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I. ILLOGICAL METHODS IN BIBLICAL CRITICISM.¹

I SHALL scarcely be expected, on an occasion like this, to speak on any other theme than Old Testament Criticism. When, eleven years ago, I was inducted into a similar chair in another institution, the discussion of this subject, in its present peculiar aspects, had just begun in this country; to-day it is the question of questions in the theological world. The movement, at once a sign and a fruit of the times, has passed far beyond its incipient stages. Its literature is already large. Even single phases of the subject have come to occupy no inconsiderable place in current thought. It is to one of these phases of the general theme that I shall invite your attention at this time. It especially concerns the style of reasoning adopted by those who advocate the newer views of the Bible. Is this reasoning in harmony with the accepted rules of logic? Can the critics of this class vindicate their often asserted claim to be scientific? On the answer to this question really depends the value of the conclusions reached.

Mr. Gladstone, not long since, speaking of modern criticism of the Bible, while confessing that he was no expert, gave this excellent advice. He said: "We must be on our guard against drawing warmth of affection into the field as having the force of argument. We should rather endeavor to defend the Scriptures upon the same principles of evidence and reasonableness governing our mental processes in other matters. When the arguments of specialists point to negative conclusions, we should beware of haste. We should reserve our judgment, even if yielding provisional as-

¹ Inaugural Address, May 3, 1893.

II. THE TENET OF *JURE DIVINO* PRESBYTERIAN POLITY.¹

By way way of introduction to our topic, let us name certain considerations which have induced us to fix upon some aspect of church polity for the present discussion.

These considerations have been as follows :

1. *The likelihood of church polity being under estimated in a chair constituted, as this one is, of church history and church polity.*

One of the greatest men who has ever occupied this chair asserted, substantially, in his inaugural address, that church history and the history of the world, which must be studied along with it, is nothing less than the "evolution of the eternal purpose of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will"; that it gives a fulness, symmetry, and maturity of theological knowledge which no other discipline can give; that it equips us as we may not otherwise be equipped to fight every error springing within the church, without the church, or from the relations between the church and the world; that it furnishes us much of our most important knowledge with reference to institutions other than the church; and that it purifies our moral judgments. Now, the course of discipline that does this, or any considerable part of it, can only be held in low estimation by the ignorant or the stupid. And church polity, attached to the great course of church history, and confined to a brief treatment of three months, or less, tends to become despised, and that notwithstanding the historical treatment it gets as a part of church history. This probability of its under-estimation, on the part of the teacher, on the part of the student, on the part of the board, and, in fine, upon the part of the church at large, as a consequence, has had its influence in the choice of the subject.

¹ An inaugural address, delivered in Union Seminary, Virginia, May, 1893.

2. *The widespread and unjustifiable contempt for the mere forms of ecclesiastical government.*

This prevalent indifference to the form of church organization is due, no doubt, in considerable part, to that infidelity as to all distinctively religious truth which has found a lodging-place in so many minds of our day. To him who believes next to nothing, except the ethics which the Bible teaches, the diversities of creed and of polity seem altogether undesirable. He is in spirit much like the Deists of the eighteenth century. They tried to find in the simple truths of natural religion a substance of doctrine held in common by all contending parties. He wishes to see his fellows come together on two or three simple articles of creed, which a member of the Bramo-Somaj could subscribe, and a polity of indefinitely small prescriptions.

But, it cannot be denied that many most sincere, as well as intelligent Christians, also make little of polity. These Christians have correctly judged that the polity of the church is not of the *essentiae* of the church. They have correctly judged that the Congregational, the Methodist, and the Presbyterian communions, though of three severally differing polities, are each a constituent part of the true visible church. But they have foolishly concluded that they may with equal propriety support, therefore, any one of the three polities. We judge with them that the polity of the church is not among its essential marks, and that a communion may be a true church, though it have a polity differing from our own. But we do not judge that it is, therefore, a matter of indifference to *have* a wrong polity or to support one. On the contrary, some marks non-essential to the *bare existence* of the church are of the highest importance to its well-being. Every essential mark of the horse is found in the raw-boned and misshapen animal that draws the ash-cart, as invariably as in the high-bred and proudly-stepping courser from Arabia. The steamboat that goes down in a little squall may be as really a steamboat as the noble vessel that rides in safety the most gigantic storm-billows of the Atlantic. Barnaby Rudge and Mr. Dick and Dominic Sampson have every essential mark of a man as certainly as Francis Bacon, as John Calvin, or as John Milton. And Benedict Arnold had every essential mark

of man found in unfallen "Adam, the goodliest man of men since born, his sons." But for all that, there is a big difference between horse and horse. And there is a big difference between what is essential to the *bare being* of a steamboat and what is essential to the being of a vessel able to stand the tossings of every angriest sea. And there is a big difference between man and man, between Barnaby Rudge and Plato, between Mr. Dick and Aristotle, between Dominie Sampson, *et id omne genus*, on the one hand, and Augustine, Calvin, Milton, on the other. The logical power of an Aristotle or a Sir William Hamilton, the speculative power of a Plato or an Emmanuel Kant, the psychological insight of a Thomas Reid, the theological acumen of a John Calvin, though they be not essential to the being of man, are qualities of exceeding value. And that logical accident which obtained in the first man, that "Truth, wisdom, sanctitude, severe and pure," and naught of which obtained in the despised Arnold, was, in spite of its not being of the *essentiae*, a property of indescribable importance. Likewise there is a difference between church and church, though each have the essential marks of the church, and so be a part of the church of Christ on earth. And among the marks non-essential to the bare existence of the church, but essential to her highest well-being, is, as we hope to show, the polity so unjustifiably in contempt.

3. *A certain misconception of the Bible teaching on the subject, and a consequent mistaken attitude toward unbiblical forms of polity.*

The misconception, and the mistaken attitude here referred to, obtain in some who hold personally the Presbyterian form of government. They believe that the Bible itself contains elements of several mutually conflicting, if not contradictory polities; and, therefore, that the diverse polities which as a matter of fact now exist are to be looked upon as entitled, severally, to a degree of favor. They tell us that in the Scriptures are norms and seeds of the Episcopal form of government, norms and seeds of the Presbyterian form of government, and norms and seeds of the Congregational; and that we should, therefore, regard with great charity any of these forms which we do not ourselves hold. These views are

again and again propounded by men of eminent position. *E. g.*, the Rev. Dr. E. D. Morris, of Lane Seminary, sets them forth in his work on *Ecclesiology*; some incidental remarks of Dr. F. L. Patton, of Princeton, in his article on "Preaching" in the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, January, 1890, ground an inference that he is of the same belief; and a considerable party of the Presbyterian Church in Canada seems to hold the same view.¹

But upon the supposition that this belief is false, that there are germs of but one sort of church polity in the New Testament, that there are norms for the development of only one kind of organism, every reverent servant of God should feel that the belief adverted to may be most pernicious to the church, dangerous to multitudes of immortal souls and detractive of the honor of God. And if a word can be said which shall disabuse any of respect for this and such beliefs, our time will not have been spent in vain.

4. *The belief that it is peculiarly one province of our age to wrestle with and develop the biblical doctrine of the church and for it to testify.*

Some of our profoundest, as well as most clear-headed thinkers, have been accustomed to look upon ecclesiology as one of the more obscure and undeveloped elements in Christian doctrine; and as an element toward the settlement of which our own age is responsible for the making of a contribution. Looking back over the history of the church, they remark a certain order in the church's development of the doctrines of sacred Scripture. They point out the facts that theology, or the science of God, had substantially its "full development during the controversies concerning the nature of the Godhead, which closed with the labors of Athanasius"; that anthropology, or the science of man as related to God, "during the Pelagian controversies, closing with the labors of Augustine"; that "after a thousand years of repose and silence in the church," was developed soteriology, or the science of salvation, "through the labors of Luther and Calvin," proclaiming salvation as by grace through faith; and that ecclesiology is left to be yet developed to completeness.

They ask whether the providences of God toward the American

¹ *Independent*, March 30, 1893.

Church, in freeing her from civil domination, and in placing her here in a position "to actualize fully and without hindrance her true nature and functions as a spiritual commonwealth," do not "seem to indicate that the time has fully come for the final development of the visible church as a governmental power on earth, yet a kingdom not of this world."

They ask whether the many obtrusive tendencies of speculation, characteristic of our age—"socialistic, political, philosophical," inquiries "about the principle of fellowship, the principle upon which the church is constituted"—do not point in the same direction; whether the claims of the "responsibility of the church for the bodily well-being of the masses"; whether the numerous societies without the church, within the church, or partly without and partly within the church, do not demand attention to polity; whether the relation of the church to its various evangelizing agencies does not cry out for it.

They ask whether the efforts which are being made for union between the churches do not urge a rescrutinizing of present politics and a restudying of the Scripture on the subject. Holding that God's people should work for unity of spirit, and struggle to an external embodiment of that unity, they yet protest that no branch of God's church should ever recede from a genuine biblical position; that while compromise is permissible in the transactions of the world, and may be in church *regulations*, it is never allowable in any matter upon which God has clearly revealed his will; that God's word as the individual denomination sees it, is the command of the Head of the church to it, however much obscured; and that for that denomination to do otherwise than walk by it, is for it to turn traitor, and rebel against its Head and Lord. Holding that the only external unity of the church that is not contemptible, results from a common understanding and a common adherence to God's word; and believing that the polity of the church has been outlined in the Scriptures and is a matter of moment, they affirm: If union, then union along the line marked

¹ Robinson's *Uhurch of God*, pp. 27, 28.

² Cf. Peck's *Eccelesiology*, pp. 9, 10.

out in the word of God. And they ask whether we should not re-examine polity, therefore, in view of the cry for union.

Now, considering that the most of these representations are made by Dr. Stuart Robinson, and Dr. Thomas E. Peck, and such *nomina venerabilia clara*, it is surely not aside from the mark, on such an occasion as this, to turn our thoughts on the true form of the church—a subject of at least proximate concern to our own time and people. These considerations, together with a growing appreciation of the kingdom of God on earth, a growing admiration for its beauty, an increasing delight in the contemplation of its development, and a deepening sense of our duty—every Christian's duty—to try to understand its divine ideal and to try to realize that ideal, have moved us to make the subject of thought on this occasion—THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TENET OF JURE DIVINO PRESBYTERIAN POLITY. Of course, every one understands that by the polity of a given church is meant its constitution, including its rules of discipline and a statement of its relation to the civil government.

It is equally familiar to all that the polities of the nominally Christian churches fall into two general classes, viz., government by priestly orders, and government by the church; and that there are two leading varieties in each of these two general classes of church government: that government by priestly orders may be prelatical or papal; and that government by the church may be of the independent or congregational type on the one hand, or of the presbyterial type on the other. It is a common-place, also, to say that the papacy is the exact analogue of the absolute monarchy among civil polities; that prelacy is the analogue of the limited monarchy; that congregationalism is ecclesiastical democracy; and that presbyterianism is the sacred counterpart of civil republicanism. It is a matter of common knowledge, too, that all these polities may be sub-divided on the ground of their relation to the state into *Ultramontane*, *Gallican*, and *Erastian*, but that speaking broadly, the papacy, as a whole, is ultramontane, claiming to be of right, supreme over all states, and to be entitled to their obedience; that prelacy has generally been erastian, making itself subordinate to the state and the servant thereof; and that the

tendency of churches governed by the people, *in persona*, or by representatives, while by no means universal, is more toward the complete separation of church and state.

Of the papacy we may more particularly observe that it claims: that Christ instituted a visible church on earth, with Peter and Peter's successors as his own vicegerents thereover; that he continued the apostolate in the prelates, to whom all the people were to be subject as the prelates themselves to the reigning vicegerent, the pope thus to be the head of the universal church; that the church was to have its seat and centre at Rome; and that the pope in his vicar's chair, within the City of the Seven Hills, the prelates in their sees, and the lower clergy in their several spheres were, and are, supplied with *ex opere operato* powers for the perpetuation and the edification of the church.

Of prelacy, we may add that it allied itself with the papacy in holding that "government is a function of the clergy viewed as a distinct order, rather than a prerogative of the people;" that it claims that the Episcopal polity is the only polity revealed in the Bible, and that Episcopal ordination is the only valid ordination, Episcopal "clergy" the only valid church officers.

Of Independency we may add, that the right of the people as such to *rule* is the fundamental principle; that all power, whether of *being* or *exercise*, is regarded as in the church members themselves; and, hence, that each worshipping assembly is considered as complete in itself and autonomous. They teach the parity of the ministry, and regard correctly the diaconate as an administrative and charitable as over against a judicial office.

And of the Presbyterians we may add: They hold that the power which Christ has bestowed upon the church inheres in the entire people, in private members as well as in office bearers; that the power of doctrine, government, discipline, and worship is committed to the whole church; but that this inherent power was never to be indiscriminately exercised; that the power, belonging indeed to the whole body, was to be exercised through the appropriate organs. They hold that the organs for the exercise of church government were to be chosen by the free, externally unconstrained volitions of the members of the church; that when chosen, these organs, however, are not their delegates, as the dele-

gates of a mob, nor an oligarchy of despots, but the representatives of the people, in the particular functional activities intended, responsible unto Christ, the King and Head of the church, and to his people through their and Christ's courts. Presbyterians strive to protect the liberty of the private member, and to prevent the representatives abusing the principles of election, of representation, or other essential feature of the system; and to that end clothe the private member with the right of appeal and protest when aggrieved. They hold that the representative has, in virtue of his being a member of the body of Christ and his call to his particular office, authority from Christ to perform the functions of his office, the authority to bear rule, say, if he is an elder unqualified by the property of teaching, and the authority to teach and to rule if his office is that of teaching elder. The power of the church as to its exercise is located in these representatives, these elders. Though dividing presbyters into two classes, they hold to the parity of the eldership *quoad* the functions to which any elders are elected in common. They hold to the parity of the ministry. They regard the diaconate as an administrative and charitable office under the oversight of the elders. They assert that the church of Christ is one; and, through a succession of church courts, sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and a General Assembly, attempt to give organic expression to its unity.

Such, in brief, are the typical forms of church polity. Postponing for a time the question as to which of these polities is the biblical and correct one, let us in the meantime contemplate,

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHURCH POLITY.

The considerations advanced in our introductory remarks, though adduced for another purpose, would warrant the opinion of the probable importance of church polity; but that importance emerges when we remark:

1. *The effect which a church's polity has on its doctrine.*

Says a distinguished writer, already referred to, "Making all due allowance for exceptions arising out of the inconsistencies of individual minds, as a general rule it is found true that bodies of men (always more consistent, and more apt to be governed by the

necessities of an inexorable logic, than individual minds), if holding any special views in theology, have corresponding views, right or wrong, of the idea and nature of the church; and, *vice versa*, if peculiar views of the church, then also corresponding views of theology. Thus, a rationalistic theology is most commonly found in connection with an erastian or independent theory of the church.

“On the other hand, a prelatical theory of the church almost uniformly stands in connection with a theology of mere sacramentalism. A Calvinistic theology seldom remains long incorrupt, except as held in connection with a Presbyterian theory of the church.”¹ Says a minister of note of our own day: “There is no necessary connection between government by chosen representation and the doctrines of grace; but the affinity between them is so close that given the one we naturally expect the other.”²

It requires but a glance over the field of church history to see that if the foregoing representations err, they err by way of under-statement rather than over-statement of the general position affirmed. The affinity between certain doctrines and certain polities, and *vice versa*, appears so close, the sequence of change in doctrine, after change in polity, or *vice versa*, appears so uniform and of such a sort that our mind instinctively asks whether there is not a causal connection between them, and whether, on the removal of all causes opposing the consequent change, the sequence would not prove universal. To cite an instance or two: In the ante-Nicene period the church, in order that she might, as she supposed, promote her unity better, and so the more successfully withstand the world, determined to change the form of her organization by the elevation of her presiding presbyter-bishop, and the bestowment on him of the powers of a monarch at the cost of the parity of the ministry, and the concomitant deprivation of the people of the franchises which they had had as the citizens of a spiritual republic, and their reduction to the place and functions of minors. Naturally, and because of causal connection, upon this change of polity there followed certain marked changes in doctrine. The spiritual priesthood of the people was lost sight of. The tenet of the necessity of mediation between the *people* denuded of

¹ Robinson's *Church of God*, pp. 32, 33. ² W. E. Moore, in Hay's *Presbyterians*.

their priesthood and treated as minors and their God emerged. This in turn led to a change in the whole conception of the gospel ministry, which was converted into a literal special priesthood, a go-between of God and his people. This doctrine of the priesthood was followed by an inevitable logic with a change in the doctrine of the sacraments so radical as to destroy them matter and form, substituting for the simple memorial and sacramental supper the awful unbloody repetition of Christ's sacrifice. Nor did the doctrines of soteriology, justification, and sanctification remain intact.

We have another example in the Church of England. Her Episcopal polity is a force, making logically for sacramentalism, for the phantasm of apostolical succession, and for the whole host of Rome's fooleries, so that as a matter of fact, she is of all Protestant churches the greatest bridge to Romanism. And we might cite instances *ad nauseam*. Just such sequences of change in doctrine, after change in polity, and *vice versa*, are a common characteristic of every part of the course of history. And mark you, they are neither accidental, nor mutually caused by some tertium, as the approaching sun causes the dispersion of darkness and occasions the crowing of cocks. We intuitively see that one's conception of polity must affect his conception of doctrine. He who conceives of the true polity as that in which the pope of Rome rules as the infallible vicar of Christ, the bishops as apostles, and the priest of every degree as clad with power to immolate and offer Christ and to grant judicial absolution, must draw his doctrines from a larger body of teaching than that which we esteem the sufficient as the infallible rule of faith and practice. He who adopts such a polity, if he has before received the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the sum total of God's revealed truth, must change his doctrine, both as to the extent of God's infallible speaking and as to his meaning. Supposing he has been a Calvinist, he cannot any longer hold the Calvinistic view of the sacraments, after his adoption of the papal polity, if he is qualified by the slightest degree of logical consistency. And if, like Augustine, he has proximately Calvinistic views of sin and grace, it is only at the cost of contradicting his own views on the sacraments.

Of course a blessed capacity of inconsistency may protect the individual with a radically false polity from a radically false doctrine; but the logical consistency of great bodies and succeeding generations is attended by no such happy breaks, but is proverbial and uniform. Every body which changes its polity tends necessarily to change its creed. To specify: if there is an apparent exception to the rule that churches with a prelatical theory as to the church tend to become churches with a theology of sacramentalism, that apparent exception may be shown to be no real exception to the tendency. Investigation will disclose that the tendency is at work, but counteracted. The Church of England, for example, is steadied and held to a Protestant theology by the light, the example, and the love of the whole Protestant world besides. It would be as easy and quite as interesting to show that polity affects doctrine not only immediately but mediately through effect upon the worship. The worship of Rome—the mass, creature worship—with all its sensuous, spectacular features, is, in part, the fruit of the polity of Rome. And the worship of Rome has had an immense influence on the development of the dogmas of Rome. Oh, the falsehoods which this adulteress has adopted, first, into her worship, and subsequently transferred into creed!

Enough has been said to impress the truth that the effect which the polity of a church has on its doctrine is great, and hence that polity is a thing of importance—a truth which may be confirmed by remarking:

2. *The effect of a church's polity on its working capacity, viewed as an agency for the glorifying of God in the evangelization of sinners and the edification of saints.*

The very *raison d'être* of the church visible is the gathering and perfecting of God's saints, in what part soever of the world they happen to be. Accordingly our Lord with his parting breath gave that biggest command ever imposed on men: "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The visible church is the great, the universal recruiting agency for the eternal armies of the Lord of Hosts.

It needs no argument to show that her efficiency in the work of drawing in recruits will be greatly affected by her organization. Without any organization she would be evidently inefficient. Every associated effort is by conception and of necessity, if commensurate results are to follow, organized effort. The more perfect the organization for the attainment of the end designed the greater the results. And there is, no doubt, a particular form of organization under which the church could do her most effective work of the kind indicated. Moreover, the church in another of her aspects may be likened to an army in conflict with foes of no common sort, and foes striving to wrest from them a crowd of miserable captives. As a matter of fact she wrestles "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Seeing that organization is a matter of such immense moment in this every-day world of ours, that it often makes the difference between defeat and victory, that it often gives to the little band of organized troops superiority over great hordes of the unorganized, we cannot regard the victories of the Lord of Hosts, so far as human agency is to be used at all, as independent of organization. And in accord with what we should expect, we find that history shows that there is a connection between organization and the church's ingathering power. Dr. Fisher, the Yale historian, has said that it has been observed that most of the denominations which have had the largest growth are compact in their organization; that the Baptists, who stand third in point of numbers in the United States are an exception; but that their opinion upon the sacraments has served as a bond of union, and, to a certain extent, as a stimulus to activity.¹ The same author ascribes the slow growth of the Dutch Reformed Church—the body for which our own Zion has such strong affections, and which is surpassed by no other body of Christians, in respectability and Christian character, in the whole country—in part, to their failure, for so long a time, "in securing a united organization under a system of self-management."²

¹ Fisher's *History of the Christian Church*, p. 561.

² *Ibid.*, p. 573.

This will suffice to make us see in the effect of a church's polity on its working capacity in gathering in the elect, the importance of church polity.

But, according to our Lord's great commission, the work of the church is not simply to gather in the elect, but to train them up. The church is to build up all the several members of the body of Christ to make them as large and perfect as possible. And it is easy to show that the effect of the church polity on the individual member must be great. To point to an analogy so close as to be practically demonstrative: Unquestionably one civil polity demands more of the citizen than another. One form of civil polity demands too much, and so proves impracticable. Another demands too little, and in that way fails to call forth that self-development of the individual which it should be the object of every government to seek. Another still demands enough of each to provoke and encourage his very best efforts; *i. e.*, one polity tends to make children of its men, weaklings of the strong. Another demands manhood of children. Another beckons each one for the present to the performance of the duties to which he is competent, promising to invite him higher in proportion as he enlarges his power.

An absolute monarchy expects few or none of the actions of a citizen from the so-called citizen. No matter how wise he may be, or how observant, he is not on that account expected to do more than his fellow who has only one-fourth his power. A democracy expects of every man, irrespective of his natural and acquired capacities, ability commensurate with the nicest functions of legislating and judicial activities. It expects the impossible. It is impracticable. Speedily it becomes mobocracy, one of the direst forms of tyranny. Republicanism, with a properly limited suffrage, expects of some individuals only the acts of minors; of others, acts to the performance of which the great mass of adult men is competent; and of others still the highest exercises of power of which they are, or can become, capable.

Now, the effect of a high demand, coupled with the possibility of ultimate attainment, is an uplifting force of the first moment. If one form of church polity be found to have it beyond others,

the matter of polity in the church appears a thing of no inconsiderable moment. For anything that gives enlargement and fulness of life, that begets growth in character, that refines the kind and increases the quantum of force in man as the servant of God, is, of all things, not to be despised.

And it is evident that some one form of church government must be better adapted to securing the two coördinate ends of the church's being, viz., gathering in the elect, and making them men of full stature in Christ Jesus, than any other form of church government. Give us a government at once compact, and yet elastic enough to allow sufficiently full play to individual action and development, and no other polity can approach it. As a matter of fact, history knows of one, and but one, such form of government.

3. *The effect on the political organization of the state.*

The forms of political organizations have ever since the apostolic age exercised an influence on the form of organization, in parts or in the whole, of the church. In the early post-apostolic history of the church, the form of the state impressed itself with resistless force on the entire church. The sublime spectacle of compactness and power exhibited in the empire appealed so strongly to the already secularized church that the church set itself to the work of sedulous imitation.

It is not less certain that the church under other forms has, at times, tended to occasion a corresponding change in political organizations, and even at times to provoke into being a civic organization after its own pattern. That certain forms of church organization are at virtual war with certain forms of state organization is everybody's belief. In response to one of the requests of the Millenary Petitioners, James I. cried out that "he had found they were aiming at a Scots' presbytery, 'which—(he says) agrees with monarchy as well as God and the devil;—(if I grant your petition) then Jack and Tom, Will and Dick, shall meet and at their pleasure censure both me and my council. Therefore, pray stay one seven years before you demand that of me, and if then you find me pury and fat, and my wind-pipe stuffed, I will perhaps hearken unto you; for let that government be up, and I

am sure I shall be kept in breath; but till you find I grow lazy, pray let that alone.'"¹ The "wise fool" well and clearly perceived the suggestiveness of the form of the spiritual republic of Presbyterianism. Nor was his successor, Charles I., more friendly toward Presbyterianism, while the grandson, Charles II., said: Let the presbytery go; "it is not a religion for gentlemen,"² feeling that a religion of blindness and servility was the religion wanted to subserve the purpose of such gentlemen as himself. The silly Stuart kings were not too blindly silly to perceive that the organization of the church was going to affect that of the state. They had seen the analogon of the spiritual republic of the presbytery erect itself against all the power of Spain and the world, as the Republic of the Netherlands, and erect itself at the inspiration of a spiritual republic. And they had *felt* the power of the Scotch presbyteries—spiritual republics.

And one would not err, perhaps, were he to affirm that the persecution of all forms of dissent by the Russian government is dictated, in part at least, by a sense of danger to the Czar's despotism in any form of church government which is not likewise a despotism. The Czar can see all that James and the Charleses saw, and should see more. If the monarch of such wide domains can see a country so small, he may see in the constitution of New Zealand an instrument shaped as nearly "as possible after the model of government furnished in the polity of the Presbyterian church."³ And if he cannot see New Zealand then he may turn his attention to our own country, and behold in it a system of government theoretically so exactly the analogue of the Presbyterian churches in the same country that one instinctively asks: Which one of these suggested the other? Our Czar knows, however, that the form in the church was not suggested by, but, on the contrary, suggested the other. *It* had existed long before, and had been in application in Europe for more than a single century immediately preceding the date of the Constitutional Convention of our country. It was being reëxamined and discussed with

¹ Neal's *History of the Puritans*, Vol. II., p. 16.

² Knight's *England*, Vol. IV., ch. 15, p. 253.

³ Porteus, *Government and Kingdom of Christ*, p. 554.

a view of adoption by our American Presbyterians at the time of the Constitutional Convention. It was, therefore, in the mind of the whole public to a considerable extent. Moreover, in the convention to frame the Civil Constitution were at least a dozen men known to be thoroughly saturated with a knowledge of the Presbyterian polity. Hamilton, Madison, and Washington, the leaders of the convention, were students of that polity. During the sitting of the Constitutional Convention Hamilton, according to the testimony of Dr. McGill, kept the Presbyterian Form of Government lying on his study table. As there was no doubt as to which of these two forms of government suggested the other, if either was suggested, so there can be little less doubt that the Presbyterian form of government was one of the provocatives of our republican Constitution.

But if the form of polity in the church of God is so potent in its influence on the form of political organizations, surely the church cannot but esteem the polity worthy of great attention for this reason. Though directing her energies toward the individual man chiefly, can she forget her more general but hardly less potent influence?

4. *In the fact, that in the Scriptures God commends clearly and at no inconsiderable length a particular form of government for his church, and but one such form.*

For the present we merely *assert* that God has commended at length one and only one form of government for his church. At present we neither prove the correctness of our assertion, nor name the form which God has commended. We shall do both these things after a little. In the *interim* we wish the hearer tentatively accepting our assertion as true to look at the bearing of the fact asserted upon our immediate subject, which is, the importance of church polity. If God has commended one form of church polity, and commended that at length, may we not reason from his doing so to the importance of church polity? May we not reason from the length of his commendation? And may we not reason from the commendation of but a single form? God may commend in the Scriptures many things, and yet commend them in such a way as to show that he evidently considers them

as the fringes, the extremest trimmings of other things; *e. g.*, such is his commendation of the Oriental custom of foot-washing, and of the kiss of friendly salutation, the fringes of Christian love and humility. But he gives a largeness of space to other things, in his precious word, and speaks of them therein in such wise as clearly indicates that the subject-matter of teaching is of no small import. In the realm of doctrine no reverent Bible student can well doubt that original sin, that election, that distributive justice, that God's benevolence and his grace and mercy to sinners, are in the sight of the author of revelation important. Nor can he consistently conclude that church organization is unimportant, unless he rejects the pastoral epistles and mutilates with ruthless hand many other and among them the fairest portions of God's word from Genesis to Revelation. We do not believe that any man can read the word of God thoughtfully and with unbiased mind, and rise from the reading without regarding the form of the church's organization as a matter of large importance in God's eyes. And if he happens to be an advocate of the dictum that we have no authority in affairs ecclesiastical save in things commanded, that we are not the confidential advisers of the Lord Jesus, but his servants, he being our captain and king, too wise to need advice of us, then our reader cannot but regard church government as a thing to be esteemed as important by the church. If, according to the Scriptures, church government is important then it is important. And if we had failed to show that the effect which polity has on doctrine is great, and hence that polity is of great significance, if we had failed to convince the hearer that the connection between the church's polity and the efficient out-working of the church's great ends, if we had not made it plain that the great influence of the form of church organization on political organizations demanded our regarding church polity as of high consequence, and could yet, as we shall by and by, point you to a relatively full exhibition and endorsement of a church polity in the Scriptures, this last fact would settle the matter decisively and finally for every reverent reader of the Bible as God's inerrant book.

If we may anticipate our references to Scripture, we may infer that though the form of government be not of the essence of the

church, though a real branch of the church of God may exist without having the true polity, it is yet a logical accident of the greatest import. The polity which has the happiest effect on the development of doctrine, which ministers to the greatest working capacity of the church in its destined mission, which ennobles every political fabrication, influenced at all by it, in the highest degree, which develops the largest and rotundest manhood throughout all the provinces of its influence, which is the God-ordained polity, is a property (an accident) that approaches an attribute in importance.

THE BIBLE POLITY.

It will be remembered that in our introductory remarks we adverted to a class of Christians who believe that the Bible itself contains elements of several, mutually conflicting if not contradictory, polities. They are accustomed to argue this: from the *antagonistic varieties* in which church *governments* as a matter of fact do exist, and from the claim made by each of these varieties of government that itself is biblical, and it alone. These gentlemen eloquently declare that human meanness, powerful as it has shown itself in church history, and human weakness, powerful as it has shown itself in church history, and human ignorance, though indeed shutting down like black night on the true path of the church, all added together could not have, of themselves, brought forth these diversities of polity; they further assert that if there be added to human meanness, and weakness, and ignorance, other causes, natural, social, and political—mental tendencies in one, say, inclining him to monarchy, and in another inclining him to republicanism, social influences, general arrangements in society predisposing to corresponding arrangements in church organization, political influences which all admit to be forceful—all these causes are not sufficient to account for these diversities of polity. They tell us that the only sufficient explanation of the diversity is to be found in an apostolic *warrant* for a variety in the form of organization.

Over against this declaration we remark: It appears to have the ring of charity about it. It grants to the churches irrespect-

ively of their several forms of organization a divine warrant for each particular form; and it, of course, proceeds upon the view that all the forms are in themselves good. And it is well to be charitable; but it is well, also, to distinguish between charity and unloving indifference to truth and right and the ends of pure benevolence. In all the celestial predications made of charity by the inspired apostle, she is never said to have been tolerant of a lie or to have rejoiced in iniquity. And without contravening the spirit of charity many a sage has said that certain of these church governments are not of God but of the devil, not good in any respect, so far as they are peculiar, but all bad in spite of any good God may have made them the occasion of his working.

Moreover, the power of human wickedness, and weakness, and ignorance, under the influence of natural, social, and political suggestions and promptings is quite sufficient to account for the diversity of polities. Some of these are bad, as we have just affirmed. The papal polity, for example, is altogether bad. It is a gigantic, a Satanic despotism. It robs the people of their prescriptive and God-given rights. It reduces them to damning ignorance of saving truth. It substitutes a priesthood for a ministry, a government of the priesthood and for the priesthood instead of a government of the people, and, through their proper organs, by the people. It, by its caricature, slanders God and his eternal church. There is no need to hunt for good causes of the papacy. "The remains of depravity in the hearts of Christians, along with the cunning, malice, and continual efforts of Satan, are sufficient for that end."¹ Does an unclean thing come out of a clean? Nor are the papists able to show any Bible grounds for their polity. They, indeed, point to John i. 42; Matt. xvi. 17-19; Luke xxii. 31-32; John xxi. 15-17. They refer to other passages, but chiefly for corroborative evidence. The passages named are the ones most to their purpose. They find in these passages a certain primacy of honor for Peter, and transmute it into one of authority over the other apostles and the whole church. They do this in the teeth of the fact that they

¹ Porteus, *Government and Kingdom of Christ*, p. 285.

thus bring these passages into conflict with the rest of Scripture. And then, for even so their lie would not serve them as a support of their polity, they make the following utterly gratuitous assumptions: (1), That the privileges of Peter's primacy and supremacy are not personal, but official, hereditary, and transmissible; (2), That they were actually transferred to the bishops of Rome in succession; (3), And that the bishops of Rome have always enjoyed and exercised a universal jurisdiction over the Christian church.¹

No one of these assumptions has ever been shown by proof to be anything more than an assumption. And it is safe to say that Omnipotence himself, though omniscient, can't prove all of them to be true. For while history, so far as man knows it, is absolutely silent as to any support for the first two assumptions, affording not a glimmer of a scintilla of proof, she says the third is false.

Our charitable friends would do well when about to engage in charitable remarks on forms of church government to investigate a little before making the remarks. Their lucubrations might then have the seasoning of sense, and a grain of the salt that makes for righteousness. This brief examination of the papal polity shows that from the bare existence of a given polity, and its claim of biblical support, there can be no concluding that it has warrant from the apostles or Christ.

In our approach to the Bible for its testimony on church polity we shall do well to lay aside any expectation of finding support for a polity because that polity exists. Let us turn to it, then, simply as inquirers, to learn to which, if to either, of the great generic forms of polity the Bible gives its easy and natural support.

In order to see the bearing of the biblical teaching, we must, of course, keep firmly in mind the distinctive traits of the several forms of government: The distinctive trait of Episcopacy, the tenet that there was and continueth unto this day a "distinct permanent order, higher in rank and power than presbyters, having sole authority to perform acts essential to the preservation and regulation of the church." The distinctive trait of Congregationalism, the tenets that power, not only power as to its being, but power viewed as to its exercise, power to rule, is the possession of

¹ Cf. Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. I., pp. 153-'56.

the people; that there are two, and only two, kinds of officers in the New Testament ideal of the church, the teaching elder and the deacon; and that these officers are nothing more, as they are nothing less, than the delegates of the people, and that a single congregation is the only visible church known to the New Testament. The distinctive traits of Presbyterianism, the tenets that the Scriptures put all permanent church power for government and teaching in the hands of presbyters, that they recognize two classes of presbyters, that they require that these presbyters shall be organized into parliamentary assemblies for the purposes of rule; and that the unit of the church is to be embodied by a peculiar series of courts. With these distinctive traits in mind, let us remark:

1st. That the Bible puts all permanent church power into the hands of presbyters, for the purposes of government and teaching. To see that it does put the power into these hands, you will note that it identifies presbyters and bishops, as is evident from the following facts: (1), It makes them always appear as a plurality, or college, in one and the same congregation, even in small cities as Philippi. (2), It calls the same officers of the church of Ephesus, alternately, presbyters and bishops. (See Acts xx. 17, 28.) (3), It makes Paul send greetings to the "bishops" and "deacons" of Philippi, but omit to mention the presbyters, because they were bishops, as also the plural indicates, seeing several diocesan bishops would not be in so small a town had there been any such anachronisms. (4), "In the Pastoral Epistles, where Paul intends to give the qualifications for all church officers, he again mentions only two, bishops and deacons, but uses the term presbyter afterwards for bishop." (See 1 Tim. iii. 1-13; v. 17-19; Titus i. 5-7.) (5), Peter urges the "*presbyters*" to tend the flock of God, "*and to fulfil the office of bishops*" with disinterested devotion and without "lording it over the charge allotted to them." (See 1 Peter v. 1, 2.) This presentation of the New Testament argument for the identity of the bishop and the presbyter in New Testament times is substantially that of Dr. Schaff in his *Church History*, Vol. I. In it he is at one with the Latin father Jerome, and with Bishop J. B. Lightfoot, as well as with all trustworthy scholarship on the subject.

The different names suggested, indeed, somewhat different relations to the church, but they pointed out the very same individuals. The New Testament presbyter and the New Testament bishop were identical.

As another step in this argument, you will note that power was committed to the bishops, or presbyters; the *only sort of power in exercise* that the Scriptures ever impute to the church, except the power of electing their officers, lodged with the people, and the subordinate power of distribution lodged with the deacon, was vested neither in non-presbyterial officers, nor with the people, but with these presbyters. The passages cited to prove the identity of presbyters and bishops abundantly proved also that a lodgement of power of the kind specified was made with them. And the passages might be multiplied to satisfy every reasonable demand. In admissions to the church, in ordinations, in discipline of any form, even the most extreme, the power is seen to have been with the presbyter bishops. (See 1 Tim. v. 17, 19; Tit. iii. 10.)

Of course, there was power in the hands of the other officers of the apostolic times, but the Bible does not teach the continuance of any offices in the church save those of presbyters and deacons. There is not the slightest evidence of any sort that the Apostolate was continued, as the Episcopalians affirm, in the Episcopacy. Our brethren of the Episcopal Church may tell us that the Jewish hierarchy, with its three distinctive classes, high priests, priests, and Levites, was intended to typify the form of government which God designed for his church; that Christ organized his church during his own life in a way to preserve the three orders, he himself being the High Priest, the twelve being the priests, and the seventy the Levites; that upon his death he had the apostles moved up to fill the vacancy made by his ascension on high; the seventy moved up to fill those vacancies thus made by the elevation of the apostles; and that Christ then created the diaconate as a third body of the clergy; that the apostles chose others to the same office with themselves, *e. g.*, Paul, Timothy. They may tell us this, but there is not the slightest evidence in the Bible for the view. Nor can any of those who claim to be successors of the apostles show one of the distinctive signs of the apostles. Not one of them

witnessed the majesty of the Lord Jesus, as revealed on earth, and especially in his resurrection, which the apostles did (Acts i. 21, 22; 1 Cor. ix. 1; xv. 8; and 2 Pet. i. 16); not one of them bears a commission immediately from Christ himself (Luke vi. 13; Gal. i. 1); not one of them is endowed with the power of the Holy Ghost in such a way that he can work miracles (Heb. ii. 14; 2 Cor. xii. 11, 12), and confer the power of miracles on others, and can write and speak infallibly—make the exalted claim that his “gospel is not of man.”

There is no evidence whatever that the Apostolate has been continued, any more than there is that the prophetic office has been continued, or the evangelist, if the latter is to be distinguished from the presbyter, save as to function chiefly exercised. We have no apostles and prophets to-day. We will have to reject, then, that form of church government which has for its distinctive tenet that there is a “distinct permanent order, higher in rank and power than presbyters, having sole authority to perform acts essential to the preservation and regulation of the church”—to reject it as UNBIBLICAL. The Bible grounds for its rejection might be made a thousand times stronger, but we have seen that the Bible puts permanent church power of government and teaching into the hands of presbyters for its exercise. It does not put that power anywhere else. The Bible, if it is to be our law-book, forces us to abandon the prelatical polity in favor of the presbyterian, on the *ubi* of power in exercise, as four-fifths of the best Christians and the best scholars in the world unite in saying; and it forces us to stand off from the congregational polity, too, which locates church power, not only as to its being but as to its exercise, in the people. For church power in exercise, save in the single case of election, appears in the New Testament always in officers, and as going to continue in presbyters and deacons alone.

2nd. The Scriptures recognize two classes of presbyters. In 1 Tim. v. 17, Paul writes: “Let the presbyters that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine.” It needs no labored exegesis to show the applicability of this text to our purpose. It teaches that there were two classes of elders, one of which was marked by the pro-

perty of laboring in word and doctrine, while the other was not so marked, though equal as rulers. But both the Congregationalists and the Episcopalians refuse the office of ruling elder, which the Presbyterians receive and maintain.

3rd. The Scriptures teach that the presbyters shall rule as organized into parliamentary assemblies. When they teach the plurality of elders in a single congregation as in Phil. i. 1; Acts xiv. 23; Tit. i. 5, and teach as they do that these several rulers are of equal authority, they teach that there could be no decency and order in the exercise of their power except by agreement, that is, by an agreement of the majority. "There must have been deliberation, conference, interchange of views, and a vote which made the action that of the whole governing body," to adopt the language of one who has thought long on the subject in hand. And for an instance of the way in which New Testament elders ruled in concerns common to more than one church, we refer to the fifteenth chapter of Acts, the account of the proceedings of the council at Jerusalem. Again, in 1 Tim. iv. 14, Paul speaks of such a court, and calls it a presbytery.

Parliamentary courts, composed solely of presbyters, then, are of biblical warrant. There are no such courts in either congregationalism or in prelacy. They are a distinguishing feature of presbyterianism. And so far, presbyterianism appears to be the biblical polity. We might as easily show that the presbyterian method of bodying forth the unity of the church of God is the biblical method. But the limits of our time forbid. We claim, that the Bible facts adduced show that the other polities must be rejected, and that we have shown, at least, that the distinctive features of presbyterianism, as a polity, are biblical. We assert, further, that every essential feature of that polity is biblical; that the whole system, with the exception of the circumstantial details, is revealed in the word of God and bound on the conscience with the authority of law. We assert that presbyterianism not in erastian connection with the state, not in ultramontane connection with the state, but wholly independent, is biblical; and that such

¹ Dr. T. E. Peck's *Ecclesiology*, p. 180.

cannot be maintained for any other historic polity. Presbyterianism is the JURE DIVINO CHURCH POLITY.

Will you meditate for a moment, now, on the way in which history and experience vindicate the wisdom and beneficence of the Bible polity ?

They demonstrate the wisdom of the presbyterian polity negatively, by showing the unwisdom of other polities, and positively, by exhibiting the blessings which have flowed from ours.

In establishing the importance of polity in the church, we brought out many facts, which, in addition to serving the purpose of the moment, were also so many historical proofs of our present point. In the historical effect of polity on doctrine, in the sequence of debased and corrupted doctrine on the change away from the New Testament polity to a prelatic polity in the ante-Nicene age, we had, though our attention was not called to it at the time, a proof of the superiority of presbyterianism to prelacy. Similarly we might have seen in the historical effect of the form of government on the development of the individual man into his roundest and fullest manhood a proof of the superiority of presbyterianism to any other sort of government. We saw in the effect of the organization of the church on the political organization of the state, a proof of the superiority of that spiritual republic which has turned out the pattern of the most advanced civil government on the globe, a proof of its superiority to any other polity whatsoever. We might, by specification of points of superiority and citation of historical facts, increase the strength of our proof indefinitely. But we content ourselves with pointing you to the facts that—

1. History and experience teach that prelacy obstructs the progress of God's kingdom; that this plan, supposed to be an improvement on God's, has never been attended with a blessing to the church, but with the moral degradation of people and clergy when looked at in the mass; that it has been attended by the empty temporal exaltation of the clergy and depression of the people; that it has been attended by the apostasy of the church almost universally. In whatever form it has existed, it has been accompanied by anti-biblical tendencies in doctrine and in life. In saying

these things we do not forget the noble fathers of the Nicene and middle ages. Nor do we forget the glorious men in the English Church. But there were grand men in the crowd that surrounded the crucified One on Golgotha.

2. History confirms Mr. James Moir Porteus, when he says: "Congregationalism frequently either excludes ministerial authority or yields servility to domination. The power of the pastor is often most urgently required to enforce discipline or to maintain truth and morality, when suddenly the semblance of it which he is allowed is put out of existence. Caprice, lax desire, delinquency, and 'purseocracy' unite in expelling the would-be reformer. Those on whose support he depends for the means of living no longer desire his presence or his efforts. He must depart. Authority in such cases there is none. Where this is not the case congregationalism frequently yields absolute power to one man. Isaac Taylor, the son, I believe, of a Congregational minister, 'says—'considered in its relation to the pastors individually, the congregational system is, in one word, the people's polity, framed or adhered to, for the purpose of circumscribing clerical power within the narrowest possible limits, and of absolutely excluding any exertions of authority, such as the high English temper could not brook. The minister of the meeting-house or chapel is one against all. . . . Feeling that the prerogatives formally assigned to him are altogether insufficient for the free and beneficial discharge of his functions, no alternative is left to him, but either to succumb, and to sustain a mere mockery of authority, or to usurp (we must call it usurpation) such powers as he can, and by personal address, or by the force of his temper, or the momentum of his talents and character, to render himself absolute. Nothing tends so rapidly to despotism as pure democracy.'"²

The weakness of that polity for anything like judicial discipline has been conspicuous on every occasion. The people are never wise jurors before whom to bring cases for trial. Nor can they

¹ The father was, for a time, a Congregational minister. Later he entered the Church of England.

² See Porteus, *Government and Kingdom of Christ*, p 349.

hear the evidence that must in many of such cases be brought out without hurt to their own lives. The inter-connection, too, between the different congregations is so tenuous that a single congregation may go off unchecked into the extremest vagary.

Presbyterianism, on the other hand, maintaining the unity of the church through her system of courts, feels, as a whole, that which affects any part, and gives the proper attention to the need of that part; she maintains a legitimate authority through her rulers, among whom parity obtains, while she protects the liberty of the people through the representative feature of her system. No church can show so pure a creed; no church among true churches can show so great a growth. None can show a more sturdy and consecrated set of children of God.

Nor can we refrain from remarking on the homage involuntarily paid to this system by the other two great germinal systems, and especially by the Congregationalists—the only other form of polity which can approximate a favorable comparison with the presbyterian. We remark this homage in their elevation of the deacon to the place of the ruling elder, as an adviser and co-ruler with the pastor, and as his substitute to conduct prayer-meetings and other meetings for the purposes of instruction and worship. We see the same homage again in their appointing delegates to try cases for discipline. They know that the congregational system would work ill. They virtually forsake it. We see it again in their consociations, which are no longer clothed with simple advisory power. And the tendency at present is in some quarters to make the power of the association *formally* more than advisory. And in other ways this body pays homage to the polity of the Presbyterians.

And it should be affirmed that our polity is just the ideal of governments, as conceived by the world's greatest thinkers of modern times. "This is the very government," says Dr. Peck, "which in modern times, among free nations, has been considered the most perfect," or, to use the language of Milton, "the noblest, the manliest, the equalest, the justest government on earth—a government by representatives, not by the people in *propria per-*

sona, or by deputies; and these representatives not all of the same class, so that as the representative principle is itself a check on the democratic principle, the two classes of representatives constitute a check upon the evils incident to a representation by one class." There can be no doubt of it; history vindicates the biblical polity.

And now, will you briefly review with us the ground covered? We saw that, though polity might, indeed, be less than of the first moment, it *might* yet be important; that, though polity regarded as a mark of the true church might be denied a place among the *essentiae*, it might yet be a note of extraordinary moment. We saw, second, that it was a thing—a mark—of great importance. We saw, third, that polity of the presbyterian form was divinely enjoined in the Scriptures; that it is the *jure divino* form of church polity. And we have just seen, last of all, that it has been, in history, vindicated as the wisest and noblest and most beneficent polity known to man. And now, we pray God to make this idea of *jure divino presbyterianism* take hold of the hearts of our Zion. There is power in the belief of it for the furtherance of our Zion. Because the Presbyterians were relatively indifferent to polity in 1640–1650, and the Independents determined for it, because of this in considerable part, England was lost to the Presbyterians. Because the Presbyterian immigrants to New England, from 1630 on, were relatively indifferent to polity, and the Congregationalists keenly alive to it, New England was lost to Presbyterians. There is power in a great religious idea; the autocratic edicts of a Zeno, a Justinian, a Heraclius, fell back on themselves, and the world went on as it was carried by the idea. Even the dull Charles V., with a world-empire at his back, and Rome as his ally, felt the power of a great religious idea, though unable to understand it—felt it as he slunk away broken and cowed to his convent. Such an idea beheaded Charles I., and placed England at the feet of Cromwell. There is power even in a false religious idea, believed to be of God. The Baptist belief in *jure divino* (?) immersion as the only valid baptismal form, carries multitudes of the superficial with them. And if the Lord shall put into the minds and hearts of our people belief in the *jure divino* polity as a thing of

importance, giving them also the essentials of his saving truth, and a burning desire for the full salvation of souls; then we shall see a lengthening of the cords and strengthening of the stakes.

Then give thy people, Lord, hearts to love not only the servants of the bride of Christ, but her very form which makes her what she is in beauty; not only the material of the temple into which thy people are builded, but the manner of the building; not only the matter of the body of Christ, but the fashion thereof.

Make thy people so love thy church and so honor thee as to wish to edify thy church in thy way. Give them the holy daring to venture to work for thy church's progress, according to thy plans, so far as discovered, whether those plans can be seen to be best or not. Oh, may thy people trust thee as wise and able to lead thy hosts to victory, glorious and complete, without advice or amendment of thy plan by man. And give grace to all rulers who have to answer the question as to whether the form of our Zion may not be changed with profit—whatever the particular of the change—to go to the law and to the testimony, there to learn for the church the will of its sovereign as well as most gracious head. "To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen."

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