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ARTICLE I.

APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

All branches of the Christian Church hold to an apostolical succession in some sense; for without it there is no ground upon which they can claim, with the slightest color of plausibility, a divine sanction for their existence. Presbyterians, for example, hold that they have the doctrine, the polity, the worship, which were taught and ordained by the apostles. They hold that the succession is to be determined, not by history or tradition, but by a direct appeal to writings which are not only more ancient than the writings of the *Fathers*, but have, according to the confessions of these Fathers themselves, a *divine* authority—the writings of the Apostles. The body which now holds the doctrine of justification without the works of the law, is, *pro tanto*, a truer succession of the church to which the Epistle to the Romans was addressed, than the church now at Rome which denies that doctrine and curses all who hold it. The body which is now governed by a presbytery is a truer successor of the church of Ephesus which was also governed by a presbytery in the days of Paul, than a church of the present day which is governed by a prelate, an officer of which the apostolic records

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know nothing. All this is true, *whatever the intervening history may be.**

We need not say that this is not the sense in which the term is used in this article. It is of the apostolical succession as held by the Papists and their "Apists" that we propose to treat, and especially of the doctrine as held by the Papists, which alone can claim the merit of being intelligible or consistent. The doctrine as held by their imitators, as we may take occasion to show, is mere moonshine, having no meaning because separated from the system of doctrine and worship of which it forms a part, and because destitute, upon its own principles, of any true historical basis.

The fundamental principle of the apostolical succession is thus stated by the Council of Trent: "Sacrifice and priesthood have been so joined together by the ordination of God, that both have existed under every dispensation. Since, therefore, the Catholic Church, under the New Testament, has received, by institution of the Lord, the holy, visible sacrifice of the Eucharist, it ought also to be confessed that there is in it a new, visible, and external priesthood. Further, that this priesthood was instituted by the same Lord our Saviour, and that to the apostles and their successors in the priesthood he gave the power of consecrating, offering, and administering his body and blood, as also of remitting and retaining sins, Holy Writ shows, and the tradition of the Catholic Church has always taught."†

Note, then, carefully, that among the Papists, apostolical suc-

*There is still another sense in which the term may be used. There has been such an *order of men as Christian ministers*, continuously from the time of the apostles to this day. This is a very different thing from the "apostolic succession" in the mouths of papists and prelatists, which is the succession, in an unbroken line, of *this or that individual minister*. "How ridiculous it would be thought," says Archbishop Whately, (*Kingdom of Christ, Essay II., § 30.*) "if a man laying claim to the throne of some country should attempt to establish it without producing and proving his own pedigree, merely by showing that that country had *always been under hereditary regal government!*"

†Concil. Trident. Canones et Decreta. Sess. 23, c. 1.

cession means a succession of *priests** in the proper sense of the word, *sacerdotes*, *ιερείς*, officers whose business it is to offer true and proper expiatory and propitiatory sacrifices. That this is the meaning of the Council is not left to inference or conjecture. It says that there has been a priesthood under every dispensation of religion; it argues that the Eucharist is a sacrifice, and therefore there must be a priesthood to offer it; in the canon corresponding with this decree, it curses all who say that the priesthood is "only an office and a naked ministry for preaching the gospel," and not a visible and external *sacerdotium*; it derives this priesthood from Christ, as the Levitical priesthood was derived from Aaron; that is, from Christ, not as the founder of the Christian Institute, but as the first in the order of priests under the new law, as Aaron was the first in the order of priests under the old; and, in proof of this, referring to Heb. v. 4, 5, it makes the apostles Christ's immediate successors as priests, and the priests of Rome the successors of the apostles as priests.

The difference between their priests and the ministers of the gospel, is much wider than between the priests of the family of Aaron and the ordinary Levites who were not of that family. It cannot be too carefully borne in mind, that the question of apostolical succession is a question about the succession of *priests*, not at all of *ministers of the word*.

Note, in the second place, that the apostolical succession involves a peculiar view of the sacraments. The priests are not ministers of the word, and, of course, a sacrament is not a *verbum visibile*, as Augustine calls it; not a sign of truths conveyed by the word and differing from the word (so far as it is a *sign*) only in the kind of language employed as a vehicle. If this view were allowed, the priests of the new law would be no better than those of the old. Their sacrifices would be only symbols and actually convey no grace. So low a view of her priesthood Rome cannot tolerate. "The power with which the Christian priesthood is clothed," says the Catechism of the Council of Trent, "is a heavenly power, raised above that of

*The English word priest is simply "presbyter writ short."

angels; it has its source, not in the Levitical priesthood, but in Christ the Lord, who was a priest, not according to Aaron, but according to the order of Melchisedec." So again the same Catechism: "Priests and bishops are, as it were, the interpreters and heralds (*internuncii*) of God, commissioned in his name to teach mankind the law of God and the precepts of a Christian life—they are the representatives of God upon earth. It is impossible, therefore, to conceive a more exalted dignity, or functions more sacred. Justly, therefore, are they called, not only angels (*Mal. ii. 7*), but gods (*Ps. lxxxii. 6*),* holding as they do the place and power and authority of God on earth. But the priesthood, at all times an elevated office, transcends in the new law all others in dignity. The power of consecrating and offering the body and blood of our Lord, and of remitting sins, with which the priesthood of the new law is invested, is such as cannot be comprehended by the human mind, still less is it equalled by, or assimilated to, anything on earth."

Every priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore these priests must have somewhat to offer. The preaching of the word will not do, because anybody who knows the plan of salvation may tell it to his fellow-sinners. Singing, praying, and alms-giving will not do, for a similar reason. The two sacraments of the New Testament have been pitched upon because they are symbolical ordinances; and the meaning of a symbol is more easily perverted than the meaning of words. The

*Papists are not good interpreters. This passage has no reference at all to the Levitical priests. It is "a brief and pregnant statement of the responsibilities attached to the *judicial* office under the Mosaic dispensation." The judges are frequently called "gods" in the law. See *Ex. xxi. 6*; *xxii. 8, 9*, in the Hebrew *Elohim*. Hence *v. 6*, "*I have said, Ye are gods.*" Augustine (*Enarratio* in p. 81) regards Israel as a whole as the subject of the Psalm, and *v. 6*, as an address specially to the *elect*, "*eos qui prædestinati sunt in vitam æternam.*" The authors of the Catechism are unfortunate in citing a passage for the purpose of glorifying the priesthood, in which the tone throughout is one of severe rebuke, and in which these "gods" are told that they shall "die like men." Our priesthood is one which knows no change by reason of death—one after the power of an endless life. See 7th chapter of Hebrews, *passim*.

ordinance of baptism has been perverted, as to its matter, by substituting a mixture of oil, spittle, salt, and water, for the element of water, (that is, an element which *defiles* has been substituted for the element that *cleanses*); it has been perverted, as to its form, by ascribing a significance to it altogether different from that which the New Testament ascribes to it; and it has been perverted, as to its design, by making it a physical cause of grace to the recipient in every case in which no obstruction is opposed to its operation. It is not the baptism of the New Testament at all, but a ceremony totally different. It requires, therefore, a different kind of administrator from that minister of the word whose office it is, by the appointment of Christ, to administer *Christian* baptism.

In like manner, they have perverted the ordinance of the supper. It is no longer a simple memorial of the sacrifice of Christ which was offered *once* for all, but a true and proper offering of the body, blood, and divinity of Christ continually for the living and the dead. The matter, form, and design of this sacrament have all been so perverted, that its identity has been lost. "We therefore confess," says the Tridentine Catechism,* "that the sacrifice of the mass is one and the same

*See the Cat. Trident. on the Sacrament of the Eucharist. We quote, for the most part, from the English translation made by Donovan, Professor of the Royal College, Maynooth. Balt., 1833. So also the Council itself (Sess. 22) in its Canons. Can. 2. "If any shall say, that Christ in these words, 'Do this in commemoration of me,' did not make the apostles priests, or that he did not ordain that they and other priests should offer his own body and blood; let him be anathema." Can. 3. "If any one say, that the sacrifice of the mass is a sacrifice only of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the sacrifice performed upon the cross, and not also a *propitiatory* sacrifice; or that it profits only him who receives it, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities; let him be anathema."

Bossuet in his "Exposition de la Doctrine de l'Eglise Catholique," which was written for the purpose of conciliating the French Protestants, softens the statement of the Council, or, at least, cites (in 1:3) the mildest language of Sess. 22, c. 1, and insists that the Church in offering Christ

sacrifice with that of the cross: the victim is one and the same, Christ Jesus, who offered himself, once only, a bloody sacrifice on the altar of the cross. The bloody and the unbloody victim is still one and the same, and the oblation of the cross is daily renewed in the eucharistic sacrifice, in obedience to the command of our Lord, 'This do for a commemoration of me.' The Priest is also the same, Christ our Lord: the ministers who offer this sacrifice, consecrate the holy mysteries, not in their own person, but in the person of Christ. This the words of consecration declare: the priest does not say, 'This is the body of Christ,' but, 'This is my body;' and thus invested with the character of Christ, he changes the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of his real body and blood. That the holy sacrifice of the mass, therefore, is not only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross, but also a sacrifice of propitiation, by which God is appeased and rendered propitious, the pastor will teach as a dogma defined by the unerring authority of a General Council of the Church." The Papists make a distinction, indeed, between the eucharist considered as a *sacrament*, and the eucharist considered as a *sacrifice*,* but the distinction is of no importance in the present argument.

to God in this sacrament, does the same thing which is done in the Reformed Church, except that the one affirms and the other denies the *real presence*. He denies that Rome pretends to offer any new propitiation for the appeasing of God anew, as if he had not been sufficiently appeased by the sacrifice of the cross; or, that any supplement is made to the price of our redemption as if it were insufficient. He represents all as being done in the sacrament in the way of intercession and application. Yet he expressly holds the doctrine of Trent, and what that is we have seen.

*See the Roman Catechism on the Sacrament of the Eucharist. It says: "The difference between the eucharist as a sacrament and a sacrifice is very great, and is twofold. As a sacrament, it is perfected by consecration; as a sacrifice, all its efficacy consists in its oblation. When deposited in a tabernacle, or borne to the sick, it is therefore not a sacrifice but a sacrament. As a sacrament, it is also to the worthy receiver a source of merit, and brings with it all those advantages which we have already mentioned; as a sacrifice, it is not only a source of merit, but also of satisfac-

Further, the Papists hold that all grace is conveyed through the sacraments; that "by them all true righteousness begins, or being begun is increased, or having been lost is restored."* They hold, also, that the grace is always conferred upon the recipient of the sacrament, where duly administered, unless the recipient places a bar or obstacle in the way; and the Trent Council curses all who say the contrary.† None, therefore, can be saved without baptism,‡ and all baptized *infants* (since they can oppose no "bar") are regenerated. As the sacraments can be administered (except in certain extreme cases) only by a priest, the priests have the whole matter of salvation absolutely in their own hands. The power of the priest to confer grace by the sacraments is not impaired by his personal character, however foul. He may be living in "mortal" sin; he may, like the Pope Alexander Borgia, be mixing poison with the wine which he is about to give his friend at his own table; nevertheless he can confer the grace of God in the sacraments; and, in Can. 12, Sess. 7, the *holy* Council curses all who say the contrary. The sacraments are everything; the preaching of the word nothing, in this holy, catholic, apostolic Church.

Again, as to the mode in which the priests since the time of the apostles become their successors, Rome holds that it is by

tion. As, in his passion, our Lord merited and satisfied for us; so in the oblation of this sacrifice, which is a bond of Christian unity, Christians merit the fruit of his passion, and satisfy for sin."

*Concil. Trident, Decretum de Sacramentis, Sess. 7, Proœmium.

†Canon 6, of Sess. 7. In Canon 8, all are cursed who say that the sacraments do not confer grace *ex opere operato*; but that faith alone in the divine promise is sufficient to obtain the grace.

‡Baptism is of great consequence in Rome, as it ought to be, seeing they make it the sacrament of justification. But the glory of the priesthood consists in the privilege of immolating Christ, and of judicially absolving men from their sins. Baptism may be administered even by a woman, by Jews, infidels, and heretics, in case of necessity, provided they intend to do what the Church does in that act of her ministry. Cat. Trid. on the Sacrament of Baptism. But the eucharist, the sacrifice of the mass, and judicial absolution, can be administered only by a priest. Con. Trid. Sess. 14, c. 6; Cat. on the Eucharist, 72.

the sacrament of orders. The main points of their doctrine are: (a). That as Christ made the apostles priests by imparting to them the Holy Ghost and the power of judicial absolution (John xx. 22, 23), so the apostles have transmitted to their successors, the bishops of Rome, the same gifts; which bishops, in their turn, by imposition of hands, communicate the priesthood to the lower order. (b). That, as in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation an indelible character is imparted, so also in the sacrament of orders. By this indelible character, he who has once become a priest is always a priest; he can never again become a laic.* (c). That with this process the people have nothing at all to do. They have no voice at all in making priests. Canon 7, Sess. 23 of Trent. The priesthood is a distinct *caste*. They perpetuate the Church as the apostles created it before them.

These points constitute the essence of the doctrine of orders. The apostolical succession as held in Rome is therefore summarily comprehended in the three assertions: (a). That there is a true and proper priesthood, on earth, under the Christian dispensation. (b). That there is a true and proper sacrifice to be continually offered. (c). That the succession of priests is secured by the sacrament of orders: this last point, of course, involving the assertion of the succession as a fact in history. We propose to consider these in their order.

I. As to the priesthood under the "new law," as the Papists delight to call the gospel, we remark:

1. That scarcely any truth is more clearly revealed in the New Testament than that of the *universal* priesthood of believers. The passages in which it is either expressly asserted or taken for granted are too numerous to be cited. One or two will suffice: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." 1 Pet. ii. 9; comp. v. 5. The Papist will of course say that this description of believers under the gospel, is identical with that of Israel under the law (Ex. xix. 5, 6); and that, as the general priestly character of Israel was consistent,

*See Con. Trid. D. and C., Sess. 23, Can. 4.

in point of fact, with the existence of a special order of priests in the family of Aaron; so a special order of priests is by no means incompatible with the universal priesthood of believers under the gospel. As an abstract proposition, this may be conceded; but there is a very great difference between the two dispensations in point of fact. *First*, there is no institution of a priesthood in the New Testament as there was in the Old. *Second*, there is no limitation put upon the exercise of priestly functions or privileges on the part of the priestly people under the New Testament as there was under the Old. Let the Papists show us any chapters in the New Testament corresponding with such as the 8th Leviticus in the Old, and we will believe them. They have their "solemn ceremonies" in the consecration of their priests; but they are ceremonies which the court of Rome, not Jesus Christ, has ordained. If they say they observe the rites ordained in Leviticus, then they confess that their priesthood is after all the Aaronic, and not, as they have been accustomed to boast, a priesthood after the order of Melchisedec. Let them show us in the New Testament any such stern prohibitions against the people intermeddling with priestly functions as there are in the Old. So far from finding any such prohibitions, we find no discrimination at all, in regard to priestly character and function, between the ministry and the people, or (to use the language of Rome) between the *clergy* and the *laity*. It is the duty and privilege of all alike to offer *spiritual* sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews exhorts his brethren, without any note of distinction, to do what the high-priest alone could do, and that only once a year, under the law—"to draw near with a true heart unto God." He bases this exhortation upon the fact that they have "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for them, through the vail, that is to say, his flesh; and upon the fact that they have a High-Priest over the house of God." Heb. x. 19-22.

2. The apostles are no where called priests, or represented as performing priestly functions. Considering the extent to which

the institutions and technical language of the Old Testament moulded the forms of representation in the New, this fact is very noteworthy. The apostles do sometimes use the sacerdotal and sacrificial language of the Old Testament to describe their work, but it is always under conditions which show, beyond doubt, that they are speaking figuratively. Thus Paul (Rom. xv. 16) speaks of himself as "the minister (*λειτοουργὸν*) of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering (*ἑρπυροῦντα*) the gospel of God, that the offering up (*προσφορὰ*) of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified (*ἡγιασμένη*) by the Holy Ghost." Here observe, (a). That while the word *λειτοουργὸν* has no strictly sacerdotal sense, being used for any public functionary, (as for instance in this very epistle, chap. xiii. 6, of the civil magistrate; comp. v. 4, *διάκονος*;) yet we concede that there may be a reference to its sacerdotal use in the Septuagint. (See Deut. x. 8; xvii. 12; Joel i. 9; comp. Heb. x. 11). (b). That the second word, which is undoubtedly sacerdotal, is explained by the nature of the offering which is made to God, to wit, the *Gentiles*, not the *mass*. If the Gentiles are a *sacrifice* in the strict and literal sense of the term, then, of course, Paul is a *priest* in the same sense. But the first will not be asserted, we apprehend, even by a Papist. The truth is, Paul's statement amounts to this: "I am indeed a priest, but my priestly functions are exercised in preaching the glad tidings to the Gentiles, and in making an offering to God of those who are, through the word, sanctified by the Holy Ghost." If the priesthood of Rome were of this kind, no objection could be made to it. But it is altogether different. Its office is to offer a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead.

We have said that the *apostles* use sacrificial language in describing their work. But Paul, we believe, is the only one of the apostles who does; and he only in the instance cited, unless Rom. xii. 1, Phil. ii. 17, 2 Tim. iv. 6, be considered instances. Peter, the "first pope," never uses it, so far as we have been able to find, in special application to the ministry. His style is, "We will give ourselves to the ministry (*διακονίᾳ*) of the word and to prayer." Acts vi. 4. "The elders who are among you I exhort, who am your fellow-elder and a witness of the sufferings of

Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof (or, performing the office of bishops in it), not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage,* but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Pet. v. 1-3. How strange would such words sound from the mouth of his pretended successors! It is too plain that the ministry of the apostles was not the same as the ministry of the papal priesthood; and that if the papal ministers are true and proper priests, they possess a dignity to which the apostles, with Peter at their head, did not dream of aspiring. It is hardly necessary to say that we hold with the apostles.

3. Not only do the apostles say that all believers are priests, and claim no special priestly character for themselves, but a special argument is made by one of them to show that there can be no true and proper priests on earth since the offering of Jesus Christ and his passing into the heavens. The doctrine of Rome makes utter nonsense of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and particularly of the 7th chapter. The papists say that their priesthood is of the order of Melchisedec; and yet the main feature of the priesthood of Melchisedec, according to the apostle, is that it *admits of no succession*. "They truly (the Levitical priests) were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Heb. vii. 23, 24. But why quote particular verses? Almost every verse in this chapter is a dagger which goes to the heart of the papal theory. Nothing but the most audacious effrontery could venture to maintain such a theory in the face of such an argument. The

*This is the only instance in which the word κληρος is used of *persons* in the New Testament; and yet it is the word from which the word *clergy* comes. According to this passage, the *clergy* or inheritance of God is the *laity* or flock, which is in danger of being lorded over. See Campbell's *Lect. on Eccl. History*, L. 9. This is worthy of being noted, because the distinction of clergy and laity came in with the notion of a sacerdotal ministry in the Church.

papal priesthood is simply an insult, impudent and shameless, to Christ, who alone possesses a priesthood after the order of Melchisedec. It is not only destitute of even the shadow of evidence, but is a direct contradiction to the teaching of the Sacred Scriptures; and being the corner-stone of the apostolical succession, the whole structure tumbles into ruins, or, rather, is proved to be "the baseless fabric of a vision."

II. As to the next element involved in this doctrine, the power of the priesthood to offer a true and proper sacrifice, it need not detain us so long. For,

1. If there is no proper priesthood on earth, there can of course be no proper offering of sacrifice. Priesthood and sacrifice go together; together they stand or fall.

2. The only true and proper sacrifice which the papal priests pretend to offer, is that of the mass; and this is a pure invention of men, instigated no doubt by the devil, that restless plotter against the glory of Christ and the salvation of his Church.

It would be out of place, in this discussion, to enter into an elaborate argument against the sacrifice of the mass. It will be sufficient to say, (a). That the *silence* of the Sacred Scriptures seals its condemnation. It is altogether incredible that nothing should be said about any sacrifice in the eucharist if that ordinance were a sacrifice, and especially if it had occupied the place in the religion of the apostles which it occupies in the religion of Rome—if it had been considered a fundamental point and necessary to the proper observance of Christian worship. The apostles give line upon line and precept upon precept in regard to things which the Papists themselves would confess to be of very inferior importance, and yet say nothing about this. This silence is the more remarkable upon the papal theory, because the doctrine of the mass is, by their own confession, hard to be believed, indeed plainly contradicted even by the testimony of the senses, and therefore liable to the strongest assaults of Satan. Further, how can these Judaizers account for the fact, that while in the old law there is constant mention of priests and sacrifices, and most minute details as to both, we

find nothing corresponding in the new? It is indeed an awful *mystery*, since the apostles have not even attempted to throw any light upon it.

But not too fast—the Papists pretend that they do find in the New Testament a sacrificial character ascribed to the eucharist. For example, 1 Cor. x. 21; Heb. xiii. 10. Now as to the first passage it is sufficient to remark that Paul does not compare the table of the eucharist with the altar of the Gentiles, but the Lord's table with the table of dæmons. The table of dæmons is not the *altar* of the Gentiles upon which they sacrificed to their idols, but the *table* upon which, after the sacrifice had been offered, the meats were spread for a feast in honor of the idol. And even if the comparison had been one between the Lord's table and altars, the conclusion would not follow which papal logic seeks to draw; for the apostle is not concerned about the reason and nature of altar or sacrifice, but only about the communion or participation of the worshippers with it. He aims to show that the Corinthians could not with a good conscience be present at these feasts in the idol-temples, because they had been made partakers of the Lord's Supper, and so had communion with Christ and professed his religion, as those who ate of the ancient victims under the law were made "partakers of the altar," that is, professed the Jewish religion.*

As to Heb. xiii. 10, we remark that nothing is said here about the eucharist; that the only sacrifices mentioned in the context as connected with this altar are *praise* and *alms-giving* (vs. 15, 16); that the altar is said to be Christ himself in v. 15;† and in v. 9, we have a solemn warning against just such a religion as Rome teaches—a religion of *meats* and not of *grace*.

(b). The only other argument we shall mention against the mass is that of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The argument is of the

*See Turretine, L. 19, Q. 29. Opp. 3, p. 456, Carter's Ed.

†So Aquinas: "This altar is either the cross of Christ, or Christ himself, in whom and by whom we offer our prayers to God." Bellarmine, though not very scrupulous about the arguments he uses, does not urge this place, because many Catholics understand by altar, here, Christ and the cross. See Turret. *ut supra*.

same sort with that respecting the priesthood. As the perfection of the priesthood of Christ admits of no succession of mortal priests, so the perfection of his sacrifice admits of no repeated sacrifices. Let us quote one passage only from the Hebrews: "Nor yet that Christ should offer himself often, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. For the law having a shadow of good things to come, . . . can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year." Heb. ix. 25-28; x. 1-3. This sword of the Spirit effectually cuts the throat of the sacrifice of the mass. With respect both to the priesthood and the sacrifice, the Papists have done the very thing against which the whole Epistle to the Hebrews is a warning. They have apostatized from the Gospel and have gone back to Judaism.

Having thus disposed of this second element of the doctrine of successson, we may tarry, before proceeding to the next, to say a word or two in reference to the doctrine of sacramental grace in all its forms. *First*: The whole idea of the Papists and their apists that salvation is conveyed through the sacraments rather than through the word, is utterly foreign to the thinking and language of the New Testament, which gives this prominence to the word and not to the sacraments. Take an example or two out of very many. Paul says to the Corinthians (1 Epistle i. 14-17), "I thank God I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in my own name . . . For Christ sent me *not to baptize, but to preach the*

gospel." So Peter: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by *the word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever, . . . and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." 1 Peter i. 23-25. And even where the sacrament is spoken of as the means of regeneration it is almost always coupled with the word, or, if not, something is added in order to guard against the error that there is any efficacy in it *ex opere operato*. Thus in Eph. v. 26, Paul speaks of the Church as sanctified and cleansed "with the washing of water *by the word.*" "Go . . . preach the gospel. . . He that believeth *and* is baptized, shall be saved." Mark xvi. So Peter in speaking of baptism as saving us, takes care to say that he is not speaking of the outward ordinance, but the answer of a good conscience towards God. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

The idea of the apostles was that the *word* was the charter of salvation, and conveyed everything that was conveyed; that the sacraments were a species of symbolical word and *pro tanto* performed the same office as the word written or spoken; and that in addition to being *signs* or symbolical words, the sacraments were *seals* of the word as charter, ratifying the covenant contained in the word and possessing no value whatever if detached from the word. The doctrine of Rome that by the sacraments all grace begins, and when begun is increased, or when lost is restored, has not the shadow of a foundation in the Sacred Scriptures, or in common sense.

Second: That there is no grace given except through the sacraments, is a doctrine still more monstrous; flatly contradicting many passages of the Sacred Scriptures. See, for example, the case of Peter in Acts x. 47, where the "first pope" argues from the fact that these heathen had received the Holy Ghost, that no man could forbid them to be baptized. And then, be it observed, he does not baptize them himself, but commands them to be baptized. No more than his beloved brother Paul, does Peter seem to have been anxious about the rite of baptism, provided only it was done decently and in order.* But the Papists

*"No passage can be produced from the New Testament in which administration of the sacrament is, by a divine law, restricted to the apostles

and their imitators must make much of it, or their apostolical succession is nothing worth. Hence they must "deny the validity of all baptism but their own, and in defiance of decency, charity, and common sense, refuse to inter an infant who has not passed under their own patent process of regeneration. The consequence is that they throw doubt (and many of them do not scruple to avow it) on the final state of the myriads of unbap-

and their delegates, or the grace of these ordinances made dependent upon the persons of the administrators. See Acts ii. 41; viii. 33; ix. 18. (Ananias, for all we know, was a layman.) The two sacraments have, in the lapse of time, experienced a very different fate. By the Donatist controversy the principle was established, that baptism even when administered by those not in the communion with the Church, if only the word and the element had been present, was so far valid as that it was not to be repeated in the case of those who, having been baptized in schism, became reconciled to the Church. It was argued by Augustin, most conclusively, that the sacrament is Christ's, not his who administers it; and derives its virtue from the sacred name in which it is administered. This was in effect disconnecting the validity of the ordinance from the person of the administrator; for though it was still maintained that the recipient, so long as he continued in a state of schism, derived no benefit from his baptism, still the ordinance itself was pronounced valid, and, as such, was not to be repeated. . . . The eucharist, on the contrary, has always been most jealously guarded from the profanation of lay hands. Yet if there is any difference in the Sacred Scriptures, as regards this point, between the two sacraments, baptism is the one which has more the appearance of being restricted. Matt. xxviii. 19. But it is characteristic of the Church system to be most peremptory and exclusive in its decisions where the Sacred Scriptures supply the slenderest foundation for them." See Sitton's Church of Christ, p. 635.

The validity of the sacraments, therefore, does not require them to be administered by certain officers; but the great law of "decency and order" makes it necessary that the Church should appoint certain persons to this office; and the ministers of the word, for obvious reasons, are the persons whom the Church *has* appointed. This is the common doctrine of the Reformed theologians. See for instance Turretine, *De Necess. Secess. Nostra ab Eccl. Rom.*, Disp. 8, 5, 18, (Vol. 4, p. 190 of Carter's Ed., N. Y., 1848). In case of necessity, the general calling of Christians and the law of charity take the place of any particular calling of officers, and the law of decency and order. Even the Papists admit the same as to the sacrament of baptism, though upon the false ground of the *absolute necessity* of this ordinance to salvation.

tized infants. Whether they are, as some of the Fathers believed, neither happy nor miserable—consigned to a state of joyless apathy, or condemned to eternal suffering—we are all, it seems, in the dark. We may hope the best, but that is all the comfort that can be given us. To a Christian contemplating this world of sorrow, it has ever been one of the most delightful sources of consolation, that the decree which involved even infancy in the sentence of death, has converted a great part of the primeval curse into a blessing, and has peopled heaven with myriads of immortals, who, after one brief pang of unremembered sorrow, have laid down forever the burdens of humanity. It has been the dear belief of the Christian mother, that the provisions of the great spiritual economy are extended to the infant whom she brought forth in sorrow, and whom she committed to the dust with a sorrow still deeper; that it will assuredly welcome her at the gates of paradise, arrayed in celestial beauty, and radiant with a cherub's smile. But all these gloriously sustaining hopes must be overcast in order to keep the mystical power of regeneration exclusively in the hands of the episcopal clergy. All charity, all decency, all humanity, as well as all common sense, are to be outraged, rather than that the power of conferring some inconceivable nonentity should be abandoned.”*

Third: This doctrine in its extreme form is the merest paganism, and resembles much more the magical rites and mummeries of people sunk in brutish, heathenish ignorance, than that “reasonable service” which God requires of his worshippers. It is a system of forms which does not compel men to recognise a God, any more than the laws of nature compel such a recognition. It is a system whose tendency is directly to infidelity and atheism. It supposes that God departs from his usual method of working by the laws of nature to accomplish effects which can be discerned neither by sense nor reason. The mystic regeneration, so far as can be known, leaves the person regenerated in no respect changed. He is neither wiser nor better than

**Edinburgh Review*, for April, 1843, p. 274, Amer. Ed.

before; just as capable of committing mortal sin, and in as great danger of eternal damnation, as if the priest's hand had not applied the magic mixture of water, oil, spittle, and salt. It has not even the plausibility of the juggler's tricks; for the juggler *appears* to work effects which are extraordinary. What evidence can miracles afford to a man who believes the doctrine of transubstantiation? Miracles appeal to the senses. This is the differentia by which they are discriminated from every other immediate act of God upon the creature. But in transubstantiation we are required to believe a miracle which contradicts the senses. How then can a miracle ever authenticate a divine revelation? If the reality of the change in the substance of the bread and wine is ascertained to us by the words, "This is my body," the question may be asked, how are we to know that these words were ever spoken or written? It will not do to appeal to the testimony of eye or ear, for transubstantiation pronounces the testimony of the senses untrustworthy. If God were to impress the reality of the fact upon the mind *directly*, still the revelation could never go beyond the mind that received it. It could never be authenticated to the minds of other men. So that the doctrine of sacramental grace is either nothing at all, a pure imposture, or its legitimate consequence is absolute pyrrhonism. It is substantially the philosophy of Hume under a religious guise.

III. We proceed now to the last point involved in the papal doctrine of succession. It might seem superfluous to argue the question any further. If there was no priesthood instituted by Christ, if the apostles were not priests, then of course there can be no succession of priests. Remove the facts of a priesthood and a sacrifice (in the sense before explained, the papal sense,) in the apostolic age, you remove the very foundation of the apostolical succession, and the whole structure tumbles into ruins. This, we venture to think, has been very effectually done, if the Sacred Scriptures are to be the rule of judgment. But we shall undertake, *ex abundante*, as the logicians say, to prove that, even if the apostles were priests, they have had no successors, or at least that there are none who can know and prove themselves

to be such, which amounts to the same thing. De non apparentibus et de non existentibus eadem est ratio.

1. It is a principle clearly laid down in the Sacred Scriptures, that no one may presume to undertake sacerdotal functions without a divine call or commission. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Heb. v.* Every attempt on the part of unauthorised persons to invade the priest's office among the Jews was visited with severe penalties. For this offence Korah and his company were destroyed, and Uzziah struck with leprosy. The Papists of course apply this principle to their pretended priesthood, *a fortiori*; since the Christian priesthood as much excels the Levitical in dignity, as the new law is superior to the old. So Christ, the founder of the new priesthood, having been called of God as was Aaron, called his successors the apostles, and the apostles their successors the bishops, transmitting to them, along with the authority of priests, the ordinary sacerdotal grace which they themselves had received from Christ. The bishops of the apostolic age have in their turn handed down the same grace to their successors, to the present time, by consecration or ordination.†

2. The power thus transmitted is twofold—a power of *order*, and a power of *jurisdiction*. The power of order is the power of immolating and offering Christ in the Eucharist, as before explained and refuted. The power of jurisdiction is the power of judicial absolution from guilt. The apostles received the first power at

*It is to be regretted that these words should generally be quoted by Protestant writers in proof of the necessity of a divine call to the ordinary officers in the Church. Such a call is indeed necessary, but not a direct and immediate call, such as the call of Aaron, and of Christ, to their respective orders of priesthood. This sacerdotal call is immediate, without the intervention of the Church, and in the Hebrews (chap. v.) the writer uses the words in application *only* to Christ and Aaron. Christ's priesthood admitted of no succession, and the words admit of no further application since his inauguration into office. In the case of the Aaronic priesthood, they were true of all his successors, because the succession was determined by *birth*. Of this more hereafter.

†See Litton on the Church of Christ, p. 530, et seq.

the institution of the Supper; the last, when Christ breathed on them after his resurrection, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," etc. John xx. 22, 23. Conc. Trid. Sess. 14, c. 1. See Litton, On the Ch. of Christ, pp. 531, 2.

3. The external instrument of transmission is the sacrament of orders, the administration of which belongs to the bishop alone. The visible sign of the sacrament is the laying on of hands. The inward effect is twofold: first, the impressing upon the soul of a spiritual *character* or stamp, which is indelible, so that he who is once made a priest can never return to the condition of a layman; and second, grace, not sanctifying, but ministerial (*gratia gratis data*) for the valid performance of sacerdotal functions. Conc. Trid. Sess. 23, Can. 4. Litton, p. 532.

This is a clear and consistent theory. If no sacraments and no absolution, then no Church. If no lawful priesthood, then no sacraments, at least no eucharist and no absolution. If no successors of the apostles, then no lawful priesthood. If not in communion with the bishop of Rome, no successors of the apostles. Hence beyond the pale of Rome, no covenanted grace.

This tremendous doctrine (for if it be true, it is tremendously true, and if false, it is a tremendous lie) we propose to examine in the light of the Sacred Scriptures, of the Papists' own principles, and of history. The result of this examination will show that the *fact* of such a succession is altogether incredible, and that it is the height of audacity for any Roman priest of the present day to affirm that he *knows* himself to be a true priest. The examination will be confined to the last of the above-mentioned points, as the others have been sufficiently discussed in the preceding part of this article.

1. The Sacred Scriptures make no mention anywhere of the *consecration* of any church officers, *as such*. All believers are priests and are consecrated to the worship and service of God by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, in any calling which the sovereign will of God may appoint for them. No word signifying consecration is used of the appointment of church officers, *as such*. We shall not waste time in proving a negative. We defy Papists and Prelatists to produce a single example.

2. The Sacred Scriptures make no mention of any *ceremony* of consecration to be used by church officers in consecrating their successors. The Papists will hardly insist on the imposition of hands, since the first instance of that we meet with in the New Testament in connection with the ordination of church officers is in Acts vi., the case of the deacons. This was a case in which the hands of the apostles were laid on officers whom the people had *elected*; and what a horror the Papists have of the people's electing their own officers, everybody knows. Besides, the imposition of hands was so common among the Jews that nobody pretends that it *always* meant consecration; and the Papists themselves use it in cases where it is designed to have no such meaning. It would seem certain, at least, that they attach no great importance to this ceremony in the sacrament of confirmation, though it be one of the three sacraments in which an indelible character is imparted. The Tridentine Catechism gives minute directions for the celebration of this sacrament: the unction of the forehead, the sign of the cross, the kiss of peace, and even the slap on the cheek—but says not a word about the imposition of hands. This is all the more strange, because the Catechism refers to Acts viii. 14–17, in proof that the bishop alone has the power to administer this sacrament; and yet in that passage it is expressly said that “the apostles laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Ghost.”*

3. The Sacred Scriptures make no mention of an *indelible character* in orders, any more than in baptism and confirmation. That the papal body attaches some consequence to it would seem to be the case, from the fact that the Trent Council curses everybody who ventures to deny it. Sess. 23, Can. 4. Certain we are that any pious and intelligent man might read the New Testament (and for that matter the Old too) without ever think-

*The Episcopal Church is here a little more consistent. It not only *alleges* the example of the apostles, but *follows* it. Of course we do not admit that Acts viii. 14–17 has anything to do with “confirmation,” either sacrament or mere ceremony.

ing of any indelible character.* Still not thinking about it is a different thing from denying it. Let us therefore examine Gabriel Beil, who flourished less than a century before the Trent Council, and was a great light in the Church of Rome. He expended a great deal of thought and of research upon this mystery, and his conclusion is thus summed up by Chemnitz:† “That the word character, in this sense, is found neither in the Sacred Scriptures, nor in the ancient ecclesiastical writers; that it is not found in the ‘Master of the Sentences’ himself (Lombard); that as to the thing itself, neither the authority of the Fathers nor reason compels us to posit any such character; that the passages adduced from Dionysius, Augustine, Damascenus, and Lombard in favor of the ‘character,’ are to be expounded rather of the sacraments of baptism itself, or of the sacramental form, than of any impress or stamp made in fact upon the soul; that all the effects ascribed to the character may be explained as well without the character as with it; that the sacraments themselves work these effects without the character; that the things attributed to the character are found in the eucharist, and in other sacraments, which are not supposed to imprint it; that the chief reason which weighed with the schoolmen for positing the character has little force; that the unreiterableness of some of the sacraments does not depend upon the character, but upon the nature of these sacraments and the divine institution; that it is less clear what the character is, than that baptism is not to be reiterated; that the sole authority for it is a passage in the writings of Pope Innocent III. (A. D. 1198–1216); that the passage is susceptible of another interpretation; that a theologian ought not to lay down anything to be believed which is not necessary, *ex fide, et cet.*” So far this great champion of

*We beg pardon; the *Roman character* is referred to in several places of the Revelation. See xiii. 16–17; xiv. 9, 11; xv. 2; xvi. 2, et al. The word is *χαραγμα*. Heb. i. 3 is the only place in which the word *χαρακτήρ* occurs.

†Examine Concilii Tridentini, Sess. 7, p. 25. This great work is a storehouse of argument and history against the leading dogmas of Rome.

Rome. It would appear, then, to use the language of the *Edinburgh Review*, that this character is "a nonentity inscribed with a very formidable name—a very substantial shadow." "As to the *ubi* of the character," says Dr. Campbell, "there was no less variety of sentiments—some placing it in the essence of the soul, others in the understanding; some in the will, and others *more plausibly* in the imagination; others even in the hand and tongue; but by the general voice the body was excluded. So that the whole of what they agreed in amounts to this: that in the unreiterable sacraments, as they call them, something they know not *what* is imprinted, they know not *how*, on something in the soul of the recipient, they know not *where*, which never can be detected." And yet we are adjudged to the everlasting pains of hell for not believing it. We are willing to share the damnation of Gabriel if he has been damned for not believing *this*.

But what was the motive for postulating this mysterious non-entity and the transmission of sacerdotal grace? In answer, we quote the words of Litton (*On the Ch. of Christ*, pp. 534–537): "Christianity [according to Rome], being the new law of Christ, must present the same general characteristics which its predecessor, the law of Moses, did. Now every legal system of religion being necessarily of an artificial and arbitrary character in its appointments, inasmuch as it is intended to work from without inwards, and to produce the dispositions which it does not find present, a law from without will regulate in detail all matters connected with divine worship, and especially will determine the functions and persons of the sacerdotal order. The permanency of the external mould in which the worshipper is to be fashioned to religion being a principal object in every such system, the institution of the priestly order will be positive rather than natural: it will come from without, not spring from within. *Moral* qualifications for the ministerial office—such as wisdom, or knowledge, or personal piety—will, under such a system, occupy a subordinate place, or rather may be altogether dispensed with; the great object being to make provision for a visible succession of sacerdotal persons, who, whatever they may

be inwardly, shall at least possess an official sanctity. Besides, it is obvious that no one can guarantee the transmission of moral endowments, natural or spiritual. This object, the ancient systems of religion—the Jewish among the number—aimed at securing, and did in fact secure, by incorporating in themselves the principle of *caste*; that is, by attaching the priestly function to a certain tribe or family, separated for the purpose from the rest of the nation, and making it pass from father to son in the way of natural descent, irrespectively of moral qualifications. By this means the perpetual existence of a visible priesthood was secured; the only contingency, and that not a probable one, which could destroy the succession, being the extinction of the sacerdotal tribe or family. An hereditary priesthood, the basis of the sacerdotal character being not the *fitness* of the individual, but the consecration of the caste, is the natural accompaniment of every system of religion which aims at moulding men, by means of law and discipline, into a specific type of religious sentiment.

“The Jewish priesthood was instituted on the principle just mentioned. The tribe of Levi was set apart to the ministry of the tabernacle, and out of it the family of Aaron to sacerdotal functions; and nothing more was necessary to qualify men for the priesthood than legitimacy of birth and investiture with the sacred garments. It is obvious, that if anything analogous to this was to reappear under the Christian dispensation, it must undergo considerable modifications to render it less strikingly inconsistent with the general principles of the gospel: it must put on a more spiritual form, and one capable of greater expansiveness. Particularly in one point a change was indispensable: a priesthood propagating itself by natural descent would manifestly be unfitted for the purposes of a religion, the professed aim of which, is not like Judaism, to be a training school for one nation only, but to embrace all nations within its pale. The transmission therefore must be independent of race or tribe. It is in fact by thus modifying its aspect that Romanism is enabled to introduce the ministry of the law into the gospel. The principle of *caste* is retained; but it appears under a new form better

suiting to Christianity. The powers which belong to the sacred office are transmitted only in one line, and in that line they are transmitted independently of any moral qualification on the part of the recipient: only instead of priests by natural, we have priests by spiritual descent, the existing body of bishops possessing the power, in and by the sacrament of orders of spiritually generating pastors for the Church. As of old, so now, the legitimacy of the ministerial commission depends exclusively upon the legitimacy of the external succession, for the want of which no fulness of natural and spiritual endowment can compensate. Yet we are not to suppose that no internal grace accompanies the transmission of orders; that a priest becomes a priest solely by the visible imposition of hands. Some concession must, as regards this point, be made to the general spirit of Christianity, and therefore it is added, that by the sacrament of orders, working like all the others *ex opere operato*, grace is conferred; not however sanctifying grace, but the mystical grace of priesthood, grace for the valid performance of holy functions, which may exist equally in those who have saving faith in Christ, and in those who have not. Thus a degree of *inwardness* is imparted to what otherwise would be as purely external a matter as the succession of Eleazer to Aaron. Finally, as the ancient priests were always priests, no one having it in his power to reverse his natural birth, so the spiritual stamp or impressed character, which is a consequence of ordination, forever distinguishes him who receives it from his brethren in Christ."

The papal idea of ordination, as thus described, receives no sanction from the word of God; none from the Old Testament, much less from the New. Under the Old Testament the call of God determined the whole matter without the will of man. According to the Papists, the will of man determines everything; for the "*intention*"* of the officiating bishop or priest determines the question, whether the grace belonging to any sacrament shall be actually conferred or not. The external forms may be strictly canonical; but who can tell, whether the licen-

*Concil. Trident., Sess. 7, Can. 11; and Chemnitz's Examen.

tious, cock-fighting, gambling priest intends to do the act which the Church intends? The notorious want of reverence in papal priest—and the nearer Rome the more notorious the want of reverence—makes it very probable that in thousands of instances of apparent baptism, or confirmation, or ordination, the sacrament was a practical jest: meant nothing and did nothing. The current of spiritual electricity met with an obstinate non-conductor, was arrested and dissipated. Under the Old Testament, the extraordinary providence which was a leading feature of that dispensation, secured the family of Aaron from extinction; and the genealogical registers secured the people from the imposture of pretenders. In Rome no man can be sure that his priest is not an impostor or intruder.

Under the Old Testament there was no transmission of sacerdotal grace; and although the right of any man to be a priest was easily ascertained, no man's spiritual relations or spiritual state was made to depend upon the doings of the priest. The utmost wrong that could be done him was external, affecting his outward relations to the Church. But these cruel religion-mongers boast that one grand difference between the sacraments of the law and theirs, is, that the latter *confer* the grace which the former only *signify*.* If therefore a poor soul goes to a priest who is no priest; or if a true priest does not happen (through ignorance, or malice, or drunkenness, or the spirit of jesting) to intend to do what the Church intends, the salvation of that soul is put in extreme jeopardy. How different this hideous and cruel abomination from the merciful spirit of the gospel, which says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Blessed be God, who brought our fathers out of this "pitchy cloud of infernal darkness" into the sunlight of divine truth, where we can "hear the bird of morning sing."

*The Tridentine Catechism says that "the sacraments of the old law were instituted as signs only of those things which were to be accomplished by the sacraments of the new law." (On the Sacraments). Let it be remembered that Rome holds that the sacraments not only confer grace, but that *nothing* can confer it without them; that they are necessary to salvation; and the statements of the text are fully sustained and justified.

Righteous will be our doom if we allow ourselves to be "re-involved" in that cloud again.

When we compare this doctrine of sacerdotal grace with the teachings of the New Testament, the contradiction becomes glaring. *First*: Neither the term orders nor the term ordination* occurs in the New Testament. It is a little remarkable that a sacrament should have been instituted without a name and without a record. We find then neither name nor thing. "The word *ordination* is of all ecclesiastical terms the most purely secular in derivation. The word *ordo* from which the Latin verb *ordinare* is derived, was the technical term for the senate or council to which, in the colonies and municipal towns of the Roman empire, the administration of local affairs was committed, and the members of which were called *Decuriones*. The correlative therefore to the *ordo* was not the laity as distinguished from the priesthood, but the *plebs* or private citizens, as distinguished from the magistracy. And in fact the word *ordinare* is never used by the classical writers to signify consecration to a sacred office. From the State it passed into the Church; whence the frequent use in the early Latin fathers of the word *plebs* to denote the Christian people or laity in contrast with the clergy. It is reasonable to suppose that when first introduced, its ecclesiastical corresponded to its civil meaning; and that to be

*It is hardly necessary to say that we do not refer to the *English* words *ordain* or *ordination*, or to the idea of ordination in the general sense of *appointing, constituting* (see Titus i. 5); but to the *ceremony* of setting apart a man to an office or a work. The word *ordain* occurs again in Acts xiv. 23 in our version, but there the Greek is different, *χειροτονεῖν*, a verb which afterwards became a technical one in the Greek Church to express ordination. But in the only other place where it occurs in the New Testament, 2 Cor. viii. 19, it is rendered by our translators "chosen." Comp. 1 Cor. xvi. 3: and this is a meaning, and apparently the chief meaning assigned to it by Suidas, Hesychius, and Suicer. See Suicer's *The-saurus* under the word. No doubt it came to be used of the act of ordaining, because the election of officers preceded their ordination—election and ordination constituting vocation to office. So in the same way *χειροθεσία* signified blessing (*εὐλογία*) on account of the benediction which accompanied the laying on of hands in certain cases. See Suicer sub verb.

ordained, or to be invested with 'holy orders,' signified merely to be chosen a member of the governing body or presbytery in a Christian society; no reference being intended to a specific grade of religious standing supposed to be thereby acquired. To transfer the notions which in later times became connected with 'ordination' into the apostolic age, or the sacred narrative, is the ready way to fall into serious errors of scriptural interpretation."*

Second: This account of the origin of the word falls in with the view of ordination as given in the New Testament. In every free commonwealth citizens are elevated to office because they have, or are supposed to have, a larger measure of the endowments which qualify for office than the body of their fellow-citizens. They are not elevated to a *caste* or *rank* because they possess gifts which have been altogether denied to their fellow-citizens; nor are they selected out of the mass as persons upon whom certain gifts are to be conferred in order to qualify them for office. They are not subjected to a manipulation by which any indelible character is to be imprinted, or any political grace imparted. They are simply put into office, with or without solemn ceremonies, by the will of the body in which all political power resides and to which all the political gifts and capacities of its members belong. The power resides in the body as to its *being*; in the officers as to its *exercise*.† In the human body the power of vision may be said to belong as to its *being* to the body, but as to its *actual exercise* to the eye. The body is the principium *quod*, the eye is the principium *quo*. The body sees, but sees by the eye. The life of the body is in every part

*See Litton's Church of Christ, p. 567, foot-note. Similar confusion and error have resulted from the like use of the terms *heresy* and *schism*, the scriptural terms differing very widely in signification from the ecclesiastical. The Church of Rome, for example, has been remarkably free from the *ecclesiastical* sin of schism; no community has been more guilty of the sin of schism in the scriptural sense. How fatal has been the force and imposture of *words*!

†This distinction was expressed in the schools by the terms *in primo actu*, or *quoad esse*, and *in actu secundo*, or *quoad operari*.

and organ, and the life of the body controls the life in every part. The eye sees by the life of the body, and sees under the control of the life of the body and for the good of the body. The eye represents the body *quoad* seeing; is *in*, not *over*, the body for that purpose. So the commonwealth makes and administers the laws by the organs instituted for that purpose. Its life is in the legislature, in the judiciary, in the executive, for the discharge of their respective functions. The civil officers in these various departments are *in* the commonwealth, not *over* it; they represent the commonwealth *quoad* these various functions, and the functions being performed by the life of the commonwealth are performed for its interests. Further, in every such commonwealth there are solemn ceremonies by which the fact of such representation is formally recognised and published; and when the officer ceases to hold the office and relinquishes its duties, he ceases to be a representative and falls back into the mass.

Now this is an exact account of what occurs in the Church, *mutato nomine*, if only we allow for the difference between a free commonwealth which makes a constitution for itself, and a free commonwealth which has its constitution made for it by Christ.* It is in substance the view given by Paul in 1 Cor. xii., where

*The difference here signalized may be made plain by an illustration. The constitution in a free commonwealth is "ordained" and established by the "sovereign people" assembled in convention. The election of persons to fill the offices created and defined by the constitution belongs to the *people* in a very different sense, in the sense of "constituents." Hence an officer holding the office created by the constitution, or the *sovereign* people, is responsible to the people in *this* sense, and not in the sense of his constituency. The old doctrine therefore of "instructions" was inconsistent with the very nature of a representative, as Burke told the electors of Bristol. Now the constitution of the Church comes in *no sense* from the Church. There is no sovereignty but in Christ her head. He ordains and establishes her constitution; creates her offices; and her officers, though elected and "ordained" by the Church, are not responsible to those who elected them, but to the Head, and to those courts which he has appointed to govern. The rulers in the Church are rulers *in* her, not *over* her, as Paul hints to the elders at Ephesus. Acts xx. 28; in the Greek $\epsilon\nu\ \phi$ not $\epsilon\phi\ \phi$. The eye is *in* the body for seeing, not *over* it. It is in a

his avowed object is to state the relations of gifts in the Church to the offices and functions discharged in it. He presents the same view also in Rom. xii. The gifts are given to the Church as a body; the life is hers, the life of the Holy Ghost; these gifts are given to be manifested and exercised for the profit of the whole body. The movement is *from within outwardly*; the organism effloresces in apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, deacons, etc. Compare Eph. iv. 4-16, in which exquisite description of the gifts and calling of the Church, the introduction of the idea of priestly caste would be felt to be an intolerable impertinence.† It is plain that the gifts and offices and officers are all given to the Church by her glorious Bride-

high place, much higher than the foot; but still it is *in* the body, as the foot is; and both eye and foot have *identically the same life*. In Rome, the priesthood is *over* the body, and has a life of its own, different from the life of the laity, (or people of God,) as the life of a shepherd is different from the life of the sheep whom he governs and *shears*.

We may add, that it follows from the view given above, that both election and ordination, while they express the judgment of the Church, express the judgment of the Church that Christ, the head, has called the persons elected and ordained.

†“All office-bearers, and especially all such as are ordinary and perpetual, are given by Christ to his Church; and the Church is not in any conceivable sense given to them. The personal ministry of Christ was surely not utterly barren. He had disciples before he had apostles; he had many, perhaps multitudes of followers, before the descent of the Holy Ghost had fully anointed the apostles for their office and work; and we are told that after his resurrection, and before his ascent into heaven, “He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once.” 1 Cor. xv. 6. And of the vast crowds that followed him, and heard gladly him who spake as never man spake, who shall presume to say that multitudes did not believe on him? To those already united with him by faith, and to his elect throughout the earth and throughout all generations, he gave, after he had singly triumphed over death and hell, the inestimable gift of a living and permanent ministry. But he had a Church in the world before there was either apostle, or prophet, or evangelist, or pastor, or teacher; and he will have a Church around him throughout eternal ages, after all his saints are gathered and perfected, and whose oracles, ordinances, and ministry shall all have fulfilled their work. His Bride was equally his undefiled, his only one, before any ordinance was established, or any oracle given, or any min-

groom; that in the order of nature and even of *time*, she exists before them. She is the end, and they are the means. The powers of teaching, ruling, distributing, are *her* powers; the gifts necessary for the exercise of these powers are *her* gifts; the officers through whom she exercises them are *her* officers; they are her eyes and ears and hands and feet. The life is the same in all: there is *one Spirit* as well as *one body*. There is no room here for the distinction of *clergy* and *laity* (if those terms mean any thing more than the distinction between office-bearers and private members); every laic is a clergyman, because he belongs to the inheritance of God; and every clergyman is a laic, because he belongs to the people of God. The simple statement of Paul is an overwhelming refutation of the putid figment of sacerdotal orders and sacerdotal grace. The officers of the Church are simply her representatives and organs *quoad* teaching, ruling, distributing, etc.; and "ordination" is simply a solemn ceremony by which the fact is recognised and authenticated. Here is no grace transmitted from man to man in a line of priests *over* the Church and *above* it; the propagation of a life separate and independent from that of the laity; but the very same grace, gifts, and *life* in the officers and in the body.

As Christ is the head of the Church, is the author of its constitution, and rules in it by his Spirit, no member of the Church can be made an officer except by a call from him, any more

istry constituted, as she is now that we enjoy all these proofs of his care and love; and if there had never been an office-bearer of the race of Adam given as a servant to minister unto her—if angels had been her only ministers forever, or the divine Spirit had disdained all secondary agencies, or were now to reject the whole body of sinful men, who are nothing but as he enables them—still that spotless Bride would be the Lamb's wife, by a covenant reaching from the depths of eternity, steadfast as the oath of God can make it, and sacred by the blood of Jesus with which it is sealed. No, no; there is no lordship, no headship in Christ's Church but that of Christ himself; there are but servants in the Church for Christ's sake; and their Master's rule is this: 'Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant—he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.'" R. J. Breckinridge's Sermon on Eph. iv. 8.

than that member could be a member except by his calling. It is Christ who confers the gifts which qualify for office, and this is done by the Holy Ghost who dwells in the whole Church. It is Christ who creates the office and defines its functions and prescribes the qualifications for it. And yet, according to the will of the same Lord and Head, the call to be an officer is not complete without the action of the Church, any more than the call to be a member is complete without the action of the Church. Hence vocation is both inward and outward; and the outward consists of election* and ordination. Election is the act of the body; ordination the act of the rulers already existing, who have themselves been chosen in like manner; but both election

*That the people in the ancient Church had the right of electing their bishops is so notorious that we are not aware of its being seriously denied by any respectable writer. Hooker, (Ch. Polity, B. 7, c. 14,) after conceding the fact, goes on to vindicate the Church of England in denying this right to her people, upon the ground that changes of this sort must occur in the social development of a people, and appeals to the *civil history of Rome*, and the changes that took place first in the republic and afterwards in the empire! What is this but virtually asserting that the Church is a natural institution like the State, and that its life is merely natural? Such a doctrine is natural in the minister of a Church which was created by the state and is governed by it; but will be rejected with horror by every one who believes that Christ is the only King in his Church, and that her constitution comes from him. The truth is, the dogma of apostolical succession is utterly incompatible with any election of ministers by the people; and one or the other *must* be abandoned. If anybody doubts that bishops were elected by the suffrages of the people in the ancient Church, he may have his doubts fully removed by consulting Suicer's *Thesaurus Ecclesiasticus* under the words *Ἐπίσκοπος*, *χειροτονία*, and *χειροτονία*. Down to the time of Nicolaus II., who was made pontiff in 1058, the people of Rome still took part in electing the bishop of Rome. Nicolaus ordered that the cardinal bishops and the cardinal presbyters should elect the pontiff; yet without infringing the established rights of the Roman [German] emperors in this business. At the same time he did not exclude the rest of the clergy, nor the citizens and people from all part in the election; for he required that the assent of all these should be asked and obtained. It was not until the reign of Alexander III., more than a century afterwards, that the election of the pope was given exclusively to the college of cardinals. Mosheim, Vol. 2, p. 233. So long did this relic of the primitive doctrine linger after the ministry had been converted into a priesthood!

and ordination are acts of the Church making the person chosen and ordained, her representative or organ as to the particular functions to be performed. Election and ordination are therefore simply modes in which the divine calling is manifested and ascertained. The Spirit of Christ dwells in the man called, in the congregation electing, in the court ordaining; and when the presence and working of the Spirit is manifested in all these modes, the calling is as complete, and as completely authenticated as the present imperfect condition of the Church will allow. Ordination imparts no authority, it only recognises and authenticates it. The solemn ceremonies used in the inauguration of a president of the United States do not make him president, (that has been already done), but only recognise and authenticate the fact. It is not necessary that the oath of office should be administered by the outgoing president (upon the principle of like begetting like); it is sufficient that it be administered by an accredited organ and representative of the commonwealth.

If this be a just view of the nature of ordination, it follows that ordination is *not unrepeatable*. The occasions for a reiteration of the ceremony may be, and commonly will be, very rare, but there is nothing in the nature of the thing to hinder its being reiterated. Paul and Barnabas were separated for the special work to which the Holy Ghost had called them, by prayer and fasting, and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery at Antioch. And yet Barnabas had been a distinguished teacher before in that very church, and Saul had been made "a chosen vessel to bear the name of Christ before kings, and the Gentiles, and the people of Israel," some time, according to some chronologers, many years before. If it be said that this was not a case of "ordination," of setting apart to an office, but only of setting apart to a special work; we answer, show us an instance of any separation to an office as contradistinguished from a work in the New Testament. If John xx. 22, 23, be adduced as an instance; we answer that this was an ordination by the Lord himself, and not by the Church. It is true that Rome directs the Bishop in the consecration of a priest to say, "Receive the

Holy Ghost;" and the Episcopal Church imitates Rome in one of its forms in the "ordaining of priests" (at the same time mercifully proposing another form for men whose consciences are too tender to allow them to use the first); but this is done without any warrant from Christ, and, as it appears to us, is near akin to blasphemy. We hold that the ordination of the apostles was extraordinary, as their office was extraordinary; and yet here is a case of the greatest of all the apostles having the hands of the ordinary teachers in Antioch laid upon him. He takes his place along with Barnabas; Stephen, the deacon; Timothy, the evangelist, or bishop, or legate *a latere*, or whatever he was; Barnabas, the teacher; Saul, the apostle; all alike had hands laid on them, and were commended to the Lord for the *work* which he had for them to do. And if any of these illustrious men had quit their work and gone to money-making, and then returned to their work again, there could be no good reason why the hands of the Presbytery should not have been laid upon them again. Or if Timothy had become a pastor of a congregation, there was no reason why he should not have been commended to the Lord to that new work, by prayer, fasting, and the imposition of hands. These things constitute the ceremonies of ordination; and Saul and Barnabas, who had been preaching for years, had these things done to them. Call it ordination or any thing you please, it was a solemn act of obedience to the Holy Ghost, recognising his sovereign will in the choice of these men for a particular ecclesiastical work of preaching and ruling. And if there be any thing more in "ordination" than this, we have been unable to find it.

Again, according to Rome, the bishop alone has the power to communicate this mysterious sacerdotal grace in orders. Now the New Testament knows nothing of the bishop as different in rank or order from the presbyter or priest. The papal bishop is a pure invention of man or—the devil. The sacrament of orders therefore falls to the ground, being founded on the bishop.

Once more. There is no instance in the New Testament, in which the act of ordaining was performed by one man. The college of apostles ordained the deacons; the prophets and

teachers laid hands on Barnabas and Saul; the Presbytery laid hands on Timothy. No doubt the apostles and evangelists did sometimes appoint or ordain elders, acting singly, when there was no existing Presbytery to do the act. But the record makes it very clear that they preferred the other method where it was practicable; just as in other acts of government the apostles, though competent to act each one by himself, preferred, when practicable, to act jointly, or as an assembly. They did this, no doubt, to indicate the mode in which Christ would have his Church to be governed in all time; "by the common counsel of the presbyters," to use Jerome's expression.

The Papists sometimes condescend to quote the Sacred Scriptures in proof of their peculiar doctrines. Their quotations generally have as little to do in fact with their doctrines, as the passage cited by a simple monk in proof of the scripturalness of the two orders of clergy, the regular and the secular—"the oxen were ploughing and the asses feeding beside them." But they find a passage (2 Tim. i. 6) which looks as if it might support their doctrine of ordination. For here is ordination by one man, and the imparting of a gift by the imposition of his hands. Upon this passage we observe, (a). That if this was a case of ordination, then it was either the same with that mentioned in 1 Tim. iv. 14, or a different one. If it was a *different* case, then Timothy was ordained at least *twice*; and what becomes of the indelible character, and the doctrine of the unreiterability of ordination? If it was the *same* case, then what becomes of ordination by bishops alone (for the ordination here was by presbyters)? Or if the Presbytery consisted of prelates, what becomes of the plenary authority of the apostle Paul? Was not *his* ordination sufficient to make Timothy a presbyter, or an evangelist, or even a prelatical bishop? If it is said that Paul condescended to be a bishop for the nonce; we answer that he might have condescended still further (as his brother Peter did, 1 Pet. v. 1,) to be a fellow-presbyter with his brethren, and act for and with them in the Presbytery in laying hands on Timothy. This, we have little doubt, is what actually occurred. (b). The gift that Timothy received by the laying on of the

hands of Paul, and the Presbytery was the gift described by Paul in Eph. iii. 7, 8, as having been given to himself, (perhaps by the laying on of the hands of the *layman* Ananias, Acts ix. 17-20). That it was no indelible character is evident from the fact that Timothy is exhorted to "stir it up;" Paul uses a word which implies that the gift had descended like fire from heaven; but that it was to be kept from going out, and to be increased by Timothy's care. It was a gift which manifested itself in "reading, exhortation, teaching" (see 1 Tim. iv. 13); was capable of being improved by these exercises, as well as by the "meditation" which was needful to perform them (v. 15); and a gift in which "his profiting might appear unto all." None of these things can be affirmed of the sacerdotal grace of the Papists. It exists alike in the laziest and the most diligent, in the vilest and the purest, in a Leo the Great and a Leo the Tenth. Whatever therefore this mystic grace may be, it is certainly a different thing from Paul's gift, or Timothy's. The "character" in Paul or Timothy would certainly have been "deleted" by a tenth or hundredth part of the wickedness which failed to delete it in John XXII., or Alexander VI.

Having thus said what we proposed to say upon the papal doctrine of succession in the light of the Sacred Scriptures, we proceed to consider it in the light of history and of the conditions of the doctrine itself. These two views of the subject we combine; as the history will show that the doctrine as stated by the Papists cuts its own throat, and that if we are to believe it, we must first abnegate our own reason. There is good reason why these people do not like an appeal to reason. We are very apt to be against that which we feel to be against us.

1. There is no such doctrine of succession as that of the Trent Council to be found in the first three centuries of the Church; we mean a doctrine involving a priesthood perpetuated by a process independent of the Christian people. Even the High-Churchman Cyprian, in the middle of the third century, whose extravagant language concerning the priesthood and the episcopate, prelatists quote much oftener and with vastly more relish than they ever quote Peter or Paul, did not venture to deny the

right of the people to have something to say in the creation of bishops and priests. The succession of the early fathers was a succession of *doctrine*, not of *persons*, except so far as persons were involved in the doctrinal succession. They seem to have been led to assert such a succession by a claim of this sort made by the heretics, who, finding the writings of the apostles against them, pretended to have a tradition of the apostles in their favor. Thus Tertullian, in his book "De præscriptionibus adversus hæreticos," urges the true succession against the false:* "Let them parade the origins of their churches, let them unroll the series of their bishops, so coming down by succession from the beginning, that the first bishop had some one of the apostles or a disciple of the apostles as his ordainer and predecessor. Let the heretics invent a figment of this sort, yet it will profit them nothing; for their very doctrine will convict them, when compared with the doctrine of the apostles, by its diversity and contrariety; for as the apostles did not teach contrary to one another, so apostolic men would not have taught contrary to the apostles." Tertullian's idea of the succession was not at all that of a priesthood whose function it was to offer sacrifice and pronounce authoritative absolution; but the succession of men in certain *churches* which, having been founded by the apostles or by their disciples, were called "sedes apostolicæ," or sees of the apostles, and were supposed to have a prescriptive right to say what the apostolical teaching really was.

This was indeed a very unsafe rule. It was not the rule given in the Sacred Scriptures. The spirits ought to have been tried by the Holy Spirit speaking in his word, and specially by the great fundamental doctrines of the word, as prescribed by John in his 1st Epistle, chap. iv.; but this rule was not deemed sufficiently easy, and yet it seems easy enough. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. If there come any unto you, and *bring not this doctrine*, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed." 2 John ix. 10.) But men were wiser than God, and in

*Tertullian. de præ. adv. hæretic. apud. Turretine. L. 18., Q. 13.

order to extinguish heresy and prevent schism, invented the Catholic doctrine and made communion with the bishop the mark of orthodoxy. But in the whole business, the *truth* was the thing aimed at, not sacramental grace or sacramental salvation. They inverted the proper order, and instead of judging the man or the Church by the *faith*, they judged the faith by the man or the Church. The results of this inversion have been deplorable; but these ancient worthies ought to be acquitted of the sin and silliness involved in the modern doctrine of the succession.

That this view of the position of the ancient Church is the true one, is evident from the Donatist controversy. It is well known that there was no difference between the Donatists and "the Church," either in faith or order. Both were orthodox; both were episcopal. There was no question made by the Church, whether the Donatist communion was a Church, a part of the Church visible on earth. Members coming to the Church from the Donatists were not rebaptized; but more than this, ministers coming from them to the Church were not reördained. Not only was this the case in the early stages of the great controversy, but even as late as the Conference at Carthage, just one century from the death of Mensurius, which was the original occasion of the strife, the Catholics offered to acknowledge the bishops of the Donatists. Even the Synod of Rome offered to hold communion with them.* The Catholic Church in fact stood

*See these positions fully established by Claude in his *Defence of the Reformation*, P. 3, c. 4. Chillingworth takes the same view of this controversy. He quotes from an epistle of Augustine these words: "You (the Donatists) are with us in baptism, in the creed, and the other sacraments"; and again: "Thou has proved to me that thou hast faith; prove to me likewise that thou hast charity." Parallel to which words are those of Optatus: "Amongst us and you is one ecclesiastical conversation, common lessons, the same faith, the same sacraments." Where, by the way, we may observe, that in the judgment of these fathers, even Donatists, though heretics and schismatics, gave true *ordination*, the true sacrament of matrimony, the sacramental absolution, confirmation, the true sacrament of the eucharist, true extreme unction; or else (choose you whether) some of these were not then esteemed sacraments. But for *ordination*, whether he (Augustine) held it a sacrament or no, certainly he held that it remained

on the defensive in this whole war, as any man can see by simply glancing over the writings of Augustine against the Donatists; it was simply defending its own right to be a Church, against a narrow-minded and fanatical sect which claimed to be the only Church in the world; it was occupying exactly the position in reference to the Donatists which *we* now occupy in reference to Rome and its imitators. The Catholics of that day had sense and charity enough *not* to follow the example of the Donatists, and unchurch all other communions but their own. It is very evident that they did not have, or did not know that they had, the apostolical succession. Otherwise, the argument would have been short, sharp and decisive. In that case the Church which had defied the power of the Roman emperors for three hundred years, might have been saved the disgrace of invoking the authority of the emperors to decide the controversy by arbitration and by the sword.

2. The Papists are in the habit of imposing upon people, by saying that the salvation of Protestants, like their faith, rests upon fallible and uncertain grounds, and that certainty can be

with them entire; for so he says in express terms in his book against Parmenianus's Epistle. Which doctrine, if you can reconcile with the present doctrine of the Roman Church, *eris mihi magnus Apollo.*" (Chillingworth's Works, P. 506, 507, of Phila. Ed., 1840.)

The learned Witsius (*De Schism. Donatistarum*, c. 7) says that he had read, "*non sine magno tædio,*" the Breviculum of Augustine, and the Acts of the Conference of Carthage (A. D. 411), and gives this as the main question disputed between the two hundred and eighty-six Catholic bishops, and the two hundred and seventy-nine Donatist bishops assembled at the Conference (held, be it remembered, a century after the breaking out of the schism), viz.: "Whether the Church which held communion with the Cæcilian, the Traditor, had not thereby lost the dignity and privileges of a Church? The controversy, therefore, was twofold: 1. First, of *fact*: whether C. was a traditor and on that account unworthy of the episcopate? 2. Second, of *law*; whether a Church is so vitiated by an admixture of the wicked, as to cease to be a Church?" This is a very different question from that which would have been discussed, if they had been disputing about the *succession*. It was indeed the same question which was afterwards debated between the Anabaptists and their antagonists, both Romanist and Protestant.

found only within their pale. Now, not to say that this assertion comes with a bad grace from a community which teaches in its creed that no man can be certain of his salvation in this life; it has been shown, over and over again, that their own doctrine of the priesthood and the sacraments makes it impossible for any man to know that he has ever been truly absolved from his sins; and this because of the uncertainty of the succession as a fact. That the sacrament of penance has ever been duly administered to him, depends upon the minister's being a true priest. "That such or such a man is priest," says Chillingworth, "not himself, much less any other can have any possible certainty; for it depends upon a great many contingent and uncertain supposals. He that will pretend to be certain of it, must undertake to know for certain all these things that follow":

"*First*, that he was baptized with due matter. *Secondly*, with the due form of words, which he cannot know, unless he were both present and attentive. *Thirdly*, he must know that he was baptized with due intention, and that is, that the minister of his baptism was not a secret Jew, nor a Moor, nor an atheist (of all which kinds, I fear, experience gives you a just cause to fear that Italy and Spain have priests not a few), but a Christian, in heart as well as profession, (otherwise, believing the sacrament to be nothing, in giving it he could intend to give nothing), nor a Samosatanean, nor an Arian, but one that was capable of having due intention, from which they that believe not the doctrine of the Trinity are excluded by you. And lastly, that he was neither drunk nor distracted at the administration of the sacrament, nor out of negligence or malice omitted his intention. *Fourthly*, he must undertake to know that the bishop which ordained him priest, ordained him completely with due matter, form and intention; and, consequently, that he again was neither Jew, Moor, nor atheist, nor liable to any such exception as is inconsistent with due intention of giving the sacrament of orders. *Fifthly*, he must undertake to know, that the bishop, which made him priest, was a priest himself; for your rule is *nihil dat quod non habet*; and, consequently, that there were

again none of the former nullities in his baptism, which might make him incapable of ordination, nor any invalidity in his ordination, but a true priest to ordain him again, the requisite matter and form, and due intention all concurring. *Lastly*, he must pretend to know the same of him that made him priest, and him that made him priest, even until he comes to the very fountain of priesthood. For, take any one in the whole train and succession of ordainers, and suppose him, by reason of any defect, only a supposed and not a true priest; then, according to your doctrine, he could not give a true, but only a supposed priesthood; and they that receive it of him, and again they that derive it from them, can give no better than they received; receiving nothing but a name and shadow, can give nothing but a name and shadow; and so from age to age, from generation to generation, being equivocal, fathers beget only equivocal sons; no principle in geometry being more certain than this, that the unsuppliable defect of any necessary antecedent, must needs cause a nullity of all those consequences which depend upon it. In fine, to know this one thing, you must first know ten thousand others, whereof not any one is a thing that can be known, there being no necessity that it should be true, which necessity alone can qualify any thing to be an object of science, but only, at the best, a high degree of probability that it is so. But then, that of ten thousand probables, no one should be false; that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting; this to me is extremely improbable, and even cousin-german to impossible. So that the assurance hereof is like a machine composed of an innumerable multitude of pieces, of which it is strangely unlikely, but some will be out of order, and yet if any one be so, the whole fabric of necessity falls to the ground; and he that shall put them together, and maturely consider all the possible ways of lapsing, and nullifying a priesthood in the Church of Rome, I believe will be very inclinable to think, that it is a hundred to one, that amongst a hundred seeming priests, there is not one true one—nay, that it is not a thing very improbable, that amongst those many millions which make up the Roman hierarchy, there are

not twenty true." (Chillingworth's Works, P. 130-2. Hooker, Phila., 1840.)

"Whether," says Macaulay in his Review of Gladstone's "Church and State" (Miscellanies, Vol. 3, P. 200), "a clergyman be really a successor of the apostles depends on an immense number of such contingencies as these: Whether under King Ethelwolf, a stupid priest might not, while baptizing several scores of Danish prisoners who had just made their option between the font and the gallows, inadvertently omit to perform the rite on one of these graceless proselytes?—whether, in the seventh century, an imposter, who had never received consecration, might not have passed himself off as a bishop on a rude tribe of Scots?—whether a lad of twelve did really, by a ceremony huddled over when he was too drunk to know what he was about, convey the episcopal character to a lad of ten?"

Mr. Gladstone proposes to remove doubts which may arise from the *historic* difficulties against the doctrine of succession, by nothing less than mathematical evidence. "By a novel application of the theory of ratios and proportion, he endeavors to show that, on the least favorable computation, the chances for the true consecration of any bishop are 8,000 to 1. . . . Be it so; this only diminishes the probability that, in any given case, the suspicion of invalidity is unfounded. What is wanted is a criterion which shall distinguish the *genuine* orders from the *spurious*. Alas! who knows but *he* may be the unhappy eight-thousandth? According to this theory, no man in the Roman or Anglican communions has a right to say that he is commissioned to preach the gospel, but only that he has seven thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine-eight-thousandth parts of certainty that he is! A felicitous mode of expression, it must be confessed. What would be the fraction for expressing the ratio of probability, on the supposition that simony, heresy, or infidelity, can invalidate *holy* orders is, considering the history of the middle ages, far beyond our arithmetic."*

"We can imagine," says the same lively writer, "the per-

* *Edinburgh Review*, for April, 1843, P. 271. Amer. Reprint.

plexity of a presbyter thus cast in doubt as to whether or not he has ever had the invaluable 'gift' of apostolical succession conferred upon him. As that gift is neither tangible nor visible, the subject neither of experience nor consciousness; as it cannot be known by any 'effects' produced by it, he may imagine—unhappy man!—that he has been 'regenerating' infants by baptism, when he has been simply sprinkling them with water. 'What is the matter?' the spectator of his distractions might ask. 'What have you lost?' 'Lost!' would be the reply, 'I fear I have lost my apostolical succession; or rather, my misery is, that I do not know and cannot tell whether I ever had it to lose.' It is of no use here to suggest the usual questions, 'When did you see it last? When were you last conscious of possessing it?' What a peculiar property is that of which, though so invaluable—nay, on which the whole efficacy of the Christian ministry depends—a man has no positive evidence to show whether he ever had it or not! which, if ever conferred, was conferred without his knowledge; and which, if it could be taken away, would still leave him ignorant, not only when, where, and how the theft was committed, but whether it had ever been committed or not! The sympathising friend might probably remind him, that as he was not sure he had ever had it, so *perhaps* he still had it without knowing it. '*Perhaps!*' he would reply, 'but it is certainty I want.' 'Well,' it might be said, 'Mr. Gladstone assures you, that, on the most moderate computation, your chances are as 8,000 to 1 that you have it.' 'Pish!' the distracted man would exclaim, 'What does Mr. Gladstone know about the matter?' And truly to *that* query we know not well what answer the friend could make."

It thus appears that there is no historical evidence for the succession; and that no man can be certain that he is a presbyter or priest upon this theory. This baseless theory is that upon which wretched men, travelling to the bar of God and the retributions of eternity, are invited to rest their hope of salvation, instead of resting it upon Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners, freely offered to them in the gospel! Blessed is he, who can say, in spite of all the cavilling Pharisees, cavilling about

the uncanonical method of his salvation—"One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see!" Blessed be he who gets his healing directly from the great Physician, without the manipulations of those who sit, or imagine that they sit, in Moses' seat! No wonder that the world is infidel when *such* a doctrine, without evidence and against all evidence, is preached to them. A man must denude himself of his rational nature before he can believe it.

The doctrine was invented, not for the glorifying of Christ, but for the glorifying of the *clergy*. Great is the contrast between the apostles and their pretended successors. "The former are intent, almost exclusively intent, on those great themes which render the gospel 'glad tidings'; the latter, almost as exclusively, in magnifying their office. The former absolutely forget themselves in their flocks; the latter well nigh forget their flocks in themselves. The former, if they touch on the clerical office at all, are principally intent on its spiritual qualifications and duties; the latter on its prerogatives and powers. To hear these men talk, one would imagine that, by a similar *ἵσπερον πρότερον*, with that of the simple-minded monk, who 'devoutly thanked God that in his wisdom he had always placed large rivers near large towns,' they supposed the Church of Christ to be created for the sole use of the clergy; and the doctrine of 'apostolical succession' to be the *final cause* of Christianity." (*Edinburgh Review*, April 1843, P. 292.)

The whole system to which this doctrine belongs is a tedious substitute for Christianity, whose chief glory is its spiritual and moral character. It substitutes "for a worship founded on intelligent faith, a devotion which is a species of mechanism, and rites which operate as by magic. The doctrine of apostolical succession itself is neither more nor less respectable than that of the hereditary sanctity of the Brahminical caste; while the prayer-mills of the Tartars afford a fair illustration of the doctrine of sacramental efficacy." It is sheer heathenism.

What is Christianity if it be not a method of salvation through Jesus Christ, to be received through faith? Justification by faith alone is its fundamental article; the "*articulus stantis aut*

cadentis ecclesiæ." What is heathenism but the attempt to appease an angry God by human works, or by human ordinances efficacious *ex opere operato*? The system to which the apostolical succession belongs, can never consist with the doctrine of justification by faith alone in Jesus Christ. The preaching of this latter doctrine led Luther, necessarily, to a rejection of the Papal theory of the Church and the priesthood; and it was because the Papal priests saw that *their craft was in danger* from the preaching of this doctrine, that they set themselves so resolutely to overthrow it. If a sinner can lay hold on Christ freely offered to him in the gospel, and obtain the forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God; if he can have immediate access to Christ, the great High Priest over the house of God, and can "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," what need for an earthly priesthood and its sacramental magic? *Hinc illæ lacrymæ.* The priests had no tears to shed over the damage done to holiness by the doctrine of the Reformers. They would have been "crocodile tears," indeed, if shed by such men, men who had become notorious and infamous all over Europe for their immorality.* No! they knew that their power over men's souls, bodies and estates was gone, if this doctrine came to be believed.

We add something on the doctrine of succession as held by some in the Church of England, and in the Protestant Episcopal Church in America. 1. If these people have any "succession,"

*As to the *moral* complexion of Papal Councils, and specially of the Trent Council, the following words of a nervous writer, who was a perfect master of the Papal History, cannot be considered too strong: "Beleaguered by strumpets, beset with fiddlers and buffoons, cursing God's truth, and leaving tracks strewed with bastards and dead men's bones! *Holy* Councils; and above all, of Trent! Which by the amazing wrath of God, cursed with judicial blindness and seared consciences, did gather into one vast monument, those scattered proofs which covered the long track of ages, and those errors and corruptions bred in the slime and filth of the whole apostasy; and reared them up, with patient and laborious vice, through eighteen years of God's long-suffering, the final landmark, the last limit of his endurance with this great, bloody and drunken Babylon." (*Spirit of Nineteenth Century*, 1842, p. 254.)

they have derived it from the Church of Rome; and as the succession in Rome has been shown to be a grand imposture, from the Sacred Scriptures, reason and history, and Rome, could give no better *orders* than she had herself—of course the succession in the Church of England is an imposture also. 2. The imposture is not grand in the last case, for the simple reason that all that makes the figment worth asserting or defending has been given up, to wit., the priestly character and the sacrifice. It is the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet left out. Without the assertion of some sacramental virtue imparted by the Bishop's hands to the presbyter, and some sacramental virtue imparted by the priests' manipulations to the laity, the pretence to the apostolical succession is of all pretences the emptiest and the silliest. Hence we find that a revival of zeal for this dogma is generally followed very soon by the doctrine of sacramental grace. There is a necessary connection between the two, and they cannot long be separated. 3. We may be excused from believing the doctrine as held by Anglicans and their American imitators, so long as they show so little faith in it themselves. If they believed it, they could not help seeing that they are what Rome pronounces them to be, *schismatics*, and in no better condition than us poor "dissenters." Let them show their faith by their works, and we shall be more disposed to consider their pretensions. 4. The advocates of this dogma in the Church of England, would do well to prove that the Church they belong to is a Church at all. According to Rome, a bishop who is made so by the appointment of the *civil magistrate* has a very doubtful claim to the title. In the thoroughly Erastian establishment of England, the whole constitution of the Church is the work of the State, and the people even pray by "Act of Parliament." The sacramental virtue, which makes bishops and priests, comes at the suggestion, at least, of the civil ministry. This accounts for the total absence of discipline in that Church. It is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to get rid of a bishop who avows himself an infidel. It is not a very broad caricature of the "Comedy of Convocation," to represent that venerable body as debating the question, whether a member of the Church of

England may deny the existence of God, without losing his standing as a member. 5. This doctrine is not taught in the formularies of the Church of England, nor is it held by very many of her best ministers and her highest ornaments. Chillingworth certainly did not hold it, and yet he had for his "God-father," no less a man than William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, by whose influence, in great measure, the strayed son was brought back from the fold of Rome into the Church of England again. Bishop Butler, we imagine, did not hold it. It would have been odd, indeed, if such a thinker as the author of the "Analogy" had believed such a conglomeration of absurdities; more especially as he had been baptized and brought up in a Presbyterian fold. Archbishop Whately not only did not believe it, but showed clearly, in his *Essays on the Kingdom of Christ*, that the thing is absurd. "There is not," says he, "in all Christendom a minister who is able to trace up, with any approach to certainty, his own spiritual pedigree." The fathers and founders of the Church of England did not believe it, as has been proved against the writers of the Oxford Tracts. How *could* men believe it, who had so clear a view of the *only* priesthood and the *only* sacrifice of Christ? men, who were asking the advice, continually, of Calvin and other Presbyterians of the Continent? No! the really great men of the Anglican Church, whose worth was real and conspicuous, had no need of insisting upon a sacramental virtue which is invisible, intangible, inoperative, manifesting itself to no power of perception either of the body or mind; which, if a man has, he is none better; which, if he has not, he is none the worse.