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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.

VI. NOTES.

BISHOP SEYMOUR ON THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE.

SOME time ago, like many other Presbyterian ministers, I received through the post the first number of *The Church Unity Quarterly*. The only article which it contains is entitled, "The Historic Episcopate: a contribution towards church unity, by the Right Rev. George Franklin Seymour, S. T. D., LL. D., Bishop of Springfield." A preface states that the periodical was sent me by the Church Unity Society, which asks the recipient to kindly accept and prayerfully examine it, and assures him that it "is not written in the spirit of controversy, but with a sincere desire for closer union, and in Christian love." In the body of the article, too, the author tells his readers that it will be a "great comfort" for him to learn that what he has written "will be honored for its candor, and regarded as an effort to secure kindly attention by the spirit of love which it breathes." I am sorry to say that if I were called on to report to Bishop Seymour the effect on myself of a perusal of his treatise, I should have to withhold from his large, generous, Christian heart the consolation for which it so ardently yearns; and I fear, too, that his own clerical brethren, who are of a less exclusive and hierarchical stripe than himself, whom, in his loving phraseology, he characterizes as "going about with a bravado which ought to excite disgust," and as furnishing a "distressing example of disloyalty," would hardly admit that he has been very successful in accomplishing his professed aim of making "known the truth in such wise, that all who hear or read are fascinated by the witchery of that sweet charity" which he delights to portray and recommend, but which, like too many others, he finds it much easier to preach than to practice. The pamphlet is really written in the spirit of propagandism and sectarian narrowness. The strength of the Bishop's plea for what he calls the Historic Episcopate consists in his own repeated and emphatic assurance that he fully believes in it. Such reiterated declarations of his personal conviction might have the force of valid arguments on the weak and ignorant, though I have said to myself once and again, on reading his needless repetitions of his undoubting faith in the system

which he advocates, "the Bishop doth protest too much, methinks." I am, therefore, tempted to begin my criticism of his plea for the Historic Episcopate by making it evident that he is a guide whose ostentatious parade of confidence in his system is no guarantee of security to those whom he undertakes to lead. I will make manifest by a palmary example that he can be the victim of incredible delusion, even when he vaunts most exultingly the invincibility of his argument.

Let us consider how he makes out the certainty of the transmission of the grace of holy orders from the time of the apostles by tactual succession. A break in the continuity he labors to show to be utterly inconceivable, and manages to furnish what I venture to affirm to be one of the choicest specimens of demonstration which the age has produced. I give his words exactly (p. 20): "In Holy Scripture we learn that the apostles ordained many, by the laying on of hands, to coöperate with them while they lived, and succeed them when they were dead." [He does not think it needful to show that any whom the apostles ordained were higher than presbyters.] "The first of the apostolical canons, which undoubtedly is genuine and represents the mind of the apostles, enjoins that a bishop must be ordained by two or three bishops, and the General Council of Nice in its fourth canon, which has been the law of the universal church ever since, requires that three at least shall concur in an ordination. These provisions secure, I may say, absolutely against the possibility of failure. The three strands, united in every ordination of a bishop, multiply by three as we go back in time, until after a few removes from the present they become too numerous easily to count. This is the sum and substance of apostolical succession." I have found by actual calculation that the three strands of bishops, united in the ordination of every bishop, if we multiply them by three, as we go back in time, do become after a few removes from the present too numerous readily to count. Suppose that the average length of a bishop's service in office is twenty years. Then between the year 1892 and 1492, that is, in four hundred years, there would be twenty removes. Suppose, now, three bishops to ordain a bishop in the year 1892, then twenty years back, or at the first remove, there would be nine bishops; multiply these by three, and go on multiplying by three at each remove till the year of the discovery of America is reached, and you will find that there must have been then living more than 10,460,000,000 bishops. After twenty removes the bishops became "too numerous easily to count," as our author truly affirms. If we should go further backward, and keep multiplying by

three as directed, we should find that when we should reach the year of the Council of Nice, or 325, they would mount up high into the trillions or quadrillions. The Bishop has evidently thought long and deeply on this proof of the continuity of the apostolical succession in the episcopate. It is, I believe, an original argument of his; and he again presents it to our admiring contemplation in a paper on the Historic Episcopate in the *Church Review* for October, 1890, (pp. 50, 51). That article is a *réchauffé* of the one in *The Church Unity Quarterly*, and in it we find these words: "This gives me a living church, bound together in time as one by a network of innumerable strands, crossing and recrossing one another, until thought is confused in contemplating the greatness of the security which apostolic and Nicene canons give us to guard the continuity of holy orders. The succession is not the succession of links in a chain, to be counted one by one, nor, as our lineal descent, to be reckoned back by a multiple of two, but beyond this, the succession brings in at each remove an increase multiplied by three." *Risum teneatis, amici?*

Could the force of folly go further? Well might the Bishop say that "thought is confused by the greatness of the security which apostolic and Nicene canons," as he applies them, "give us to guard the continuity of holy orders"! It is a good thing to consider the consequences of our application of certain principles; and if they are found to issue in absurdity, we are bound to conclude that there must be something wrong with the principles, or in our application of them. But the Bishop carries recklessly his false assumptions to the most shocking results. If any one is slow to believe that he could have blundered so outrageously as to ask us to admit that there were at least 10,460,000,000 bishops in existence in 1492, I have only to request the doubter to take the trouble to make the calculation exactly according to the Bishop's instructions. Baron Munchausen must surely yield the palm for imaginative story-telling to the present bishop of Springfield, Illinois.

But what shall we say of Bishop Seymour's assertion that the first apostolical canon, enjoining the ordination of a bishop by two or three bishops, is "undoubtedly genuine, and represents the mind of the apostles"? Here we have to make mention of a disgraceful practice, too prevalent in the early Christian centuries—that of giving the name of the apostles, or of their contemporaries, to writings composed long after their death for the purpose of advancing hierarchical interests. The Apostolic Canons, to which Bishop Seymour, who would have us

honor his candor, ventures to appeal, as to an authentic work, are one of these forgeries, as every one who has any capacity for historical criticism can convince himself by even a superficial examination.

The second apostolic canon, which speaks of *other clergy* besides bishops, presbyters, and deacons, betrays an age later than the apostolic. Or, take the twenty-fifth canon: "A bishop, or presbyter, or deacon, who is taken in fornication, or perjury, or stealing, let him be deposed, but not excommunicated; for the Scripture says, Thou shalt not avenge twice for the same thing in affliction." The Scripture thus perverted to the undue mitigation of the penalty to be inflicted on a clerical offender is Nahum i. 9: "Affliction shall not rise up the second time."

The thirty-first apostolic canon runs: "If any bishop makes use of the rulers of this world, and by their means obtains a church, let him be deposed and excommunicated, and all that have communion with him." Who does not see that this canon must have originated when Christianity was the religion of the empire, and long after the age of the apostles? And if this canon were indeed apostolic, it would destroy the apostolic succession in England and other countries in which it has been customary to use the influence of worldly powers to attain elevation to the Episcopal bench. How are most Anglican bishops elected at the present day? In a way which excites the scorn and derision of unbelievers. Emerson's description of it I saw lately quoted with approbation in a Roman Catholic quarterly, the *Dublin Review* (July, 1891, p. 11, note): "The bishop is elected by the dean and prebends of the cathedral. The queen sends these gentlemen a *congé d'élire*, or leave to elect, but also sends them the name of the person whom they are to elect. They go into the cathedral, chant and pray, and beseech the Holy Ghost to assist them in their choice; and after these invocations, invariably find that the dictates of the Holy Ghost agree with the recommendation of the queen." It is a great tax on our credulity to be required to believe that men elected in this way are exclusively entrusted by God in England with the grace of holy orders, and that none but those on whom they lay their hands are true ministers of Jesus Christ.

The fiftieth apostolic canon directs that a bishop who does not perform the three immersions of the one initiation at baptism should be deposed. If this canon is apostolic, there is not a lawful bishop in the Episcopal Church in the United States. The best excuse for the

temerity of Bishop Seymour in appealing to the Apostolic Canons (so-called) is to say that he was "beguiled through simplicity."

It was only by degrees and after much struggling¹ that bishops succeeded in establishing their exclusive right to ordain. In opposition to Bishop Seymour's affirmation that the first of the apostolic canons was universally acted on, I might content myself with appealing to Bingham (*Antiq.* Book II., ch. xi., sec. v.), who says: "The church many times admitted of the ordination of bishops that were consecrated only by one or two bishops," and he proceeds to furnish instances of this practice. In Smith's *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* (I., p. 224) such a pronounced high churchman as Mr. Had-dan expressly teaches that the Welsh and early Irish and Scotch practice was to have only one consecrator. Here are exceptions to the rule of multiplying by three at every remove as we go backward, which, as we saw, leads to a stupendous result. Why, I could prove by such witnesses as Jerome, Ambrosiaster, and Eutychius, that even in the third century the bishop of the very important see of Alexandria received no Episcopal ordination, but was appointed solely by the presbyters of the city. And the validity of his Episcopal standing was not challenged. The twenty-ninth chapter of the sixth book of the *Church History of Eusebius*, relates how Fabianus, who afterward suffered martyrdom in the Decian persecution, was seized and without any delay (*amelletos*) seated on the Episcopal throne of the city of Rome by the excited multitude, who imagined they saw a sign from heaven, which rendered any human ceremony of ordination unnecessary. If there had been any Episcopal consecration in the case of Fabianus, Eusebius could not have so related the story of his obtaining the see of Rome.

¹ This is unmistakably intimated in *Apostolic Constitutions*, Book VIII., ch. xlv., where we read "Many (or rather, the many, *hoi polloi*, the greater number) esteem this a subordinate matter, and dare to confound the orders, and to remove the ordination which belongs to each, snatching to themselves dignities which are not given to them, and allowing themselves tyrannically to give what they have not authority." etc. Language like this testifies that even at a comparatively late period, and after the three-fold order of the ministry had been constituted, great confusion and irregularity in the practice of ordination prevailed, the inferior clergy undertaking the functions of the higher. Alas for the theory of a continuity of the grace of holy orders, through an unbroken succession of bishops, when orders and their functions were very generally confounded and presbyters took upon them to ordain like bishops, and little importance was attached by most to this disregard of clerical distinctions! It was judged a *parergon*, a subordinate matter (as even the *Apostolic Constitutions* confess) to discriminate the functions of church officers.

We have seen that the "Apostolic Canons" which Bishop Seymour has the boldness to declare "undoubtedly genuine" are unquestionably spurious, as is admitted by every competent scholar. I will not dispute the genuineness of the fourth canon of the council of Nice, over which he has lost his wits. But every one should know that a canon enacted in the year 325 could bear only on the appointment of bishops in subsequent times. It could not affect ante-Nicene practice, which was notoriously not in accordance with that fourth canon. It strikingly evidences the uncritical spirit of our author when he assumes that the canons of the Nicene Council were the universally observed law of the church from that time onward. Was he not aware that the twentieth Nicene canon directs all Christians to *pray standing on Sundays* and the whole time between Easter and Pentecost? He will hardly pretend that this canon has been observed always, everywhere, and by all. The testimony to the early prevalence of this practice is very different from that to the necessity of "three strands" of bishops being united in the ordination of every bishop. Bishop Seymour has strangely forgotten to give any scriptural proof of the ordination or appointment by the apostles of any ecclesiastical officers besides presbyters (who were bishops) and deacons. We do not read in Scripture of the apostles ordaining any bishops in the modern sense.

Bishop Seymour's treatise is not of the nature of an irenicon. To call it "a contribution towards church union" is a strange misnomer. He makes no concession to his non-Episcopal brethren, but insists on their submitting unconditionally to Episcopacy. Where there is no bishop, in his sense of the term, there is no church. "I believe," he says, "that the sacraments are official acts, and depend ultimately upon the episcopate for their validity." He is careful to inform his brethren who are not under Episcopal government, that "the church cannot permit her children to recognize their ministries." He is at great pains to impress upon his readers that this is a matter of principle with him. "It is impossible" for him "to recognize" his non-Episcopal brethren "as *officially representing the divine Muster as his ambassadors*, because they have not the credentials which can alone accredit them as coming from him." He exculpates himself from the charge of bigotry and exclusiveness in maintaining his doctrine of the church, in a passage which is too curious to be in anywise modified. "Moreover, in this view of our relations, namely, that Episcopacy is divine in its origin, and the only form of church government, so far as we know, appointed by God, we must be acquitted by our brethren of that

charge of which we so often hear, and which seems to give offence, that we 'unchurch them.' Whoever holds this belief as I do, cannot unchurch any one. It is simply impossible. The church in its organization is God's work, not man's. He must receive it as God gives it to man." Those who only think of the church under the aspects in which it is presented in Scripture will be puzzled to form any intelligible idea of what is intended by "receiving the church as God gives it to man." But in Bishop Seymour's nomenclature the word church is employed to denote an organized body of ecclesiastics.

But what are we to make of the Bishop's solemn affirmation that he does not "unchurch anyone," and that it is "simply impossible" for him to do this? What he says is true, and is not true. It is not true as an answer to the charge of unchurching non-Episcopal Christian bodies. He is not at liberty to give the term "unchurch" a meaning which it does not bear in the accusation which he professes to repel. He does not "unchurch," or deprive of the character or rights of a church, his non-Episcopal brethren, because he does not acknowledge that they have any such character or rights to be deprived of. But he ought to be aware that in the charge which he professes to repudiate, the sense of the word "unchurch" is "to refuse the name or character of a church to." (See *Century Dictionary*.) This is what he does to every Christian communion differently organized from his own. He refuses the name or character of a church to it. This he will not deny. If the Bishop were a clearer thinker than he is, if his thought were not liable to be "confused," he would deserve severe reprehension for unworthy quibbling, for "paltering with us in a double sense." I will allow a man after his own heart in the matter of church government to reprove his bigotry. Bishop Andrewes was accounted a very high churchman in his day. He held very different views from those of the early fathers of the Anglican Church.¹ But Bishop Andrewes

¹ The idea of maintaining the continuity of holy orders was far from the mind of Cranmer, the first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury. The king's appointment, without any Episcopal consecration, was in his opinion sufficient to make a valid bishop. And the Elizabethan Primates Parker, Grindal, and Whitgift, in ordaining bishops had certainly no intention of communicating any grace of holy orders received by succession from the apostles; nor did the bishops whom they ordained think that such grace was imparted to them at consecration. Without intention on the part of the ordainers or the ordained how could the grace be imparted is an interesting question discussed by Gilbert Child in the *Contemporary Review* for November, 1892, in an article on The Present Position of the High Church Party in England. In his book, *Church and State Under the Tudors*, Mr. Child

has uttered words of scathing rebuke to men who treat non-Episcopal communities as Bishop Seymour does. Here is his language: "Though our government be by divine right, it follows not either that there is no salvation, or that a church cannot stand without it. He must needs be stone-blind, that sees not churches standing without it." I have such a regard for the urbanities of controversy that I could not bring myself to tell Bishop Seymour that he was stone-blind for not seeing churches standing without Episcopal government; but it may be useful for him to know that this is the judgment pronounced on him by so renowned an Anglican prelate as Dr. Launcelot Andrewes.

I can consider only very briefly Bishop Seymour's proof of the divine origin and sanction of Episcopacy. He comes, he tells us, to the New Testament expecting to find there three orders of ministers to correspond to the high priest, priests, and Levites under the Law of Moses. Of course he finds what he wished and expected to find. But he does not seem to know, what is evident to every one who investigates the matter, that the ministry of the church of the New Testament was not organized after the model of the ministry of the temple, but after the ministry of the synagogue. The apostles did not appoint over the church high priest, priests, and Levites, but elders, such as were in the synagogue. The name of priest (*hiereus*) is no appropriate designation of the Christian minister. The preacher of the gospel is contrasted with the priest who ministered at the Jewish altar, as when Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Know ye not that they which minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar? Even so the Lord ordained

proves the doctrine of the necessity of Episcopal ordination to have been an afterthought in the English Church. "The idea of questioning foreign Protestant orders was looked upon by Bacon (fifty years after the separation from Rome) as not only a novelty, but also an outrageous novelty." How could men holding the view of the English Reformers of the Church of Rome think of being dependent on her for the grace of holy orders? The third part of the sermon *Against Peril of Idolatry*, in the Homilies appointed to be read in churches in the time of Queen Elizabeth, calls the Church of Rome "the idolatrous church," "not only an harlot (as the Scripture calleth her) but also a foul, filthy, old withered harlot," "the foulest and filthiest harlot that ever was seen," "the great strumpet of all strumpets, the mother of whoredom set forth by St. John in his Revelation, who by her glory provoked the princes of earth to commit whoredom with her." It is curious to note how pleadings on behalf of the continuity of holy orders, which the leaders of the High Church party in England have been forced to abandon, are still repeated in the *Church Review* of the United States. See Mr. Child's article above referred to.

that they which proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.) Our only high priest is the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is an infringement on the rights of Christ's people for any party in the church to assume to itself an exclusive or a paramount title to that name of priesthood. Christ has made all his people priests unto God.

Bishop Seymour next seeks to prove a ministry of three orders in the church from the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. From the same doctrine the necessity of a trine immersion in baptism has been proved. "Looking," he writes, "with lowly reverence at the persons of the ever blessed Trinity in their revealed relations to mankind, and knowing that our Lord would appoint a ministry officially, as I believe, to represent himself to the end of the world, can I help anticipating that this ministry will be *threefold*?" "The eternal Father creates and rules; the eternal Son sacrifices and redeems, and the eternal Spirit sanctifies and teaches." Further, in the three offices of Christ our Prophet, Priest, and King, he finds a necessity for three orders of ministers. "Must there not be three?" he asks triumphantly. And as corresponding to the three persons of the Trinity, and Christ's three offices, he can thus describe the three orders which he professes to find in the New Testament: "It is the official prerogative of the apostle to rule; it is the characteristic privilege of the presbyter to celebrate the holy eucharist, and it is the special duty of the deacon to teach." To one who has read the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles it seems passing strange that Bishop Seymour could so far misrepresent the office of a deacon as to make his special duty be to teach. The Bishop sets at defiance canon law, for which he professes such reverence. For at the close of the third book of the so-called *Apostolic Constitutions*, we read that the deacon is forbidden to meddle with teaching, which is a function of the presbyter. It is the official prerogative of the presbyter, according to the New Testament, to both rule and teach. (1 Tim. v. 17.) When Bishop Seymour describes the characteristic privilege of the presbyter to be to celebrate the holy eucharist, he makes this erroneous assertion with a view of finding in the presbyter's office something to correspond to the priesthood of Christ. It is obvious that he regards the celebration of the eucharist as a priestly offering of sacrifice, which is one of the worst heresies ever promulgated. I would refer the Bishop to the ninth and tenth chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that he may see that the idea of offering Christ as a sacrifice for sin a second time must be abhorrent to every one who believes in the perfection of his atoning work. The apostles were, indeed,

rulers in the church; but ruling was certainly not their chief employment. They had more important work to fulfil. But by making the apostle rule, the presbyter offer, and the deacon teach, our author is able to affirm that the "three orders, the Episcopate, the Presbyterate, and the Diaconate, in ministering things spiritual, preserve the analogy of the law, the offices of Christ, and the persons of the blessed Trinity"! Bishop Seymour has no scruple about identifying the Episcopate with the Apostolate, and giving an utterly false account of the Presbyterate and the Diaconate, in order to draw out a fanciful analogy to which a sound thinker could not attribute the slightest weight as an argument.

Bishop Seymour tries to draw from the great commission which our Lord gave to the disciples ere he left the world a proof of Episcopacy. He has many irrelevant observations to make on this commission. He assumes that Christ in his parting words is engaged in defining clearly Episcopal government and jurisdiction. It would be a waste of time to expose all the erroneous remarks which he professedly founds on the last charge of our Lord to the disciples. But I would observe that the concluding promise of his perpetual presence is given by Christ to the apostles as the representatives not of ministers only, but of the church generally. And so thought Bishop Pearson, who, in his exposition of the creed, in the article of the Holy Catholic Church, in expounding the promise "I am with you alway, even to the end of the world," tells us that "it giveth not only an assurance of the continuity of the *church*, but also the cause of that continuance, which is the presence of Christ." And Pearson quotes Leo the Great as holding this view of the passage. But there is really not a word in the commission about the supposed prerogatives of a bishop. Baptizing and teaching are the only ministerial functions mentioned in it, and presbyters are permitted, at least in the present day, to baptize and to teach. If our Lord, as Bishop Seymour declares, "in this charter very plainly recognizes, and would have us recognize, the Apostolate as an office distinct from the men who bore that office," and if this office is permanent, then this office is continued in presbyters, for to them belongs the right both to baptize and teach—to do every thing mentioned in the charter. I do not read in the great commission anything about Episcopal ordination. It would follow, then, that presbyters, as confessedly authorized to teach and to baptize, can be properly regarded as the true successors of the apostles. The Apostle John in the beginning of his Second and Third Epistles calls himself an elder or

presbyter. I read, too, in the First Epistle of Peter (1 Peter v. 1) of the Apostle Peter calling himself a presbyter, a fellow-elder or copresbyter of the elders or presbyters to whom he wrote. And these elders or presbyters whom he addressed had the spiritual charge of all the churches in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. (1 Peter i. 1.) They exercised the oversight, or were bishops of all the Christians in this wide range of territory. These presbyter-bishops are the only bishops of the New Testament; and to them the right of ordination appertained; for the hands of the presbytery were laid on Timothy. (1 Tim. iv. 14.) At a later period, long after the apostolic age, presbyters were deprived of the authority to ordain, just as, for a time, they were forbidden to baptize. But the authority to baptize was restored to them. And why should they remain deprived of the authority to ordain?

Bishop Seymour admits that the names of presbyter and bishop were given to one and the same order of church officers in the New Testament. It is thus confessedly anti-scriptural to make bishops higher than presbyters. But he explains: "The second order is rich in having *two names* at first. We find them in the epistles. But in process of time the second order surrendered one of its alternative names to the first order, and its members were henceforth called bishops, instead of apostles, and the second order was restricted to the title presbyter." This is not the true genesis of Episcopacy, or Prelacy. An original *permanent* first order above presbyters is a pure invention. Jerome, the most learned of the fathers, writing towards the close of the fourth century, proves conclusively from Scripture the original identity of presbyters and bishops, and adds that "gradually, that the plants of dissension might be rooted up, all care was deferred to a single person. Therefore, as presbyters know that by the custom of the church they are subject to him who has been placed over them, so let bishops know that they are greater than presbyters rather by custom than by the truth of the Lord's appointment." (*Comment. in Titum*, i. 5.) The history of the church makes evident that Jerome gives the true origin of the rise of post-apostolic Episcopacy. St. Augustine agrees with Jerome in ascribing to the *custom* of the church of his time the superiority of the bishop over the presbyter. (*Epistles*, lxxxii. 33.) When Clement wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, there was no higher office in the church of Corinth than that of presbyter, and the same is true of the church at Philippi, when Polycarp wrote to it a letter. And Bishop Lightfoot confesses that when the lately discovered

Didache or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* was written, "bishop still remained a synonym for presbyter, and the episcopal office, properly so-called, had not been constituted in the district in which he [the author] lived." (*The Expositor*, January, 1885, p. 7.) The apostles were all long dead when the *Didache* was composed, yet the only bishop known to the writer was the presbyter-bishop. Surely this fact is fatal to the theory of the apostolic succession of bishops as a higher order than presbyters. Here we detect a breach, a gap, in the continuity in the sub-apostolic age.

Bishop Lightfoot refutes the opinion hazarded by Theodoret and Bishop Seymour that the same officers in the church, who were first called apostles, came afterwards to be designated bishops. "If the two offices had been identical, the substitution of the one name for the other would have required some explanation. But, in fact, the functions of the apostle and the bishop differed widely. The apostle, like the prophet or evangelist, held no local office."¹ (Lightfoot on Philip-
pians, p. 196.)

Bishop Seymour alleges that Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Irenæus, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyprian, and others, testify to the doctrine for which he contends. Those who read the earliest of these writers for themselves will be able to judge of his accuracy. I have already alluded to the testimony regarding church government borne by the Epistles of Clement and Polycarp. The more I study Ignatius, the more thoroughly I am convinced that the bishop whom he extols so extravagantly, could not have been more than the pastor of a single congregation. How else could he have been consulted, as was required

¹ "If bishop was at first used as a synonym for presbyter, and afterwards came to designate the higher officer under whom the presbyter served, the Episcopate, properly so-called, would seem to have been developed from the subordinate office. In other words, the Episcopate was formed, not out of the apostolic order by localization, but out of the presbyterial by elevation; and the title, which was originally common to all, came at length to be appropriated to the chief among them." (Lightfoot on Philip-
pians, p. 196.) Who so ignorant as not to know that a love of preëminence and of high sounding titles has distinguished the clergy as a body throughout the history of the church? To remit aught of their dignity and prerogative was foreign to their spirit. Keeping in view their inveterate inclination and tendency, we find it impossible to accept Bishop Seymour's theory that the highest order of the clergy were so humble that they gave up the title of apostle which they had the right to bear, and borrowed from the second order the more lowly name of bishops. Facts are all in favor of the theory that the Episcopate is a development of the Presbyterate as Lightfoot puts it, or, as I would prefer to say, a usurpation of authority over it.

by Ignatius, in regard to every marriage of the people under his charge? (Ep. to Polycarp, ch. 5.) Without the bishop they must neither baptize nor keep the love-feast (Ep. to the Smyrnaeans, ch.8). What do such instructions indicate? That the bishop of Ignatius had not a more extensive sphere to oversee than the ordinary Presbyterian pastor. And no higher can he be whom Justin Martyr speaks of as the *president* (*proestos*) at divine service.

Bishop Seymour asks the question: "Can it be that the eternal Son of God ordained a plan of government for his church, which, as regards its essential character, went out of sight and out of mind in less than three score years and ten?" This is a rhetorical question. I will not say that it has been framed deceitfully, but it involves a fallacy—the fallacy of interrogations, as logicians speak. It takes for granted what is not granted. I do not for a moment allow that the form of church government, which I see disclosed in the New Testament, went out of sight and out of mind in less than seventy years. On the contrary, I have furnished some evidence of its continued existence in its essential character in the second and third centuries, and of its having been kept in mind by such fathers as Jerome and Augustine long afterwards: and I could present testimony of its not having been lost sight of in later ages.¹ But anticipations of what the course of the church's history *must be*, man is not competent to make. One thing is plain, that a certain fixed form of church government is not absolutely essential to the being of the church; though in this matter, it is our duty and wisdom to seek to conform to the mind of Christ in so far as it can be ascertained. But we must correct our forecasts by facts. Who could have anticipated that the spiritual condition of the seven churches of Asia would so soon have become such as we find it depicted in the Book of the Revelation? Or who could have foreseen the rise and prevalence of the papacy with all its enormities? And

¹ "Even in the fourth and fifth centuries, when the independence and power of the Episcopate had reached its maximum, it was still customary for a bishop in writing to a presbyter to address him as 'fellow-presbyter,' thus bearing testimony to a *substantial identity of order*. Nor does it appear that this view was ever questioned until the era of the Reformation. In the Western church, at all events, it carried the sanction of the highest ecclesiastical authorities, and was maintained even by popes and councils" (Bishop Lightfoot, on *The Christian Ministry*, Commentary on Philippians, p. 230). He refers for proof to Gieseler i. p. 105 *et seq.* It is characteristic of some writers to be most emphatic and forceful in their asseverations when they are least worthy of trust. It is fair to state that in the above quotation from Lightfoot the italics are mine.

we must not forget that our Lord and his apostles did predict a great apostasy in the church, such a spread of false doctrine and superstition, and erroneous practice among professing Christians that the true faith would be in danger of disappearing. It is instructive to consider what took place under the Mosaic Dispensation. There prevailed such gross irregularities, such general defection from the regulations of the law, since the age of Joshua till the return from the Babylonian exile, that critics like Kuenen, Wellhausen and Robertson Smith have ventured to date the composition of the middle books of the Pentateuch about a thousand years after the time of Moses. They contend that they could not have been in existence earlier, because they were so completely ignored. This theory is utterly false. But what a state of matters must for long centuries have obtained in Israel when such a theory could be put forward with any show of probability! Who will assert that what happened under the law could not have a parallel under the gospel? God was faithful to his promise to be a God to the seed of Abraham, and never to forsake his chosen people. And *he*, too, has remained faithful who said that the gates of hell should not prevail against his church. But *a priori* calculations that the Lord of the church could never suffer confusion and misgovernment and error to reign in it, have their refutation in the stubborn facts of history.

Such a pamphlet as that of Bishop Seymour is no real contribution to church unity. Presbyterians can have no desire for closer union with men holding his views. Can two walk together except they be agreed? At the late General Convention, held in Baltimore, Bishop Seymour was one of those who would not sanction the sending of missionaries to enlighten the benighted idolatrous people of Mexico, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, because such a measure would be a violation of the principle of canon law forbidding intrusion into the sphere of other bishops who occupy a country! Union with such men, till their views on church principles are completely altered, we could not regard as a *desideratum*.

Bishop Seymour has his prototype in the days of the apostles. There was then a certain Diotrephes, who loved the preëminence, and would not receive even the Apostle John. It is of this Diotrephes, not of John, that he is the true successor. It is a great comfort to know that all bishops of the Protestant Episcopal church are not of one mind with him.

DUNLOP MOORE.

Pittsburg, Pa.