUT to make short work of it ; I grant to this Author all he contends for. I grant that the Names of Bishop and Presbyter are used so promiscuously in the New Testament, as to leave no distinction of Office. I grant there are as many Bishops in the first sense of the word as Presbyters in the most early Churches. I grant that we can find in the New Testament no Presbyter who was not a Bishop, ( i. e. ) called by that Name. I grant the duties and qualifications of those called Bishops in the New Testament, and of those called Presbyters are the same, because they are the duties and qualifications of the same Church Officer called by both those Names. I grant to him all these things, that is indeed only one single point thus variously express'd, *viz.* that Presbyters are those Church Officers who are called Bishops in the New Testament.

BUT though I have granted to him all this, yet I hope may, and will maintain, that the Powers of those who were called Bishops in the New Testament, were not the same with the Powers of those who were called so afterwards in an eminent sense, or in other words, that those Church Officers who are stiled Bishops in the New-Testament have never received or exercised the right of Ordaining others; but that this right was always in the hands of Officers Superiour to them. And this evident, from the Churches of Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Thessalonica, Crete, &c. which had in them a Clergy consisting of several Ministers. If therefore all the Ministers were equal, and had a right of Ordaining, they might have done it themselves, without putting the Apostles to the Trouble, and hazard of long Journeys, and dangerous Voyages ; or for that purpose, obliging them to  
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Depute Bishops. Nay, were they conscious of any such Privilege belonging to them, how natural were it for them thus to expostulate ? By what Authority are these Officers imposed upon us ? By what Authority are we restrain'd from exercising the Power of Ordination ? Are we not all equal ? Are we not all fellow Presbyters ? But they had more humility, and had not so learned Christ as to fly in the face of Authority, and Usurp a Power which did not belong to them, No ! they wanted the Pride and Ambition of our Modern pretended Presbyters, to qualify them for so heinous an Offence. — We do not find, that in the time of the Apostles any one was admitted into the Ministry, but by them, or by those to whom they had given such a Commission. The power of Ordaining was in the hands of those who possess'd a distinguished Authority : Otherwise there would have been no need, that the Apostles, or their Commissioners, should cross Countries and Seas, to Ordain Ministers for Churches, which had a numerous Clergy, if these might have done it without them.

Again, THE fixing the Name of Bishops upon those who are in an eminent sense Overseers, and Curators of the Church, was a matter purely Arbitrary, and now founded merely upon Custom : and it is not from the difference of Names we argue to the difference of Offices ; and therefore cannot think it of any Importance, on the other side, to argue from the Identity of Names to the Identity of Offices.

THE Argument founded upon this Plea, if stated truly, can amount to no more than this ; Presbyters are called Bishops or Overseers in the New Testament : therefore, certainly they must justly claim all the Rights belonging to those who are there called Bishops. This I acknowledge. But what those Rights are, we are still as much at a loss to know as ever. — That this Argument will not prove Ordination to be one of them is very evident,

evident, because that can be done only by producing such Texts as declare this to be one of the Rights and Privileges, belonging to those then called by that Name: Which can never be done. On the contrary, I have this argument to urge: Presbyters have a Title to those Rights only which were enjoyed by those Church Officers who are called Bishops, or Overseers in the New Testament. But the Power of Ordination was never allowed to, or claimed by those who are there called Bishops. Therefore it is not one of those Rights to which Presbyters have a Title.—And whether St. Paul dealt with the Presbyters of Ephesus, and Crete, as if he knew any thing of such a Commission, let any one judge, who can read his Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*.—And indeed, Ordination to me seems to have been too necessary a Qualification, for St. Paul to have omitted, in his Enumeration of a Bishop's Qualifications, *1 Tim. 3.* had he known of any such Power to which they were entitled. The great mistake of our Dissenters lies here, They imagine that Bishops now peculiarly so called, are the same with those Presbyters called Bishops in Scripture; not considering that Bishops eminently so called, answer not to Presbyters so called in the New Testament, but to such superior Officers as *Timothy* and *Titus*, &c. who had the Power to enforce Presbyters to their Duty, to receive accusations against them, and judicially to pass Sentence upon them; which abundantly proves their Superiority. But should it be ask'd were there then in the Primitive Church such superior Officers as we now call Bishops in an eminent Sense? We answer, yes, but they were then commonly called Apostles, as *Epaphroditus*, Bishop of *Philippi*, is called by St. Paul himself, *Phil. 2. 25.* ὑμῶν ἡ ἀποστολὴ, your Apostle. And if we consult the ancient Records of the Church, we shall there find, that *James* Bishop of Jerusalem, *Mark* of Alexandria, *Timothy* of Ephesus, *Titus* of Crete, and *Clemens* of Rome, were all called Apostles. And as *Theodoret* observes, τὰς νῦν καλεμένους Ἐπισκόπους, Ἀποστολὰς ἠνόμαζον; those which we call

call Bishops, the Primitive Christians called Apostles. Had there been no difference of Names settled, but had both Presbyters and Bishops been called by one common name to this Day, whither Bishops or Presbyters, all the Arguments had still stood as firm for Episcopacy. If it could be shown, that there had been always in the Church Officers (superior to the Teachers of particular Congregations) to whom the Power of Ordination did peculiarly belong, the Cause of Episcopacy must have stood firm. I have endeavoured to set this matter in a true and easy Light, because the Gentleman's whole reasoning seems to be built on this mistaken notion, that Identity of Names implies an Identity of Offices.

BUT it is alledged, " That the Apostles call themselves Presbyters ; be pleased to read *1 Pet. 5. 1.* The Elders that are among you, I exhort, who am also an Elder, ( or Presbyter ) so *2 John 1.* and *3. John 1.* Can any thing be plainer, than that according to your own Scheme, Bishops are in these texts called Presbyters. The Gentleman makes a very wrong Inference, for it will not all follow from those texts, that Bishops were Presbyters, but that the Apostles were Presbyters. And who ever denied it ? But doth it hence appear, ( what ought to be proved ) that the Apostles were only, or no other than Presbyters, or ( which comes to the same ) that every Presbyter is an Apostle ? certainly no. For tho' a superior Order does frequently presuppose and include all its relative inferior Orders, yet in no case does the contrary obtain, as being unnatural and so irrational. Whence it comes to pass, that ( as it does not follow, that, because every Master or Doctor in any faculty is also a Batchelor in the same Faculty, therefore every Batchelor is a Master or Doctor ; or because every Serjeant at Law is also a Barrister, therefore every Barrister is a Serjeant ; or lastly, because every Duke is a Marquis, therefore every Marquis is a Duke ; so ) in the case before us, tho' every Apostle, or Ec-

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son of the Apostolical, otherwise called the Episcopal Order, be also a Presbyter or Deacon, yet it doth not follow that every Presbyter or Deacon is a Person of the Apostolical or Episcopal Order. And thus you may see that from the aforecited words of *St. Peter*, or of *St. John*, no conclusive Proof can be drawn for the equality of the Order of Presbyters, with the Apostolical or Episcopal Order: but only that the word Presbyter was sometimes applied to the Apostolical Order, particularly by way of Humility or Condescension. Not to add, that according to this Example, 'tis the well known Practice of the Bishops of our Church, when any one of them writes to a Presbyter, to subscribe himself your affectionate Brother; which he does (not as a Bishop; but in *St. Peter's* Language) *ὡς Συμπρεσβυτερος*, (i. e.) as being also a Presbyter.

BUT further, if *St. Peter's* or *St. John's* applying to themselves the word Presbyter is a sufficient argument to prove that all Presbyters have Apostolical Power; and consequently the Power of Ordination; then it must also be allowed, that *St. Paul's* applying to himself, nay, even to Christ, the word Deacon *Eph. 3. 7. Col. 1. 23. Rom. 15. 8.* is as sufficient an Argument, that all Deacons are also invested with Apostolical Power, and consequently with the Power of Ordination. And thus, this Gentleman's own way of inferring will force him further, than he cares willingly to go; which is indeed no other than usually happens to the Abettors or Maintainers of bad and erroneous causes.

BUT we are told, "that it appears with the most convincing Evidence, that the whole work, as well as the name of Bishop, was committed to Presbyters, from *1 Pet. 5. 2.* where Presbyters are exhorted, to feed the Flock of God which was among them, taking the oversight thereof ( *ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΝΤΕΣ* ) acting the Bishop therein, as in the Original Well, and  
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what then; that he exhorts the Presbyters, to do the Office of Bishops, that is, of those then called Bishops, or Overseers, I grant: But to say that it thence follows that he commands them to Ordain, and Govern, which are parts of the Duty of those since that time call'd Bishops in a peculiar sense, is manifestly to beg the Question. For the Question is not whether Presbyters were not called Overseers in those early Days: But what the Business of those, who were then called Overseers was. So that the Argument is no better than this, *St. Peter* commands Presbyters to do the Office of those who were in his Days call'd Bishops or Overseers; therefore he commands them to do the Office of those who were afterwards called so in an eminent sense. Whereas the Point now in Debate is, whether those Officers who were then called Bishops, were called to the Office of Ordaining? What the Office of those was to whom *St. Peter* writes, is plainly enough here expressed, *viz.* To Feed the Flock in that place where they were placed, overseeing, or looking after it. Now it cannot possibly be implied in this, that they had the Power of Ordination, which respects the constituting Shepherds over other Flocks, not the Feeding that Flock over which they were themselves placed. Nay, the contrary is rather implied, because *St. Peter* when he is giving them advice to perform their Office as becomes them, mentions only the Feeding of that Flock, which they were before this, call'd to oversee and take care of. From all which it is evident, that nothing can be collated from this Passage in favour of Presbyterian Ordination.

“ BUT it is evident that Presbyters were vested with the  
 “ Power of Ordination, from 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. Neglect not the  
 “ Gift that is in thee by Prophecy, with the laying on of the  
 “ Hands of the Presbytery. It must be remembered, that the  
 “ Gift which is here affirmed to have been conferr'd on *Timothy*  
 “ by the Hands of the Presbytery, in another place is said to  
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have been given him by the putting on of *St. Paul's* hands, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. But we are told, " That it is very probable that " the Gift which *Timothy* received by the imposition of *St. Paul's* " hands, was the extraordinary miraculous Powers of the Holy " Ghost, &c. I answer, If the Gift in one Text may signify the miraculous Powers of the Holy Ghost, why not in the other ? And then the Ordination of *Timothy* is not the thing here spoken of, and consequently nothing hence can be collected in favour of Presbyterian Ordination. But it is said, " If the supposition be granted, that this imposition of Hands " was for Ordination, it will follow that the Apostle acted as " an ordinary Presbyter at the Ordination. For *Timothy* was " Ordained by a Presbytery, and consequently the Ordainers " must be Presbyters. And Presbyters no doubt they were. And perhaps Superior to Presbyters ; for as the word Presbyter is promiscuously applied to the Apostles themselves ; from hence it will follow, that by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery here mentioned, may very well be understood, the laying on the hands of no other than the Apostles. And then the Inference drawn by the Dissenters from that Text, cannot prove what it is brought to prove.—Again, I answer, That it suits not with *St. Paul's* Modesty and Humility thus to arrogate to himself the sole Power of conferring that Office, when other Presbyters were equally concerned, as it is manifest he does to any one reading over the Text ; for when it is said, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. That *Timothy* was Ordained by *St. Paul*, the Greek Preposition is *δια*, per, by the imposition of my Hands. But 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. The Preposition made use of is, *μετα*, cum, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. And he is not sufficiently acquainted with the Greek Language, who does not know, that in producing Effects, and giving Power, *δια*, signifies the principal and efficient cause ; *μετα*, only the assistant. But says our Author, " Presbyters have the " Power of Ordination. Or else what Business had their hand, " upon

“ upon *Timothy*, in conferring an Order, that they had no Authority to communicate. I answer, that supposing Presbyters peculiarly so called were in this company, ( which doth not appear, nor will the Primitive Father at all allow ) it will only follow from hence, that they may Assist ( with Officers Superiour to themselves ) at an Ordination ; not that they may without any such Officers manage this Affair. If this Advocate had first proved that whoever may lay on hands in Ordination upon any account, must have himself an intrinick Power to Ordain, then indeed he might have insisted that Presbyters had a Power to Ordain ; but to take for granted the thing he ought to prove, is such a way of proceeding as suits only with the Dissenters Modesty in handling a cause. Presbyters may lay on their hands, for the greater solemnity of the Action, or to give their Consent or Approbation. This is the Opinion of several Commentators. And is the practice of our Church, where the Presbyters joyn with the Bishop in laying on of hands, and yet they have not an intrinick power to Ordain, for the Bishop only Ordains.—Our Author's playing with the Extraordinary and Ordinary capacity of the Apostle, is little to the purpose ; however it shall be considered in a proper place. He indeed with confidence enough assures us, that *St. Paul* “ in his Ordinary Capacity was but a Presbyter : But as he does not undertake to prove it, we may safely place it to the Account of a strong imagination.

ANOTHER proof for Presbyterian Ordination is taken from *Acts* 13. 1, 2. “ where says this Writer, *Paul & Barnabas* are set apart to the exercise of the Ministry among the Gentiles, only by the imposition of the hands of a Presbytery, which is, he thinks an unexceptionable evidence, that Presbyters may Ordain without Superiour. Now, I deny this was an Ordination at all ; for if this were the Ordination of *St. Paul*, it will follow from hence, not only that Presbyters have a right to

Ordain Presbyters, but also that their Office extended to the Ordaining even Apostles themselves, and to give them the Authority which they had in the Church: which is too absurd to need any confutation. But then it may be asked, for what end *Paul* and *Barnabas* received imposition of Hands? I answer, this rite was commonly used both by the Jews and primitive Christians in Benedictions. *Jacob* put his hands upon the Heads of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* when he blessed them: And only to mention one instance more, Little Children were brought to Christ, that He should put his Hands on them, and bless them. Accordingly this imposition of Hands on *Paul* and *Barnabas*, was a Solemn Benediction on their Ministry of Preaching the Gospel in a particular circuit, to which they were then sent by the Holy Spirit's direction. Hence it is call'd in the next Chapter, *Acts* i4. 26. A recommendation to the Grace of God for the Work of Ministering the Gospel to certain Cities, which they are said to have fulfilled. So that this rite was not their Ordination to the Apostolick Office; because the end for which it was given, is here said to be fulfilled, whereas their Apostolical Office lasted as long as their Lives. And therefore *Paul* and *Barnabas* seem only now to have had a particular Mission to Preach the Gospel in a certain and limited district, in the same manner as *Peter* and *John* were sent by the College of Apostles to Samaria to confirm the new Converts, and settle the Church there.

Again, THAT this was not a proper Ordination, is manifest from hence; Because this rite of imposing Hands whereby other Ministers were Ordain'd, was never used in making Apostles.

It was a distinguishing part of their Character, that they were immediately called and Ordain'd by Christ himself; who conferred on them the Holy Ghost by breathing on them; but neither he nor any other is ever said to lay Hands on them. When a Place became vacant in the Apostolick College by  
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the Apostacy of *Judas*, the supplying of his place was left to the Appointment of God ; and we read of no Imposition of Hands. Neither was *St. Paul* inferiour in this mark of honour to the rest of the Apostles : For he asserts himself to be an Apostle not of Men, nor by Man, but immediately, and without the intervention of Men, to have been appointed by Jesus Christ. *Gal. 1. 1.* And indeed this Gentleman seems to me, to have quite forgot that there was such a Chapter as the second of the Epistle to the Galatians, where *St. Paul* himself affirms that he and *Barnabas* had many Years before received the right Hand of Fellowship at Jerusalem from *James, Cephas, and John*. From all which it appears that the fore-cited Text has no reference to Ordination.

But suppose *Paul* and *Barnabas* were now Ordain'd, what advantage can the Dissenters reap thereby ? This was done by an immediate command of the Holy Ghost, and consequently can be no precedent for those that are not impowred by such a Commission.

It was a Maxim among the Jews that a Prophet may do all things by virtue of particular Warrant from God. And we accordingly find them performing such things as would be criminal for other Men to attempt. So *Samuel* anointed *David*, and another Prophet anointed *Jehu* to be Kings of Israel ; whilst others were in possession of the Throne : which Acts had they been performed without God's express Commission, would not only have been invalid and null, but Treasonable ; whereas both of them had their full force, as appears from the Sequel of the History. And if the command of God authorized Prophets to break God's own positive Precepts ; and to constitute Kings, we may conclude, that the like command would enable them to Ordain Apostles. But should another usurp a Commission of Ordaining Apostles and other Ecclesiastical Officers,

cers, he must undoubtedly be guilty of the same offence against the Church, which private Men who set up Kings and Magistrates commit against the State.

AND now to take a review of what has been said. If it does appear, that Ordination never belonged to those called Bishops in *Phil* 1. 1. &c.

Is there were other ordinary Officers in the Churches planted by the Apostles besides Bishops and Deacons, to whom belonged the Power of Jurisdiction and Ordination, as is manifest in *Timothy, Titus, Ephraimitus* &c. it necessarily follows that Ministers of particular Congregations had not a Power of Ordaining, call them Bishop, Presbyter, or what you will.

Is notwithstanding Bishops in Scripture are called Presbyters, and Presbyters Bishops, the Apostle knew of a superiour Order, to whom belong'd the aforesaid Powers of Jurisdiction and Ordination, as they certainly did. If the whole Jurisdiction was never committed to Presbyters, and the Ruler is more honourable than the Preacher: If neither Ordination nor Jurisdiction in the Apostolick times were in the Hands of the Presbytery, as I have fully proved they were not; our modern pretended Bishops must found their Authority upon something else than Scripture Institution.

In a word, what one thing is more plain in the New Testament to an unprejudiced eye, than the fallaciousness of arguing from the Identity of Names to the Identity of Offices. If it were possible to add light to a Cause, that already appears as the Sun at Noon-day, I might observe to you, that the word Bishop is never used in Scripture with Ordination appendant; and that the word Presbyter, when appropriated to a Gospel Minister, as a meer Presbyter, is never used for the highest ordinary Officer in the Christian Church. Which renders

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me utterly incapable to imagine upon what Scripture Authority our Modern pretended Presbyters Power can be founded. And if I look into all the Authors that have ever written upon Controversy on their side the Question, I am nothing assisted in that enquiry. There is no Argument, upon which any of them pretends to found their Episcopacy, but that some or other of the same Party have subverted the foundation, and proved the insufficiency of the Argument. There never was greater Confusion in the building of Babel, than there has been in digging of new foundations for this modern Episcopacy: Which gives a shrewd suspicion, that it is not to be found in the Bible; otherwise there would be better Argument among the Patrons of that Cause, as to the true Scripture bottom, upon which it is to be erected. This is the Author's Language in his review of what had been said retorted upon himself; if it be esteemed Cant and not Argumentation, it is not mine, but the ingenuous Author's of the Divine Right of the Presbyterian Ordination considered.

From what has been said, the reader may perceive the fallaciousness of arguing from the Identity of Names to the Identity of Offices, that is absurd and ridiculous; and consequently until the Author proves the right of Ordination to belong to those called Bishops in Scripture, he has done nothing.

BUT our writer has another retreat, and argues from the power of Preaching, of the Keys and Administration of the Sacraments: "They, says he, that have the principal and chief parts of the sacred Ministry committed to them, have also a claim to the inferior and subordinate Parts of that Office. Well who denies it? "But Preaching and Baptizing are the principal and chief parts of the Ministry. I deny that. The power of Ordaining and Authorizing a Man to execute these Offices is much greater. This very Argument do the Papists use, to prove the sameness of Bishop and Presbyter, as to Order;

der ; for as they say, the highest Act is to make the Body and Blood of Christ present, so, to seal and apply it according to our Author, are the principal and superiour Parts of the Ministry ? But pray could not *Philip* the Evangelist Baptize and Preach, but could not confirm. The Presbyters of Ephesus could feed the Flock ; in doing of which no doubt they Preached, and administered the Sacraments ; but 'tis plain, they could not Authorize another to do it : If they could, 'tis amazing to find Persons of a superiour Character sent amongst them, (to manage that affair) in whose Hands this Power is expressly lodged ; Poor Men ! they were not so well acquainted with their own Privileges, as those that were born Sixteen Hundred Years after them. And yet notwithstanding this late and wonderful discovery ; in all the Acts of the primitive Church, we read of this distinction of Officers, and can produce long Catalogues of single Persons succeeding in every Church in this Station and Office.

In the next Paragraph we have a Specimen of the Gentleman's extraordinary Skill in drawing consequences. He quotes, *1 Tim. 5. 17.* " Let the Elders that Rule well, be counted worthy of double honour ; especially they that labour in Word and Doctrine ; And from hence, as he infers, that Labouring in Word and Doctrine is a Work superior to Ruling, and the principal part of the Ministry. Now, who is so dull as not to perceive, that this is no Consequence at all. — Why the very Elders who rul'd the Church, and over and above that Service laboured in Preaching the Word, are the Persons counted worthy of double honour. Here is no preference given to Preaching above Ruling, but Rulers are commended for executing the other Offices of the Ministry. And what is this to Presbyterian Ordination ? But any thing to blind and impose on the Reader. Now, who would be a drudge to a Cause that cannot be Supported without such pitiful Shifts as these ?

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Our Author's next Argument is founded on a mistaken notion that Presbyters were the Apostles immediate Successors in the Ministry. Now this mistake arises from his imagination, that Bishops now peculiarly so called, are the same with those Presbyters called Bishops in Scripture, not considering, that Bishops eminently so called, answer not to Presbyters so called in the New Testament, but to such superior Church Officers as *Timothy* and *Titus*, who had the plenitude of the Apostolical Power and Authority which was ordinary and standing in the Church.

For tho' every Minister of the Gospel may in some respects be said to be the Successor of the Apostles, because his Office is of Divine Right ; yet certainly those Ministers who were Vested with the whole ordinary and always necessary Apostolical Power, are more properly the Successors, than those who have part of it only. But of this more particularly anon.

He queries, " If *Timothy* had the Authority to commit the same things which he had received to other faithful Men, why hasn't all others in the Ministry the same Authority. I answer, because it is not inconsistent with the nature of the Pastoral Office, or to the Gospel, to communicate the entire Power to some Officers, and some branches of it only to others. Nor do I much regard " that celebrated Maxim of Arch-bishop *Usher's*, *Ordinis est Ordinare* ; he that is in Orders, has the right and power of giving Orders. For we know well, that one Deacon cannot Ordain another consistently with the Dissenters own Scheme. — And altho' Bishops do consecrate Arch-bishops, it will not follow that Presbyters should Ordain Presbyters ; and the reason is plain because Presbyters are not at all impowred in the New Testament to perform this Work. Neither do we allow of Inferiours consecrating Superiours, as this Writer would disingenuously insinuate ; For all Bishops have originally equal power and right in Church Affairs. And tho' a primacy of Order is

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granted to some by general consent, under the regulation of Ecclesiastical Canons; they have no proper Superiority and Jurisdiction over Bishops, they being all *ejusdem Sacrodotii et Autoritatis*.

THIS Gentleman closes his first Conference (with his accustomed Ingenuity!) exhibiting a most terrible Charge against us of Unchurching the whole Protestant World, but our selves, because destitute of Episcopal Ordination. Had this Gentleman been less Sanguine, and more Inquisitive, he might have discovered that all the Churches of the *Ausburg* Confession have a subordination of Pastors; and in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, they have both Bishops and Arch-bishops. The Protestant Churches of Hungary and Transylvania are divided into Dioceses, the Ruler whereof is a Bishop. The Bohemian Churches had also their Bishops until the last Calamity they sustain'd drove them to the Woods and Mountains. So that this Author does most shamefully, or ignorantly misrepresent the Protestant World.

BUT is it this received Principle of the Catholick Church, that Unchurches foreign Churches? Or do they Unchurch themselves by continuing wilful Transgressors of it? The positive Laws of God are all Sacrosanct, especially those he hath ordain'd for Government, and He will in no wise excuse the wilful neglect of them; but every such Transgression against the Polity of the Christian Theocracy, let the number of Offenders be never so great, shall receive a just recompence of reward.

THUS Sir, have I examined all the Author's reasoning delivered in his First Conference for his new and fantastical Notion of preferring Presbyterian to Episcopal Ordination. And hope these Papers may have the favour of your Pardon, if not the advantage of your Esteem.

Your's, &c.

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## Second Letter.

*Sir,*

IN my former Letter I stuck close to the Author's Reasoning, and believe I did not omit particularly Answering every thing Material Objected by him. In the examination of his Second Conference, I shall alter my Method, for these reasons. First, Because part of it has already been considered. Secondly, Because he has placed his Antagonist's Arguments in so indifferent a light, that I think my self not at all Obliged to regard his stating the Questions in dispute; and I suppose he will have little reason to boast of a Victory, after I prove these four Propositions.

First, THAT the Apostles had properly Successors in the Essentials of the Apostolick Office.

Secondly, THAT it is not contrary to the Nature of the Pastoral Office, or to the Gospel, to communicate the entire Power to some Officers, and some branches of it only to others. And under this head, I shall examine this Advocate's reasoning from the grand Ministerial Commission.

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Thirdly,

Thirdly, THAT in the Apostolick times there were Officers, Constituted in the Church by the Apostles themselves Superior to Presbyters, and that this Superiority has been continued in Bishops eminently so called.

Fourthly, THAT had there been no such Officers constituted by the Apostles Superior to Presbyters ; Yet Modern Presbyterian Ordination must be Null and Void. — These Propositions fully proved, will invalidate ( I conceive ) and quite undermine this Author's Superstructure.

First then, I am to prove that the Apostles had properly Successors in the Essentials of the Apostolick Office. This my Antagonist denies, and endeavours to Answer Reasons, as he of his great Wisdom, is pleased to put in his Adversary's Mouth ; but they are nothing to me.

In order therefore to reduce the debate into as short a compass as possible, I will first shew wherein this Advocate and I are agreed.

We are agreed, that the Apostles had no Successors in that part of their Power which was extraordinary and miraculous. This being transient, temporary, and limited to the Necessities of the Church, at the first Preaching of the Gospel. But then I affirm that this was not essential to the Apostolick ; and my Antagonist denies it. We are also agreed that the Apostles had Successors in those Branches of Spiritual Power, that are not founded on such extraordinary Assistances, and peculiar Priviledges : such was the Preaching the Gospel, Administering Sacraments, Ordaining, &c. These Offices I make the Essentials of the Apostolick Office, and hope to prove it. Now all my Adversary's Arguments upon this Head will be fully considered, If I can give a clear and satisfactory Answer to this Question. Whether the extraordinary Priviledges

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of working Miracles, and being Witnesses of the Resurrection, which the Apostles were blessed with, were essential to the Apostolick Office? I deny they were, and my Adversary affirms the contrary.

In order therefore to give a clear Answer to this Question, I will suppose that by Essential, this Gentleman understands something that was peculiar to the Apostolick Office, and what distinguishes it from all others. And then nothing can be Essential to the Apostolick Office, but what distinguishes it from all other Offices: And therefore must be so peculiar to the Office of the Apostles, as not to belong to any other Order of Men. But it is evident that those extraordinary Gifts we are speaking of, were so far from being peculiar to the Apostles, that many Men were endued with them, who had no share at all in the Ministry, therefore these extraordinary Gifts were not of the Nature and Essence of the Apostolick Office, so as to distinguish it from all others. And since the Apostolick Office was to continue for ever in the Church according to our Saviour's Promise, *Mat. 28. 20. Who told them, Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the World,* And since these extraordinary Gifts did not continue any longer than the necessities of the Church required them, it is manifest, that these extraordinary Gifts were not essential to their Office: And consequently nothing was of the Nature and Essence of this Office, but what might be succeeded in, but what was communicated to other Ministers of the Gospel, from Generation to Generation.

THE Apostles indeed, in the Execution of their Office, had the Power of working Miracles to defend it; but then this Power was not Essential to their Office, neither did it distinguish them in their Ministry from other Men; and I do not know but God would furnish his Ministers even now, with  
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such extraordinary Privileges, if there was occasion for them: So that really there is nothing that can formally distinguish an Apostle from other Ministers of the Evangelical OEconomy, but the Fulness and Plenitude of that ordinary Power, which was to continue for ever in the Church. But this Gentleman "would fain know, how it appears, that Apostles are permanently set in the Church, and to continue till Christ comes; "when Prophets, Evangelists, Miracles, Gifts of Healing and "Diversity of Tongues are confessedly Temporary. — I Answer, that these were not so many distinct Offices. They were only several Denominations conferr'd on those Officers which were in the Church before, with relation to their Labours in several Parts and Places of the Catholick Church; and were all included in the Names Apostles and Elders. And indeed they were only occasional Commissions to execute some Branches of the Apostolical Offices, which could not be executed, as things then stood, without an extraordinary Power; and whenever God sees such to be necessary, he may grant such Commissions again. But the Apostolick Power which was peculiar to them, and the distinctive Character of their Office, I have already proved was to continue for ever, and does still continue. But their extraordinary Assistances were not Essential to, or distinctive Characters of their Office. Besides, the work of an Evangelist and Prophet, &c. was common to every Minister: St. *John* & St. *Matthew* were Apostles & Evangelists; St. *Mark* a Bishop and Evangelist; *Phillip* a Deacon and Evangelist; and therefore they could not be distinct Offices, that required distinct Officers.

Again, If the Essentials of the Apostolick Office consisted in being Witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, and the extraordinary Assistances of the Holy Ghost; then the Seventy Disciples who had the extraordinary Assistances of the Holy Ghost, and were Witnesses of our Saviour's Resurrection, were Apostles; Nay, the

the Five-Hundred Brethren by whom he was sent at one time; 1 Cor. 15. 6. had one Essential of the Apostolick Office, and some of them more, for ought we know, and consequently were Apostles. But, I would gladly be inform'd, to what purpose *Matthias* was chosen in the place of *Judas*, if by that choice he could receive no more Power than he had in his Commission before? The Distinction therefore between them, must have consisted in the ordinary Branches of the Pastoral Office; and consequently, the Essentials of the Apostolick Office were not founded on such extraordinary Assistances, and peculiar Privileges; which was the thing to be proved.

My Second Proposition is this, THAT it is not contrary to the Nature of the Pastoral Office, or to the Gospel, to communicate the entire Power to some Officers, and some Branches of it only to others. And under this Head, I shall examine our Author's reasoning from the Grand Ministerial Commission:

IN this Opinion I am confirmed, because the Scripture supposes it may be done, and has left the communicating the several Gifts to the Discretion of the Ordainers, to distribute them as they shall find the Persons to be Ordained, qualified to receive them. And tho' the Ordainers cannot diminish the Power which is annexed to any Office, yet the entire Pastoral Power is no where in Scripture so clearly annexed to any Officer, that one Man may not be supposed to have the Exercise of one Branch of the Office committed to his trust, and not of another: on the contrary, the Scripture plainly supposes this may be, *Rom.* 12. 6, 7, 8. Where the differing Branches of the Pastoral Office are placed, not in the same, but different Persons: Prophecyng in one, Teaching in another, Exhorting in a third, Ministering in another, Ruling in another, according as they were qualified.

Again, THAT our Saviour founded his Church in an Imparity both of Order and Power, must ( I think be acknowledged )

ledged ) if the Twelve Apostles were Superior both in Order and Power to the Seventy Disciples.

AND this I am the more Sollicitous to prove, because my Adversary is of Opinion, that " to shew wherein this Distinction and Inferiority lies is too hard a task. Its what none of our Party can ever be able to do. These Expressions are terrible indeed, but I am not at all startled with his big words, and bold asseverations. The Proposition, I prove thus.

THE Apostles were Ordained to be with our Lord, and accordingly are every where throughout the Gospels reckoned as his constant Attendants, both from the time of their Ordination, till they were sent forth to Preach ; and again after their return from Preaching, till his Death : But the Seventy were only appointed to Preach, and after they returned to our Lord, and gave him an account of their success in the Execution of that Office, they were never once mentioned again.

THE Seventy were only sent before our Lord's face into the Cities and Places, whither he himself would come, (*Luk. 10. 1.*) to prepare the People for his Reception. Whereas the Apostles Commission was in general to Preach to all the Jews. The Inauguration of the Seventy to their Office, was not so solemn as that of the Twelve, before which, our Lord not only commanded the Disciples to pray to God, to send Labourers into his Harvest, but continued a whole Night in Prayer by himself. The Twelve were distinguished by the name of Apostles, the Seventy only called by the general name of Disciples ; the Apostles were constantly called the Twelve ; whereas had they been all equal, they must have been the Eighty two. Twelve Thrones were appointed, whereon those Twelve Men should sit to judge the Twelve Tribes of Israel, *Mat. 19. 28.* And the Twelve Foundations of the New Jerusalem were to contain the Names of the Twelve Apostles. When a Vacancy happened in the College of the Apostles by the Apostacy of  
*Judas,*

*Judas*, another was in a most solemn manner by divine Designation appointed to take his Bishoprick, and to be numbred with the Eleven Apostles. *Matthias*, the Person Ordained to succeed *Judas*, if any credit may be given to *Eusebius*, *Jerom*, or *Epiphanius*, was one of the Seventy. From all, and every one of which observations, it appears how unreasonable they are, who think the Seventy were of the same Order and Dignity with the Twelve.

It therefore, from what has been said, it appears, that the Apostles were superior to the Seventy Disciples. If our Saviour gave them some Power, which these had not : If the Scripture has left the communicating the several Gifts or Offices to the Discretion of the Ordainers, to be distributed, as they shall find the Persons to be Ordained, qualified to receive them ; pray where is the inconsistency of imparting, the entire Power to some, and some Branches of it only to others. This Proposition will receive further Confirmation in my examining the Author's reasoning from the Grand Ministerial Commission.

AND first, Supposing what this Author contends for, that this was the Commission by virtue of which the Apostles Ordained their Successors in the Ministry ; Supposing I say, that this was the full Commission of the Apostles ; all the Ends of it might be answered, by their appointing different Orders, for different Offices in the Church : nor will it at all follow that this is the Commission of Presbyters in such sense as that they are empowered by it, to Ordain others, because the Apostles were. This is the Point which this Writer instead of proving has taken for granted, viz. that because this was a Commission for the Apostles to Ordain, it was so to Presbyters ; whereas there is no consequence in the Argument. This may be the original Commission, signifying Christ's will to his Apostles that Disciples should be made, baptized, and instructed, and consequently that there should be a succession of Officers in the Church for these Purposes : But it will by no means follow, that therefore it was his will, that whosoever was appointed

pointed to teach, should likewise be commissioned to Ordain others to teach: nor is it implied in these words.

THE Apostles by virtue of this very Commission might have appointed some Persons to baptize, others only to teach, and others endued with all these Powers; and have as fully answered the intent of it, as if they had appointed one sort of Officers, to perform all these Offices. And, tho' this Commission doth not say, that he who is called to teach in the Church, shall not be called to Ordain likewise; yet it will not follow, that every one who is called to teach, is therefore called to Ordain. Notwithstanding there is no difference of Officers made in the words, the Apostles were left to their own judgments, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, whether there should be a distinction of Officers in the Church, or not: and consequently, whether one sort or more were appointed by them for the Offices designed to continue in the Church, must be collected by their succeeding Behaviour, and what that was, will be shewn under the next Proposition.

BUT altho' this was a Commission given to the Apostles, and designed to signify what their main Business in the World was to be: yet that it was design'd as their full Commission, or as a full declaration of the Methods they were to take in the execution of their Commission, there is no ground to think. The words may be fully sufficient, to declare the nature of their Office in general, and yet their particular direction and commission to Ordain other Ministers might be given them afterwards by the Holy Ghost.

AND notwithstanding, this Gentleman puts this Argument, in his Antagonist's mouth, that he may have an opportunity (as he imagines) of triumphing over him, yet he is so far from obtaining a Victory, that he has not proved that this is even the Apostles commission to Ordain. If so, by what Commission (I desire to know) did St. Paul and Barnabas Ordain Presbyters? I can't discover that it was by virtue of the Grand Commission; nor consequently how the Presbyters whom they Ordain'd, could plead this

this Commission for their right to Ordain. If therefore it is not necessary to suppose that this is even the Apostles commission to Ordain ; ( which is the only ground of the present Plea ) the Argument for Presbyterian Ordination taken from this Commission is at once overthrown. And now I intend to give a Solution to a Question of our Author's. " If Presbyters are not in the Commission, whence have they their existence ?

I answer, from the will of the Apostles declared about them. The full Commission of the Apostles themselves was not made known to them by the Holy Ghost, and immediate Inspiration, till after our Lord's Death. And it was not in the least necessary that our Lord should declare his will in these Points, since the Holy Ghost was afterwards to be sent, in order to complete their Commission : And it is as much for the good of the Christian Church, that the Apostles (who acted by the same Spirit) should declare the Commission of Presbyters, as that our Lord himself should.

BUT if Presbyters were impow'ed by this Commission to Ordain, how came they in several Churches, to be restrain'd by the Apostles themselves, and denied the exercise of this right immediately after this Commission was given them ? And why do we find St. Paul dealing with the first Presbyters, exactly as he would have dealt by them had they not originally the right of Ordination ? Again, If Presbyters had this right by the general Commission, how comes that in all accounts we have of the Primitive Church, we read of single Persons succeeding the Apostles in this Station, and Offices ? And when was the time in which they did exercise this right of Ordination ? And how comes it to pass that their Ordination, were always disapproved, and condemned, and their right to this Work constantly denied ? And they must be discerning indeed that can from the New Testament discover, that any such right was ever supposed by the Apostles originally to belong to Presbyters.

I pass therefore to the third thing proposed. That the Apostles did thus divide the Pastoral Office, and Ordain'd some to the whole Power, such as we now denominate Bishops, others to part of it only, such as we call Presbyters; to whom the power of Ordination never did belong. Since our Saviour, that wise builder, founded his Church in an inequality of Church Officers by making his Twelve Apostles superior to his Seventy Disciples, how the Apostles could have acted otherwise, than according to this Platform, he had left them, will puzzle any reasonable Man to conceive. For he tells them, As my Father sent me, so send I you. As he sent them with Power superior to the rest of his Disciples, so they must Ordain others to the same Power as their Successors to the end of the World. As they therefore were superior to other Presbyters whom they Ordain'd, so they chose out some of those Presbyters, (now distinguished by the name of Bishops) to whom they communicated all the branches of the Pastoral Office, who might supply their places when they were gone, and be superior to other Presbyters. Such were *Timothy*, *Titus*, *Epaphroditus*, &c. And this is a very remarkable thing, that when there were Presbyters already settled at Ephesus and Crete; and such as no doubt were as well qualified to Ordain in latter Ages, that *St. Paul* should not think fit to entrust this Affair with them, and their Presbyteries, but should devolve it wholly upon *Timothy* and *Titus*; should appoint these two to that Office; without mentioning any right in the Teachers; as they according to modern reasoning, must certainly have had. The least that can be concluded from this Argument, is, that *St. Paul* knew of no such right belonging to them. And this consideration is the more weighty because the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, are the only records in which we find his will plainly express'd, concerning the first Ordination of Presbyters and Teachers properly so called; and yet not a word, as if he thought that Presbyters had a right to Ordain others, but on the contrary all his rules directed to Superior Officers.

Officers. And this distinction of Power was not to be laid aside, but to remain as long as the World endured.

THIS was the Opinion of the Primitive Fathers who unanimously agree, that St. *Paul* made *Timothy* Bishop of Ephesus, and *Titus* of Crete. Thus does *Eusebius* expressly declare; *Euseb. Hist. Ecc. Li. 3. C. 4.* That *Timothy* was Ordain'd by St. *Paul* Bishop of Ephesus, and *Titus* of Crete. Thus also do St. *Jerom.*, *Primasius*, *Isidore*, *Theodoret*, *Sedulius*, &c. As may be seen in Bishop *Taylor's* Episcopacy Asserted. And indeed I do not know of any one Author, who so much as calls it in Question.

SINCE therefore it is confess'd on all hands, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were vested with all that Power, which the other Presbyters of Ephesus and Crete were vested withal; and besides that had some Power which they had not: And since all the Primitive Writers agree, that they were truly and properly Bishops, it is evident beyond consideration, that in the Opinion of the Ancients, the Apostles divided the Pastoral Office, and Ordain'd some to the whole Power, and others to part of it only, which was the Question to be resolv'd.

BUT it is said, " That *Timothy* and *Titus* were Evangelists; " extraordinary Officers. And therefore no Arguments to be " drawn from hence.

THIS I call a meer conjecture, because this Advocate has not so much as attempted to prove that they were meer Evangelists, which he ought by all means to have done, especially considering that all Antiquity expressly declares that they were Bishops. As for *Titus* there is not in Scripture the least pretence of his being an Evangelist. St. *Paul* indeed gives him a Superiority of Ecclesiastical jurisdiction over all the Presbyters of Crete; a Power of excommunicating Hereticks, of rebuking with all Authority, of Ordaining Elders, or Presbyters in every City: Nay this was the very cause for which St. *Paul* left him in Crete: All which are  
 Episcopal

Episcopal acts, and must continue as long as the Church endures, so that here is not the least shadow of Proof, that *Titus* was an Evangelist.

St. *Paul* indeed bids *Timothy* do the work of an Evangelist, 2 *Tim.* 4. 5. But what this work of an Evangelist was may be seen in the second verse of this Chapter; Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all suffering and doctrine. All which every Bishop is obliged to perform. So that this can be no proof that *Timothy* was a meer Evangelist, and that his Office was Temporary; Nay I defy this Advocate to produce any one single duty which *Timothy* was obliged to perform, as a Minister of Christ, which was Temporary. Nor does St. *Paul's* enjoying him to do the work of an Evangelist, make him any more a meer Evangelist, than the words immediately following make him a meer Deacon, for he is commanded to fulfill his Deaconship: if therefore this latter expression does his Episcopacy no hurt, neither does the former, but he might be Bishop, Evangelist and Deacon.

To be an Evangelist is agreeable to all the Subordinations of the Christian Hierarchy; and whatever Missionary, (let him be Bishop, Priest, or Deacon) travels to convert Infidels, does the work of an Evangelist, when he propagates the Gospel in the same sense that *Timothy* is called to do it.

But a great difficulty is started, and a great Argument drawn from *Timothy's* presence at the time in which St. *Paul* exhorteth the Presbyters of the Ephesian Church in these words, "Act. 20. 28. Take heed therefore unto your selves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers &c. From hence the Gentleman infers, " that the Church of Ephesus was at this time committed to the sole care of a Presbytery. This is like the rest of his Inferences. St. *Paul* its true, exhorts the Presbyters to do the Office of Bishops, (i. e.) of those then called.

led Bishops or Overseers, who denies it : But will it thence follow, that he commands them to Ordain and Govern ? This was what the Author should have proved, wou'd he prove any thing : But his Arguments drawn from the Identity of Names to the Identity of Offices have been fully confuted in my former Letter, — That *Timothy* was a Bishop of that Place ; that he dyed upon his Cure, and that he was succeeded in his Episcopal Authority over that Place by single Persons, all the ancient Records assure us. *Eusebius* says, Lib. 3. C. 4. that *Timothy* is storied to have been the first Bishop of the Province or Diocese of Ephesus. In the Apostolical Constitutions we are expressly told, that he was Ordain'd Bishop of it by *St Paul*. Const. Apost. Lib. 7. C. 47. And the Fathers of the Council of Calcedon, including *Timothy* in the number, reckon Twenty seven Bishops of Ephesus to their time. Conc. Calced. Acts II. So we have as much assurance of his being Bishop of that Place, as we can have for any matter of Fact whatsoever.

I Shall not trouble the reader with examining whether Bishop *Pearson's* or *Mr. Owen's* account of the date of the Epistles to *Timothy* be truest, because the most injudicious reader may plainly see that the decision of that matter, does no way affect my Cause, tho' Bishop *Pearson's* account should be wrong ( which no judicious man will say ) for the utmost that can be said, is only this, that *St. Paul* sent *Timothy* on several Messages after he was Bishop of *Ephesus*.

TILL therefore this Author be able to prove that the Power with which *Timothy* and *Titus* were vested by *St. Paul*, and exercised in the Churches of Ephesus and Crete, was only Temporary ; till he can invalidate the most ancient Records of the Church, all which unanimously agree, that they were fixed and settled Bishops of those Places ; Till he can prove, that they exercised no Power over the Presbyters of Crete & Ephesus, I hope, he will grant that these instances do utterly destroy his Cause, that they evidently prove, that *St. Paul* gave all the Ecclesiastical Power to some, and part of it only to others ; and that it is safer depending on the unanimous

con-

consent of the Primitive Fathers in such a matter of Fact, than upon his precarious and groundless conjectures. And there is all the reason in the World to rely on their Testimony in this case, because this is a matter of simple uncompounded Nature, perfectly within their knowledge, not requiring learning or reasoning, but level to all Capacities; a matter in which they might be very easily contradicted had they represented it falsely; and a matter in which they could not be byassed in the first Ages, by Interest. And in these there is such a constancy and unanimity, that even *St. Jerom* himself (who was born near 250 years after the Apostles, and is the chief Person in all that time whom the Presbyterians cite for any purpose of theirs) traces up Episcopacy to the very Apostles; and makes it of their Institution; and in the very place where he most exalts Presbyters, he excepts Ordination as a work always peculiar to Bishops. Add to this, that *Mr. Baxter* could not but own thus much at least " that there were fixed Bishops in some Churches in the days of one of the Apostles; that neither the Apostles nor any one of their Disciples, nor any Christian or Heretick in the World, spoke or wrote a word against Episcopacy till long after it was generally settled in the Churches. And I challenge this Gentleman to instance any Christian Church for 1500 years without Presbyters and Deacons subordinate to their Bishop; notwithstanding his extravagant boasting that the Primitive Fathers are all of the side of the Presbyterian Scheme.

BUT if as he ( very modestly ) asserts, the Primitive Fathers are all of his side the Question; it will not ( I hope ) be judged impertinent in me to desire information in these particulars,

1. WHEN the Episcopal Usurpation began.
2. WHERE it began, whether in a particular Church, or few Churches at first; or all at once thro' the universal Church?
3. If it began in Particular Churches, how or by what steps it made its Progress all over the Christian Church?

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4. WHETHER it can be supposed that the Presbyters then living could be all or most of them ignorant of the Powers belonging to them by Original Right ?

5. WHETHER it can be supposed that the Presbyters would willingly and wittingly submit to a restraint from exercising the Powers intrusted with them by God ?

6. If they did not willingly, what force was there made use of to compel them to it ?

7. How can it be accounted for, that there should be no mention of fuller Relation of so great an Usurpation to be found in Record in Ecclesiastical History ?

THE foregoing Particulars seem to me to carry in them difficulties insuperable ; upon which account, I apply my self to this Gentleman as the properest Person from whom I may expect light and information in this very important Affair, from his great intimacy, and familiar Correspondence with the Primitive Fathers.

UNTIL I receive greater insight in this matter, I must unavoidably content my self with that Golden Rule of *Vincentius Livorensis* ; *Quod Ubique, quod semper, quod ab Omnibus creditum est, id quidem vere est Catholicum.* That which every where, always, and by all has been received, must needs be a Catholick truth.

THIS Author must excuse me if I wholly pass over his Modern Authorities ; for could he produce thousands of greater Names than he mentions, I see not of what importance it wou'd be in the Case of matter of fact, we must not be born down by great Names, in a matter which is in them purely Opinion, (which Opinion some of them upon the most exact enquiry have recanted ) and depending upon their own reasoning.

HAD this Gentleman been a little more inquisitive, and not ( depending on the Authority of others ) neglected examining the Epistles of St. *Ignatius* an Apostolical Father, he might have met

with one, asserting the Superiority of Bishops to Presbyters by Divine Right. To omit the plain and manifest distinction he makes between them in every one of his Epistles; hear what he says in that to the Philadelphians.

“ FOR as many as are of God, and of Jesus Christ, are also with their Bishop; again there is but one Flesh, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and one Cup, in the Unity of his Blood; one Altar; as also there is one Bishop. He compares the Bishop to the Father, in his Epistle to the Trallians; in his Epistle to the Magnesians he exhorts them to reverence the Bishop according to the Power of God the Father.

AND it is the most reasonable thing in the World to suppose, that he could not speak of Episcopacy as he doth, had he known it to have been only the Agreement of Presbyters amongst themselves; had he known it to have been an Alteration in the Church, from the State in which the Apostles left it; as he must have done according to the conjecture of some Modern Writers; And the more highly he magnifies it, still the greater Argument it is, that he knew it to be settled by the Apostles in the Churches of Christ, and that it was their will it should be retain'd and esteemed. It is impossible he should speak of it as he doth, if he knew, and all the Church then knew it, to be a Voluntary prudential compact amongst the Presbyters. For what could induce him to it? Or what influence could his high words have upon those who knew as well as himself that it was just then Agreed upon; And had no higher an Original than the Consent of Presbyters, so that this wholly destroys the strange supposition that a Bishop was only the chief of the Presbyters.

But this Author has recourse to Councils, particularly the fourth of Carthage, from whence he quotes several Canons, “ A Bishop must not Ordain any without the Counsel of his Clergy; He must hear no Man's Cause, unless his Clergy be present; otherwise the Bishop's Sentence shall be void. Whilst a Bishop sits, he shall not suffer a Presbyter to stand. He must know that he is but a  
“ Colleague

“ Colleague of the Presbyters. — Well ! and what then, therefore Presbyters can Ordain ; No such thing. Let a Bishop be Ordain'd by two or three Bishops, a Priest by one Bishop, and so likewise a Deacon ; Apost. Canon. 1. 1.

THIS is a very instructive Canon ; for here the intelligent Reader will observe the three holy Orders retain'd in our Church, distinguished from each other. andly, The Power of Ordination reserved to the Bishop only. To what purpose should I multiply Quotations, the Testimonies on this Subject are so many, and have been so often produced by learned Men, that it is needless to transcribe them.

THE Reader would do well to observe, That altho' this Author makes use of the Testimony of the Fathers, he does it only as *Argumentum ad hominem*, for else where he calls them “ *an ignis fatuus*, that will lead a man he knows not whither. Modest enough indeed ! They serve not his purpose, and therefore are with Ignominy discarded. But let me tell this Gentleman, this is of desperate consequence with respect to all Historical certainty ; that the universal Testimony of many ages should be rejected upon such a strange supposition, sure the Testimony of the Primitive Fathers may be depended on in a simple matter of fact ; perfectly within their knowledge ; and that more especially, since it is upon the Testimony of ancient Writers in all Ages, that we believe the Books of the New-Testament to have been extant from the Apostles days, and to have been written by the Apostles, or by Persons approved of them, and this indeed should make all good Men the more solicitous to establish the Credibility of this Testimony. Because I fear the Objections advanced against it will militate as strongly against all Historical certainty, and reach farther than they were designed, to the Prejudice of what is of the last importance to the Christian Church. I mean the Holy Scriptures. I should now proceed to rescue some Arguments ( miserably tortured ! ) out of this Gentleman's hands, frequently made use of in Defence of Episcopacy, and with which

he furnishes his Antagonist. But these Sheets having already swell'd to a greater bulk than I expected, make me decline it ; and that so much the rather, because I think I have gained my Point without them, and proved what I propos'd. I cannot however forbear taking notice of a most curious Remark of this Author's, you will find it page 37th of his Book. Thus he argues, " The " Seventy were so far from being Presbyters in the Christian " Church, that they were not so much as Members of it. And yet in the same breath he would equal them with the Apostles ; I can't help being concerned for this Gentleman, and his critical Inspectors ; and shall only remind them of *John* 4. 1, 2. When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and Baptized more Disciples than *John* ( tho' Jesus himself Baptized not but his Disciples ) What ? Did they Baptize who were not themselves Christians ? I desire to know if they were not then Members of the Christian Church, at what time they were initiated. This I leave to the Gentleman's more serious consideration.

WHAT consequences follow from what has been said, I leave to all to determine for themselves ; yet I think I may safely conclude, that a settled Distinction between the Offices of Bishops ( peculiarly so called ) and Presbyters, is founded upon the will of the Apostles ; particularly, that the Right of Ordination, by their will, belongs to Bishops, & was never design'd by them to be entrusted to Presbyters.

BUT I have still an account to make up with this Advocate, which is the next thing to be considered, and my last Proposition. viz. That supposing all the Arguments urged by this Gentleman in Defence of Presbyterian Ordination, were incontrovertibly true, yet Modern Presbyterian Ordination must be null and void.

'TIS too well known to require Proof, That the true state of the Controversy between us and the Presbyterians depends upon the state of the Ministerial Office at the time of the Reformation ; and that whosoever would judge aright of the Validity or Invalidity of ( what

( what has been ever since the Reformation, called ) Presbyterian Ordination, must in the first Place duly inform himself, in what sense the word Presbyters was taken at the time of the said Reformation, what Order of the Ministry was then distinguished or known by that Name, and with what Ministerial Power those then called Presbyters were invested by virtue of the Ordination they themselves had received. The Question is not, Whether such as were called Presbyters in the times of the New Testament, had the Power of Ordination ; but the Question we are concerned about is this, Whether such as were called Presbyters at the time of the Reformation, had the Power of Ordination. All Presbyterian Writers acknowledge, that at, and for some Hundred Years before the Reformation, the Distinction of the three Ministerial Orders, as they now stand in the Church of England, had obtain'd in all parts of the Christian World : And that according to this Distinction, as those of the uppermost Order of the three, were at, and some hundred Years before the Reformation alone stiled Bishops, and were alone invested with the Power of Ordination ; so the name of Presbyters was at, and during the same Period, applyed only to those that were of the Second Ministerial Order, and so Inferior to Bishops, and consequently not invested with the Power of Ordination. Since then it has been observed already, that the Question in Debate is, Whether such as were stiled Presbyters at the time of the Reformation had the Power of Ordination ; and since 'tis as certain as any thing can be made by the universal Consent of Ecclesiastical History, &c since 'tis hereupon no other than what is acknowledged by the Learned Men of their own Perswasion, that the name of Presbyters did, at, and for some hundred Years before the Reformation, denote only such Ministers, as were Inferior to Bishops ; and were never invested with the Power of Ordination : Hence it clearly follows, that the true state of the Question controverted by us, is in short this, *et c.* Whether a Person in Holy Orders, tho never invested himself with the Power of Ordination, can nevertheless

less be truly said to have the just Power of Ordination, or ( which comes to the same ) can nevertheless duly and rightly take upon him to give Ordination to others.

Now the Question being thus truly and plainly stated, on which side of it the truth lies, seems to be so clear, as to be in a manner self-evident. For common reason teaches us, that no one can duly act beyond the Commission he receives ; or beyond that degree of authority, he has been invested. And if so, then it follows, that such Presbyters as are concerned in this Controversy, could not duly Ordain, since they were never invested with the Power of Ordination ; and consequently, that by taking upon them to Ordain, they acted beyond that Ministerial Commission they had received, or beyond that degree of Ministerial Authority, wherewith they had been invested ; and therefore acted unduly and unwarrantably.

To the testimony of common Reason may be added the greater and more weighty testimony of Revelation. As therefore St. Paul argues in *Rom.* 10. 5. How can they Preach, except they be sent, namely to Preach ? So it is to be argued in this case, how can they Ordain, except they be sent, namely to Ordain.

BUT there seems to be no occasion to insist on the Testimony either of Reason or Revelation, since what they are brought to prove in the Case before us, is granted (if not expressly, yet in effect) by the Party themselves. For whilst they go about to justify the validity of Presbyterian Ordination, by endeavouring to shew that the Presbyters in the New Testament were invested with Apostolical Authority, as to the permanent and standing parts of the Apostolical Office, and consequently were invested with the power of Ordination ; they do implicitly or in effect grant & acknowledge the main Point, that the Church of England requires to be granted, *viz.* That no one can duly or rightfully Ordain, without being himself first duly invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination. And tho' it be certainly true, that such as are invested with the full extent of standing Apostolical Power, are invested with the  
Power

Power of Ordination ; and tho' it should be true, that those called Presbyters in the New Testament, were thus invested with the full extent of the standing Apostolical Power ; yet both these do not avail any thing towards the justification of the Presbyterian Cause ; forasmuch, as what has been ever since the Reformation called Presbyterian Ordination, was at first brought up, & has been ever since continued, by such Presbyters as were never themselves invested with the Apostolical Power of Ordination ; and consequently such an Ordination is not a due and valid Ordination.

AND thus I have shewn by a natural and clear method, that the Presbyterian Ordination, which has been practised since the Reformation, and which alone is concerned in the Controversy between the Church of England and that Party, is by no means valid and sufficient to Authorize any one to take upon him the exercise of any part of the Ministerial Office.

THEIR ridiculous pretensions to regular Mission by Succession would naturally tempt a Man to some little Merriments : Because were we to trace the Ordination of the present Presbyterian or Independant Teachers about One Hundred Years backward, we should find it derived from meer Lay-men, and all their regular Succession probably terminate, in some gifted Mecanicks, among the Separatists, formerly known by the name of Brownists. And indeed the first Nonconformists, ( as they stood distinguished from the Brownists ) were so far from pretending to, or exercising such a Power, that they pronounced the Ministry of the Church of England a lawful Ministry, charging those who separated from it as " guilty of a shameful and odious Schism. See Answer to *Ainsworth's* Preface 17. See more in *Bishop Stillingfleet's* unreasonableness of Separation, Part I.

THE case being thus, the Nonentity of these unhappy People's Church, appears upon a double account : First, as wanting a Ministry, which the Apostles make one of the Constitutive parts of a Church, they being appointed for the edifying the Body of Christ

And

