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Review of the "Doctrines of
the church vindicated from

REVIEW

OF THE

“DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH”

“VINDICATED FROM THE MISREPRESENTATIONS OF”

“DR. JOHN RICE;”

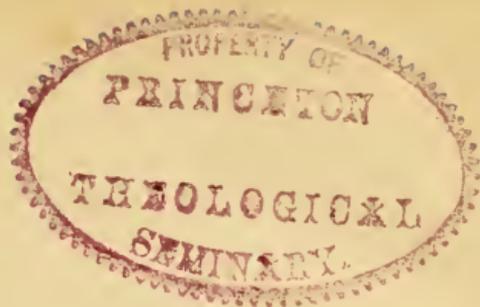
“AND THE INTEGRITY OF REVEALED RELIGION DEFENDED AGAINST
THE ‘NO COMMENT PRINCIPLE’ OF PROMISCUOUS BIBLE SOCIETIES:
BY THE RIGHT REV'D JOHN S. RAVENSCROFT, D.D.
BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF NORTH-CAROLINA.”

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE
Literary and Evangelical Magazine.

RICHMOND, VA.

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NOTICE.

The following sheets were first printed in numbers in the Literary and Evangelical Magazine.

They were composed in the *odd ends and corners of time* saved from a most laborious employment.

They were printed at a distance from the residence of the writer, so that he had no opportunity of reading the proofs.

The work grew on the author's hands much beyond his expectation or intention.

This statement will account for the repetitions which occasionally appear in the work; for the imperfections of style; the numerous typographical inaccuracies which deform it; and for the omission of some topics, the discussion of which was promised.

ERRATA.

- Page 5, line 13 from bottom erase the commas after *is* and *doubt*.
- 22, line 5 from bottom, for ! insert a period.
- 23, line 10, read *Being divinely inspired, &c.*
- ib.* line 22, after *error* insert *only*.
- 34, line 1, after *dust* insert : instead of ,
- 42, line 12 from bottom for, *the same* read *one*.
- 44, line 5 from bottom, insert a comma after *society*.
- 47, line 3, for *Lyn* read *Syn*.
- 50, line 5 from bottom for *was* read *is*.
- 53, lines 32 and 33, for *right* read *rite*. *Ceremony* is a better word.
- 67, line 21, for *work* read *it*.
- 73, line 20, for *began* read *begun*.
- 74, line 8 from bottom, for *suggested* read *suggestion*.
- 77, lines 12 and 2 from bottom, for *ordinary* read *ordaining*.
- ib.* NOTE 3d line, for *anglicised* read *anglicised*.
- 89, line 16, for *a church*, read *the church*.
- 90, line 16, for *Griesback* read *Griesbach*.
- 102, line 11 from bottom, for *Cotebr* read *Coteler*
- 103, line 16, for *by* read *of*.
- ib.* line 19, for *bishops—presbyters*, read *bishop-presbyters*.
- 107, line 20, for *came*, read *come*.
- 111, line 7, for *puris*, read *pares*.
- ib.* line 14, after *heathenism* insert :
- 113, line 26, for *dispositiones dominicæ*, read *dispositionis dominicæ*.
- Page 118, line 8 from bottom, for *Jona*, read *Iona*.
- 118, line 15, for *Ardan*, read *Aidan*.
- 122, line 17 from bottom, put a comma after 4, instead of a period.
- 126, line 18, for *business* read *bishops*.
- 128, line 26, for *Redley* read *Ridley*.
- 138, line 10 from bottom, for *deriving* read *derives*.
- 139, line 11, after *Bible*, insert *even*.
- 145, line 1, for *These* read *There*.
- 146, line 21, for *an additional reason*, read *a reason additional*.
- 147, line 18 from bottom, for *be*, read *lie*.
- 165, line 10, for *illa lachryma*, read *illæ lachrymæ*.
- 167, line 9, insert a mark of quotation after *death*.
- 180, line 5, for *sactarum* read *sanc-tarum*.
- ib.* line 9, insert ? after *church*.
- ib.* line 17, insert a mark of quotation after *approbations*.
- 187, line 21 from bottom, for *state* read *statement*.
- ib.* line 6 do. do. for *Lirensis* read *Lirinensis*.
- 188, line 13 do. do. for *undetermined* read *indeterminate*.
- 189, line 8, for *on* read *or*.
- 191, line 2 from bottom, after *point* insert :
- ib.* line 1 from bottom, after *decision*, place a comma.
- 194, line 20, for *charges* read *changes*.
- 203, line 14 from bottom, for *The naked*, read *When the naked, &c.*



REVIEW

OF

The Doctrines of the Church Vindicated, &c.

THIS is probably the most polemic title page that has been printed for the last hundred years. We certainly have seen nothing like it in modern times. As critics, we are obliged to say that it is in very bad taste; and as Christians, we cannot but add, that it breathes a bad spirit. Justice, too, compels us to remark, that the whole work is of a piece with the title. We have never, in all our reading, seen an example of more perfect conformity to the critical rule of Horace, than has been given by this author;

—————
Servetur ad imum

Qualis ab incepto processerit, et sibi constet.

It is indeed a rare instance of perfect consistency; the more to be admired, because the whole work is at variance with the spirit which ought to govern a christian polemic, and possesses a character of mind and heart which ought not to be impressed on any thing by a bishop of the church. Evidently the writer was angry. And when we first glanced at the title page, we could not help exclaiming "*Ira, brevis furor est!*" But on looking through the book, and perceiving the same spirit pervading the whole, it occurred to us, and the thought really excited compassion, that the *paroxysm* must have continued a surprising length of time—through the writing and printing of one hundred and sixty-six octavo pages! The book puts us in mind of a dinner made by a man of foreign garb and accent, by whom it was our fortune to sit not long ago at table, on board a steam-boat. He first called for fish, and sprinkled on it at least two teaspoonfuls of Cayenne pepper! After eating this, he asked for roast beef, and seasoned his slice with an equal quantity of Cayenne pepper!! He then took salad, and it was Cayenne pepper again!!! So of this book; but with this difference; the traveller employed the pepper for his own use; but this fiery preparation is made for us. We, however, must beg to be excused. We certainly "will take none of it!" And we would have our readers to understand that by a process, now through long use familiar, we can as critics, separate from a work every thing personally offensive, and touch only on that which concerns the public. We have thrown bishop R's work into our alembic, and shall in due time take out all the parts which it is important others should "handle and taste," and serve them up in a style, which we fondly hope every body will approve.

We have made these remarks for the purpose of shewing that we are in perfect good humour, and so shall continue during the whole of this process. If others forget themselves, it is not for us to fol-

low their example. We know too well both the pleasure and advantage of keeping cool, to allow ourselves to grow warm.

The bishop, however, has placed us in a delicate situation. His intemperate language merits rebuke. He has offended the public taste, and has set an example of conducting religious controversy, which ought not to be imitated. The critics are bound to set him up as a warning for others. But should we do this with the best temper in the world, prejudiced men of all sorts, will cry out against us, as cherishing personal resentments; and many will be glad of the opportunity of saying "See how these Theologians hate one another."—Now we hate nobody; we are angry with nobody; and we are very desirous that none may *commit sin* by saying of us *what is not true*. We fully purpose, therefore, as far as possible, to shun even the appearance of evil. Yet we earnestly wish to make bishop R. feel that he ought to have been more "courteous," more urbane and gentle.

For this purpose we will ask him to recal to recollection the language which he has applied to us, and then make the following suppositions: 1. That he and his Reviewer, instead of being clergymen, were *members of Congress*, or *officers of government*, who profess to be regulated by that wretched system called the *code of honour*; what would men of the same stamp say that the Reviewer must do, or be forever disgraced? 2. Let it be supposed that the Bishop and the Reviewer were plain citizens, who submit to the laws, and seek redress of their wrongs from the justice of their country; how could the Reviewer do any thing but vindicate his character in a civil court? Yet both Bishop and Reviewer *are clergymen*, and recourse to such measures would cover them with everlasting reproach: both are obliged to adopt the maxim of the admirable Cowper, expressed in the following lines,

A pious, sensible and well-bred man,
Will not insult me, and no other can.

The Right Rev. Dr Ravenscroft knows this; and, therefore, we are sorry to have to say, he ought not to employ language, which, according to common usage, is regarded as insulting and abusive.

If these remarks are not sufficient for the purposes of salutary reproof, we must refer to the scriptures. And we do here most earnestly entreat *the bishop* to compare the terms which he has permitted himself to use in reference to his Reviewer, with the character which a *bishop* ought to sustain, and the conduct he ought to pursue, according to the judgment of the Apostle Paul. "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, *sober*,* of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, *not given to wine*,† no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but *patient*, not a *brawler*, not covetous, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity: (for if a man know not

* *Σωφρων* the word here used, means one who has all the thoughts, desires and passions well regulated and restrained.

† *† παρηνος*, has been rendered, ready to quarrel and offer wrong, as one in wine.

how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." 1 Tim. iii, 2—7. Again the same holy Apostle says, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." 2 Tim. ii, 24, 25. Hear, also, what he saith in the epistle to Titus, "for this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain ELDERS in every city, as I appointed thee; if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot or unruly: for a bishop must be blameless as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre, &c." Tit. i, 5—7.

We are as far as possible from blaming any one for earnestly contending for what he believes to be the faith and order of the gospel. On the contrary, if he fails to do this, he fails in his duty. But it is mournful to see one, who is clothed with the sacred name of Christ's ambassador, and raised to an exalted station in the church forgetting the dignity of his high calling, the proprieties of his office, the gentleness of spirit which peculiarly becomes him; and using reproachful epithets, uttering bitter words, and displaying violent passion. The public good requires that he should be told of his fault, frankly yet mildly; and warned not to repeat it. If bishop R. had been a Presbyterian, there would be much less occasion for our taking this trouble; because we do conscientiously believe, that such a book as he has written would have called forth admonitions from his Presbytery, fully sufficient for all salutary purposes.

So far in discharge of our duty to the public—One word as to the personal concerns of the Reviewer. Bishop Ravenscroft says of himself "You have mistaken your man." He might have saved himself the trouble of saying this; we were fully convinced of it, before he told us. Formerly, with a sincerity, which obtained no credit from all those *who were incapable of entering into our feelings*, we expressed a warm fraternal affection for him as a christian and a minister. This brotherly love was rejected with a scorn and derision, which, it is, no doubt, thought become a *high churchman*. We know that, commonly, despised love turns to hatred. But we do most solemnly protest that it is not so with us. The only effects of the conviction that we *had* mistaken our man were, first, the surprise natural to all on the occurrence of an unexpected event; then *pity*; and finally *sorrow*. We do sincerely pity any man in this world, who *easily gets warm, and has a great capacity for retaining heat*. He cannot be happy. We are sorry, when the high passions and intemperate language of a christian minister injure the cause of religion.—It is very probable that this modification of our affection will be rejected with higher scorn than ever. We cannot help it—the result will be, that our pity will be rendered the more profound, our sorrow the more pungent. As far as experience goes;

we are warranted too in saying that it will cause us much more frequently than ever, in our secret addresses to the throne of grace, to think of a prayer which cannot but be familiar to bishop Ravenscroft. This prayer so exactly expresses our feelings on the present occasion that we must beg leave to quote it. "Almighty and everlasting God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift, send down upon our bishops and other clergy, and upon the congregations committed to their charge, the healthful spirit of thy grace; and that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing: Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our Advocate and Mediator Jesus Christ. Amen."—And here the Reviewer ventures to say, but with no boastful spirit, to bishop R. and all who think with him, "*You have mistaken your man*"—As far as he is personally concerned, it is his policy to *live down* reproaches. No bitterness of language will provoke him to return railing for railing: by the grace of God nothing shall prevent him from acknowledging as brethren all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, cherishing towards them fraternal affection, and rejoicing in their gifts and graces. No man shall deprive him of the pleasure he enjoys while praying for the blessing of God on them and their labours, and entertaining the hope that he will enjoy everlasting communion with them in a better world. The Reviewer, on deliberate examination, has his preferences in regard to religious connexions. He might have been an Episcopalian; he was free to choose his denomination. One thing which had no small influence in determining him to be a Presbyterian was, the following passages in their book called "*The Confession of Faith*."

"All saints that are united to Jesus Christ their head, by his Spirit and by faith, have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection and glory: and, *being united to one another in love, they have communion in each others gifts and graces*, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do conduce to their mutual good, both in the inward and the outward man."—"Saints by profession, are bound to maintain a *holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God*, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things according to their several abilities and necessities. *Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended to all those, who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Again; the Presbyterian church has solemnly and publicly declared their belief "that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ: and in all these they think it the duty, both of private christians and societies, to exercise mutual forbearance towards each other." Here is a truly liberal, that is a truly christian spirit. The Reviewer in his various inquiries sought in vain for such maxims in the acknowledged standards of any other denomination: and this, in part, was the reason why he preferred the Presbyterian Church to all others. His purpose is to act consistently with this ground of preference. But in doing this, it will always be his duty to oppose those arrogant claims, and exclusive

pretensions, which, in pursuit of a hopeless uniformity, break up the fellowship of Christians, prevent their co-operation, and place stumbling blocks in the way of others.

The Reviewer is ashamed of having said thus much of himself. But he is now done. He wishes that his real design, and the true objects of the present controversy may be clearly understood. And for this purpose he feels it to be his duty to add to what has been already said, a few historical remarks; which will not only serve the present occasion, but also stand in place of an answer to many causeless reflections thrown out by the right reverend author in the book before us.

It is well known that while Virginia was a British Colony, the Church of England was by law established among us. We do not blame the present Episcopal Church for the conduct of the establishment; but we see no reason why historical truth should be concealed out of tenderness to our contemporaries. The overbearing and monopolizing spirit of all establishments was manifested in this colony. It will always be so, when interests, which ought to be purely spiritual, receive a secular character. The clergy were generally worldly men. For the most part they were foreign adventurers, whose language to their patrons in England was, "Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices, that I may eat a piece of bread." But when they came here and got into fat livings, they ate and drank, hunted and played with the *gentry* of the country; they married the people, christened their children, and buried the dead: but the peculiar doctrines of the gospel were not preached, and by many among them were not believed. We with pleasure admit that there were honourable exceptions, but we give the general character of the established clergy as known to many who yet survive.

Men whose care of the flock, to borrow an expression from one of themselves, was always manifest at *shearing time*, could not with any patience witness the coming in of *Dissenters* to lead the people off from the parish church. This *intrusion* did not indeed lessen the salary of the clergy; but it exhibited their indolence and worldly spirit in a very odious light. The consequence was, that no class of *Dissenters* escaped persecution. A Presbyterian clergyman, who for a long series of years, was regarded as one of the lights of the country, and an ornament of the city in which he lived (the late venerable Dr Rodgers, of New York) was compelled to leave the colony. *Dissenters* of other denominations experienced treatment, sometimes more harsh than this.

But about eighty years ago, a train of remarkable providences, brought into the colony of Virginia, the Rev. Samuel Davies, a man who would have done honour to any church in any age. The establishment was then in its vigour; and it required all the talents of Davies to convince the *ruling powers* that the *Act of Toleration* extended to this country. The energy of that distinguished man, however, succeeded in securing the protection of the law to the Presbyterian church, which was then organized in the colony. The progress of this society in Virginia in later times has been so slow,

that one can scarcely believe the accounts of its rapid growth in the days of Davies and his compeers. The reasons of this increase may be found in the character of the men who were employed as instruments, their fervent zeal, their *perfect union and co-operation*, their indefatigable industry; and in the facts, that many of the original settlers of the state were Presbyterians in principle, and that numbers in the established church were dissatisfied with the conduct of the clergy.

One of the measures resorted to at the time, to stop the progress of dissent was the cry that Dissenters had no right to preach and administer the ordinances. This gave occasion to the only publications of a controversial character made by the Presbyterians while they were Dissenters. On one or two occasions, when ministers were to be ordained, Davies vindicated the validity of Presbyterianial ordination, and published his sermons for the information of the people. He, however, carefully abstained from attacking the Episcopalians; but acted entirely on the defensive. We have reason to believe that the pulpits of the established church rung with the cry of war against these intruders, but the Presbyterians content with the defence which had been made, remained on this head entirely silent.

Affairs went on in this way, until the Revolution broke down the established church. In this case the Presbyterians showed no indecent triumph at her fall, no glorying over her in her ruin. The principles of religious liberty, however, which were then established, being perfectly coincident with those held by the whole body of Presbyterians in this country, were regarded as in the highest degree auspicious to the true interests of religion; and the members of that denomination were perfectly satisfied. Without interfering in any way with others, they proceeded to preach the gospel, and, by promoting sound learning and true morality as they could, to discharge the duty of good citizens, expressing their obligations to society for peace and protection, by contributing their share to the common welfare.

It deserves to be distinctly remarked, *that it has uniformly been a principle with that society NOT TO SEEK FOR PROSELYTES.* If an indiscreet individual has disregarded this principle, we are prepared to challenge, and we boldly do challenge proof to contradict our general remark. We have carefully perused the records of the Church in this state from the organization of the Presbytery of Hanover until the present day, and are convinced that they fully bear out our assertion. The Presbyterians receive those who apply, if on examination they are approved; *but they solicit none.* Their conduct towards other denominations has been marked by extreme liberality. They acknowledge brotherhood with all who hold the fundamental doctrines of Christianity; they commune with them, and receive them into communion, while they ask none to give up their distinctive names, or leave their church connexions. Many Episcopalians can bear witness to the truth of this statement, and know that for years, while deprived of the privileges of their own church, they have participated in all the advantages which

Presbyterians can afford to their own members. This course of conduct, united with the natural influence of our free institutions, did much to soften down and nearly eradicate old prejudices. A few years ago, it was not uncommon to see Presbyterians and Episcopalians at the same communion table, and their ministers in the same pulpit. No one ever expected, or, as far as we know, even wished that the churches should be amalgamated; but the hope was entertained that their ministers and members would live together as brethren, in the habitual interchange of christian kindness.

This view of things shows why the Presbyterians have forborne to press their peculiar sentiments; and explains the reason why the people of the South have never as far as Presbyterians are concerned in the thing, been made acquainted with the Episcopal controversy. Bishop R. seems to reproach us with this fact: whereas we have thought, and we still presume to think, that here is a proof of our exemplary moderation. It would have been easy for us to have made an attack, and gained the victory, when there was none to oppose us. But the Presbyterians are above a warfare of this kind, as they are above a narrow, sectarian, proselyte-hunting spirit.

Not to indulge, however, in remarks of this kind, we proceed to observe that while the hopes before mentioned were entertained, some of the most warm hearted and sanguine among the Presbyterians were meditating a plan of ministerial intercourse, to be adopted by the two societies. But in the midst of these projects, what is commonly called "A Revival of the Episcopal Church" took place.— This event was, to our certain knowledge, hailed with great joy by many Presbyterians. They were delighted, they were thankful to see, rising up in a sister church, men of liberal zeal and enlightened piety, who, it was hoped, would co-operate with them in supplying the spiritual wants of the southern country. It is a fact, which we are able to establish, that in some instances, distinguished Presbyterian clergymen, advised pious young men, who had numerous Episcopal connexions, to enter the ministry in the Episcopal, rather than in the Presbyterian church, on the ground that in this way they might perhaps be more useful. It was well known, too, that there is a sphere wide enough for the labours of all; and not the most distant apprehension was entertained of unfriendly collision, or unfraternal rivalry.

But unhappily, amidst these pleasing anticipations, by some means it began to be whispered about, in one private circle and another, that the Episcopal church is the only true church; that there is no validity in Presbyterianial ordination; and that Episcopalians ought not to acknowledge the truth and reality of their sacraments. These private hints and whispers took effect, and numbers, whom we had long welcomed to our ordinances, and with whom we delighted to hold communion, silently withdrew. To keep up appearances, however, christians of all denominations were invited to receive ordinances at the hands of Episcopal ministers: but *they* could not unite with others, "for that you know would be an acknowledgment of the validity of their ordination." Indeed, it soon

became manifest to every observer, that while there was not courage to avow exclusive claims and pretensions, there was a secret agency, the object of which was to spread the opinion, that the Presbyterian church is not a church of Christ. It was not difficult for those who chose it, to trace this under-ground work to the very commencement.

This sort of attack, often spoken of under the name of "bush fighting" called forth two publications, the sole object of which was to show the validity of Presbyterian order and administration; to prove that we are a branch of the Christian church; that our ministers ought to be received as ministers of the gospel; and that our brethren ought to esteem it as great a privilege to commune with us, as it was for us to commune with them. All intention of attacking any thing but *high-church principles* was solemnly disavowed; and a most earnest desire expressed of preserving "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Indeed the hope was cherished, that, without much effort, the *spirit of the age* would put down arrogance and bigotry; and that they who were raising anew the old cry "*the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are WE,*" would be obliged for their own sakes to hold their peace.

But in the midst of these things, Dr Ravenscroft, who had for some time been uneasy under the prudential restraints which were laid on him, was chosen and consecrated Bishop of the diocese of North Carolina. This afforded him an opportunity, which he was not slow to embrace, of declaring his sentiments as a high churchman. In a farewell sermon delivered to the people of his former charge; and in a discourse pronounced at the first meeting of the convention of his diocese, after his induction, he expressed sorrow for his former tenderness towards Dissenters, and openly maintained that there is no true church but the Episcopal; that hers is the only authorized ministry; that her sacraments are the only seals of God's covenanted mercies; and that separated from her communion, we have no warranted hopes of salvation.

Had these sermons been only preached to the people and clergy of his own connexion, we should have remained entirely silent. But they were printed and put into circulation, evidently with the intention of propagating the sentiments of the author. Of this however, we do not complain. The press is free: discussion ought to be unshackled. Every man, under his responsibility to the law of the land, and to the great tribunal of public opinion, has a right to publish what he pleases. This is our right and we mean to exercise it: but not causelessly, much less wantonly. And we have made the preceding statement for the purpose of showing that we had *grave* reasons for the course pursued by us.

Bishop R. had, in his own peculiar manner, attacked truths and principles, which we conscientiously regard as highly important. He boldly attempted to cut asunder ties which had, for some years, been drawing together christians of different denominations, and to break up totally a communion which many had found to be profitable and pleasant. He taught men to place a value on matters of minor importance, which ought only to be given to things essential

to salvation. He created incurable divisions, where men ought to agree to differ; and in our deliberate opinion did much to fix deeper in the church the old reproach, which it is the endeavour of the present day to wipe off. We felt it our duty to animadvert on these sermons in such style as we thought they deserved.

It was indeed the opinion of some, that we had undertaken a work of gratuitous labour and trouble; that the extravagant pretensions of bishop R. might be left to sink at once into the oblivion to which, it was believed, they are destined. We thought differently. It has for some time appeared obvious to us that there is growing up a spirit in this country, which seeks for marks of distinction between itself and the mass of the people. As Infidelity is out of fashion, and Unitarianism is not popular to the South, there is a great demand, among people of a certain sort, (to use a phrase current among all good cavaliers ever since the "merry days of King Charles,") for a "religion fit for a gentleman." There is, also, among many of our republicans, a passion for ceremony, for pomp and show in religious worship. Others, moreover, too indolent, too much devoted to the world, to secure scriptural evidences of their being in a state of salvation, are willing enough to look to their priests for assurance. High-church notions, then, do not sink under the influence of public opinion. It is necessary to make efforts to pull them down. The interests of the church and of the country require it. Under this conviction, we acted according to our sense of duty; and endeavoured to show that the claims of this bishop could not be sustained either by reason or Scripture.

Not long after we had performed this humble, but easy service, it was understood that bishop R. on being invited to preach a sermon for the benefit of the Bible Society of North Carolina, accepted the invitation, and made a direct attack on the fundamental principles of that institution. This extraordinary proceeding would have been left to the animadversions of the particular friends of the Bible Society of North Carolina, (who, by the way, have shown themselves fully able to do their own work) had not the sermon been published and distributed among us. It attacks principles, dear to the friends of all Bible Societies, and to every consistent Protestant throughout the world. We again felt as though we were called on to bring the Bishop under review, and point out the error of his opinions. And this the more, because he seemed to be going systematically to work in support of high church principles. This became apparent, when he published his *Sermon on the Interpretation of Scripture*. This completed the development of his scheme. And if we understand it at all, it amounts to this.

1. *As to the Church of Christ*: This is the Episcopal Church, and no other. They who are separated from it are schismatics, guilty of grievous sin, and without authorized hope of salvation.

2. *As to the Ministry of the Gospel*: It is really a Priesthood divinely appointed to offer sacred things to God; an authoritative agency between man and his Maker, empowered by the administration of the Sacraments to give assurance of the pardon of sin and

eternal life. But all who are not Episcopally ordained, are intruders into the sacred office ; mere wolves in sheep's clothing.

3. *As to the Scriptures* : They are insufficient of themselves, and ought not to be circulated among the people "without note or comment ;" but by all means be accompanied with that interpretation, which the church, in every age, has agreed to give as the true interpretation.

This scheme we regard as untrue and dangerous ; derogatory to the honour of the gospel, and injurious to the best interests both of the Church of Christ and of civil society. Again, therefore, our reviewer shewed a determination that the bishop's writings should not long go "without notes and comments." This laudable resolution was adopted from an earnest desire that the public might form a just opinion on the true character of his principles. Our comments were made in terms frank and familiar ; but, we make bold to say, gentlemanly and christian. We cannot descend to the use of any other : we cannot forget what belongs to the honour of the Christian name, and the dignity of the Christian ministry. But while many thought that we had treated the vehement denunciations, and arrogant claims of the Bishop of North Carolina with too much mildness and courtesy, that right reverend Doctor seemed to think that we had been speaking "evil of dignities, and were audaciously free and bold with prelates of the church ; and in the resolution to give us a sound Episcopal castigation, he wrote the *extraordinary* book, of which the *extraordinary* title is given at the head of this article.

Our first purpose on glancing at this title page was to go no further. We had no inclination to make ourselves familiar with the *interior* of a building which hung out such a *sign* at the door. But it was told us that some were praising the book in high terms, and pronouncing it unanswerable. This induced us to look farther : and we found that the author, besides many other things which have no bearing on the great subject of controversy, in the vehemence of his spirit, pushes his extravagant claims even farther than before. We have therefore compelled ourselves to undertake the unpleasant task of reviewing this work also : not, we solemnly declare from personal feelings or private motives, but solely with a view to public interests.

But we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we design to pursue the uniform policy of that church, of which we have the honour to be members. We make no attack on Episcopalians. Many of them are our highly esteemed friends. We regard the evangelical ministers of that communion as brethren. On all that belong to it we can say from the heart, "Grace, mercy and peace be multiplied." Let them take that course to heaven, which affords them the best helps and the greatest comforts—and the blessing of our common Father and Lord be on them.

All this, however, under the full conviction that the Episcopal Church may be fairly separated from high-church pretensions. If, however, we have mistaken the case ; and this thing cannot be ; then we are prepared to maintain that the prevalence of that church in this country is far, very far from being desirable. It is, never-

theless, our deliberate opinion, that, while these obnoxious principles may creep into any Society, they may be kept apart from all really Protestant communions; and that it is the duty of every one to cause the separation to be made as soon as possible, whenever the deleterious mixture takes place.

We feel the more bound to make these remarks, because bishop R. has thought fit to say that we have attacked the Episcopal church, misrepresented her doctrines, and attempted to excite political odium against her members. Now the Reviewer never entertained such a thought or purpose in his life. By no possibility can it be shown that he has done this thing, unless it can be shown that the *principles of the Episcopal church*, and *high-church principles* are identical. When convinced of this, he will acknowledge the charge. The Reviewer then affirms constantly that his assault has been made *not on Episcopalians* but on *high-church principles*. He endeavoured to bring odium on them, because he thinks them odious: to discredit them, because he believes them pernicious both to church and state. He is conscientiously their determined enemy; and will, by the help of God, to the latest day of his life carry on a warfare against them, whatever name they may assume, whatever guise they may wear. But this, so far from being hostile to any denomination of christians, is regarded by the Reviewer as one of the strongest proofs he can give of friendship for that christianity which is common to all. He ought to be believed then, when he declares that he is above personal enmity and selfish or party purposes. The liberal of every name will believe him. Bigots can no more conceive of his feelings, than the "lean, lanksided miser," who makes mammon his God, can conceive of the feelings of the man who finds "that it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Our views and purposes respecting the whole matter between bishop R. and the Reviewer, may be very briefly expressed. The New Testament contains the *constitutional principles* of the church: it is the *charter* of our religious liberties. *The Reviewer DOES NOT LIKE THE CONSTRUCTION PUT ON THE CONSTITUTION BY HIGH-CHURCHMEN.* It gives them a great deal more power than the letter, or true spirit of the instrument conveys. It is an usurpation which has done infinite mischief to the world. Bishop R.'s mode of interpreting the charter, makes use of the *dicta* of corrupt men for sanctioning abuses which crept in under their administration. This whole evil must be exposed; and it *shall* be exposed, notwithstanding all the reproaches which anger and bigotry can heap on their objects. The exposition however shall be made calmly, kindly, firmly. It will be time enough to boast, however, of the book before us, when it shall appear that any thing is left unanswered, besides bitter words and hard sayings. In this field—or quagmire, rather—the Reviewer freely acknowledges that he is vanquished—*They who glory in the triumph, may crown the victor!*

It may be as well here as any where else to notice an undeserved compliment given by bishop R. to his Reviewer. "It is well known," says he, (pa. 30.) "that you are looked up to as the *Magnus Apollo* of the Southern Presbyterian interest, and that the

direction given to the opinion of the readers of your Magazine, is implicitly followed. If the spring then be poisoned at its fountain, what must be the desolation of its meanders?" It seems to be a pity to spoil this pretty mixture of figures by disclaiming entirely both the honour and the responsibility here heaped on the Reviewer. We are not surprised however, at the bishop's ignorance of the Presbyterian church. There are only two errors in this extract, which we think it of importance to correct. 1. The Reviewer so far from being the *Magnus Apollo* of Southern Presbyterians, is no *Apollo* at all. He is an humble member of an association of men, at the feet of many of whom he counts it a privilege, when the opportunity is offered, to sit as a learner, while he rejoices in the superiority of their gifts and graces. Let not the bishop lay "the flattering unction to his soul," that should he succeed in totally demolishing the Reviewer, his warfare will then be accomplished.— There are in our Israel mighty men, like those round about David, as recorded in 2 Sam. xxiii, and among the least of these is the Reviewer.

2. But secondly, the right reverend prelate of North Carolina needs to be informed that *Presbyterians* have never been given to the exercise of implicit faith in any being but God Almighty. Their principles; their whole religious training from infancy to manhood; their religious discipline in all its parts, are utterly at war with this submission of the understanding. And when bishop R. has the *happiness* of knowing them as well as we do, he will have found out that they are a hard people to manage; and indeed that it is scarcely possible to do any thing with them, unless by solid reasons one convinces their understanding. In fact they are too independent and too conscientious, to be "calculating," and "united" men: and among them every one pursues pretty much his own course, and leaves it to others to pursue theirs.

It is our purpose, because we think it to be our duty, to enter pretty fully into the matters of difference between us and the right reverend John S. Ravenscroft, D.D. bishop of the diocese of North Carolina. But there are some preliminaries, which we wish our readers maturely to consider, and fully to understand, before we touch the main questions in this controversy. They lie at the foundation of a correct decision respecting the whole matter. They also show that the subject is one of great importance, involving our most valuable rights, and dearest interests. We shall therefore, without further preface or apology, proceed to treat them according to our views of their true character.

When Christianity was introduced into the world, it found, every where established by law, a religion opposed to its doctrine and discipline. The apostles and primitive christians were *Dissenters*, in the fullest sense of that term; and were treated both by Jews and Gentiles, as hardly as high churchmen have ever treated those who have borne the name in modern times. But no reproaches, no dangers, no sufferings moved them. With a firmness and fidelity worthy of everlasting remembrance, they taught the doctrine, and unfolded the principles of discipline, which they had learned

from their Master. The maxims which they received, and delivered to others, were such as these. "My kingdom is not of this world."—"But be ye not called Rabbi: for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even Christ."—"Neither as being Lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock," &c. The men left by them in the churches, had a large portion of their spirit. But corruption soon began to work among them. Changes from good to bad, and from bad to worse were introduced. A spirit of domination invaded the clergy. They sought eagerly for wealth and power, were but too successful in their efforts, and established a terrible despotism throughout the christian world. These are unquestioned facts; and we wish in the present number to assist our readers in tracing them to their proper causes. Unless they will take the trouble to do this, the most instructive portion of the history of man will afford its warnings in vain.

In accomplishing the object proposed, it is necessary to consider the nature of the religion taught by Christ. Without just views of this subject, we are continually in danger of being misled by the fierce and noisy declamation, the bold assertions, and artful sophisms of men, who wish to invest themselves with *official dignity*. And here we cannot help remarking, that there is no subject in relation to which men in general so easily suffer themselves to be imposed on, as that of religion. In some, there is an indolence and indifference, which allows any one who will soothe their ruling desire, to think for them. In others, there is a sort of enthusiasm or fanaticism, which offers a fine subject for the artful and designing to play on. And in all who have no fixed religious principles, there is a proneness to superstition, which at the proper time gives to the impostor a powerful hold on the mind. We do therefore think it of the highest importance, that all should have just views of the fundamental truths of the christian religion. It suits our purpose here only to lay down general principles.

True religion consists in just views of the attributes and government of Deity; and in feelings and conduct corresponding with those views. It, however, will always be modified by our knowledge of the character and condition of man, and of the purposes of divine justice and mercy in relation to him. This knowledge of God and man, of truth and duty, embodied in due form, constitutes a system of religion; and the sentiments, the feelings, the principles of action, formed by the system of truth, constitute vital and practical religion. Considered in this point of view, religion is founded in the nature of man. Veneration of what is august and majestic; awe of almighty power; love of excellence; gratitude towards a benefactor; a sense of weakness; the feeling of guilt; anxiety in relation to the future, are the elements, in human nature, of that complex feeling which we call religion.

The founder of christianity introduced a system in many important respects different from any that had ever been taught before.

It was indeed a filling up of the Jewish system ; but the additions made by him rendered necessary a very great change in the external form of the church. As a particular instance, the Jewish religion, in common with most others, had its altar and its priests. But christianity has neither. The proper notion of a priest is, that of a person appointed to make offerings to God, on behalf of the people. These offerings are of various kinds ; and among them we always find some of an expiatory character. But there is nothing of all this among the offices to be performed by the ministers of Christ's religion. In his dispensation, he is the only priest. *By one offering of himself, he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified.* Since his death there has been no priest of God's appointment.

Christianity, according to the teaching of Jesus Christ and his apostles, consists entirely in knowledge of the truth, in affections corresponding to the truth, and a course of conduct in accordance with these affections. It is a religion of knowledge and love : an homage of the heart ; a voluntary service. The church of Christ is from the nature of the case a voluntary association. It cannot be formed in any other way. Christ owns none as his people, but a "willing people." In the church then, as administered according to the law of Christ, there is no place for coercive power. It is impossible to make men christians, except by reason and conviction. Jesus Christ never thought of any other mode. Accordingly, the Society organized by him differs widely from the political associations of this world. And the institutions of the Saviour, were in conformity with the genius of his religion. The only means appointed by him for the promotion of this religion were affectionate teaching and persuasion. He sent out men, whose great business was to set truth before the people, and persuade them to embrace it. This is the most dignified and important work in the church ; the great object of the institution of the gospel ministry.

Ecclesiastical power, then, is quite another thing than high churchmen have supposed it to be. A church, we have said, is a voluntary association formed on the great principles of belief in the doctrines, and obedience to the law of Christ. The exercise of power is limited and regulated by those principles. The church is bound to receive all who profess faith and obedience ; the teachers instruct them more fully in the doctrines and duties of their religion, and persuade them to obey the commands of their Saviour. They have no influence but a moral influence ; no power but such as truth and love afford. And if this does not prevail, the church refuses any longer to acknowledge fellowship with the disobedient.

These are the great principles on which Jesus Christ founded his church. The obligation to be a member of it, respects the authority of God alone ; and the demand of the Almighty is on the will and the affections. " My son give me thy heart." The whole polity of the church, we repeat, is exactly adapted to its nature as a voluntary society. The principles of prudence and common sense which apply to the regulation of all similar associations, were adopted by the Head of the Church ; and such arrangements were made for the preservation of order, and the attainment of the great

objects in view, as commend themselves to the understanding of all men.

It is easy to see, that in a society such as this, there is but little room for the exercise of government, in the common acceptation of the term. Where the whole power is moral power, he, who most clearly and most affectionately, exhibits the truth, and lives the most exemplary life, exerts the greatest influence. So it was in the beginning. The first teachers of christianity did not subdue the world by blustering and vapouring about apostolical dignity, and diocesan authority ; but they won their way to the hearts of men by love.

It deserves to be remarked, however, that it suited the wise purposes of the Head of the Church gradually to unfold his system, and to appoint men, furnished with extraordinary gifts, to complete the work which he, in his wisdom, left unfinished. These men executed their commission with exemplary fidelity : and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, gave a body of written instructions, containing the whole will of their Lord respecting his church. This was intended to be the common rule for the direction of all, whether teachers or disciples.

The Apostles also left, in the various divisions of this great society, suitable persons as teachers of the new religion ; whose province it also was to preside over the affairs of the church, according to the true character of their office, and the rules given for the regulation of their conduct. The design plainly was to perpetuate the Association and preserve in purity the doctrines originally taught. This was the leading object of the appointment of church officers ; and he is most fit to be a minister of the gospel, who knows most of the doctrines of Christ, and has most of his spirit.

But while, from the very nature of the christian religion, it is expedient that there should be teachers, the Head of the Church never subjected the faith of his disciples to their spiritual instructors. This is put beyond all contradiction by the directions given in Scripture to the whole body of the faithful :—it is most evident too from the very nature of the case.

1. The directions given to the whole body of christians are such as these—“ Beloved, believe not every spirit ; but try the spirits whether they are of God ; because many false prophets are gone out into the world—Prove all things, hold fast that which is good—Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them—Now we command you, brethren ; in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition (doctrine) which ye received of us—And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.” Here is a clear acknowledgment of the right of private judgment ; and here the members of the church were required to distinguish between true and false teachers, between sound and corrupt doctrine. Such are the rights and duties of christians now. Before the Canon of Scripture was formed, the

Apostles themselves under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, furnished the standard of truth. But when they had committed the doctrine of Christ to writing, and delivered it in this form to the churches, then Scripture formed the standard; and by this unerring rule, all were to try the spirits, and detect false doctrine.

2. It appears from the very nature of the case that men must either judge for themselves, according to the Scriptures; or have an infallible human guide. If we should be persuaded by the very *ind, courtly and dignified* language of the right reverend doctor John S. Ravenscroft, to put ourselves under the direction of his holy apostolical church, will he answer for us in the day of judgment; will he, can he take our place at the dread tribunal? If not, what will be the consequence if we embrace false doctrine, and in conformity to it, live an unholy life? The church can err, for it has erred. Will the guilt be charged on the church, and favour be shown to us? Clearly every man must answer for himself before God; and therefore every man "must be fully persuaded in his own mind."

These were the principles of the primitive church. They were taught by the Apostles and received by their converts. The first ministers did not pretend that they held a higher office than that of *teachers*. And they were surrounded by a body of affectionate, contending disciples. There was no assumption of power or pre-eminence among them; there was no order of priesthood; no mysterious rites; no pretended charm in sacraments; no incomprehensible virtue in ordinances as administered by one particular class of men; but all was plain and intelligible. In a word, the church was a voluntary association organized in its simplest forms. And while it continued thus, christianity grew and flourished. Its moral influence was too mighty for philosophy, priestcraft, arbitrary power, and prevailing corruption combined. But in process of time there was a mournful change. "The abomination of desolation" was seen in the holy place. The ministers of christianity became proud, luxurious, and avaricious; and the church of Christ a theatre for the display of the most corrupt passions of the human heart. This sad change it is our painful duty to trace to its causes: our only consolation is that the work is full of important instruction.

We shall therefore proceed, in discharge of the duty which we have assigned ourselves, to notice some of the most striking and disastrous changes which were produced in the form and doctrine of the church. But there is one remark, which we previously offer to the most serious consideration of our readers. If religion is ever permitted to travel out of its proper sphere, and mingle with political concerns, one of two things is sure to happen; *either religion gains the ascendancy over the civil power, and there is erected a fearful ecclesiastical tyranny; or, the state is obliged, for the prevention of this evil, to purchase an alliance with the church, and take the ministers of religion into its pay, for the purpose of securing their subserviency.*

We wish to offer an additional observation: the only power, as we have said, that properly belongs to the church, is *moral power*:

it is the influence which the wise and good exert on their fellow men. This influence is greatest, where the community is enlightened and virtuous. But an ignorant population is always prone to superstition and fanaticism; and affords a full opportunity for the attainment and exercise of undue ecclesiastical power. Now religion has respect to the greatest of all beings, and the dearest of all interests; it therefore takes a most powerful hold on the human heart, and brings its uncontrolable energies to bear on all human concerns. Its influence is irresistible. It, however, deserves most serious consideration, that religion may be false as well as true; and that the power of the former, though far different in its effects, is as mighty as that of the latter. Superstition and fanaticism are the storms and tornadoes of the moral world, which mark their way with desolation and ruin. The unreasonable dread of supernatural beings may be as strong as filial fear of the deity: the cowardice of guilt, and the stings of remorse render men as prompt to submit to severe penances, as, under the dictates of an enlightened conscience, they are to discharge their duty to God and man.

According to these remarks, a faithful and enlightened ministry of the gospel always desires to promote learning and science among the people; while men of aspiring views and sinister motives, whose aim is to lord it over God's heritage, are well content that the people should remain incapable of judging for themselves. And it deserves to be remembered, that during the changeful periods which we are now about to bring under a brief review, the population of the Roman empire, and of the nations which grew out of it, was such as just suited the purposes of ambitious and worldly-minded men, whose great object was to raise the church above all other power, and accumulate in its coffers the wealth of the world.—They were ignorant of religion, and excessively superstitious, often mingling ferocious cruelty, ardent devotion, and unbounded generosity, in a manner truly strange and surprising. Among these people, such changes as the following were produced in a few centuries.

1. In the beginning the clergy were teachers of religion, surrounded by a body of affectionate disciples, who looked up to them for instruction. They had no influence or power but that derived from the humility, the benevolence, the purity of their character, and their superior knowledge of the religion which they taught. They pretended no personal authority; no dignity of rank or order; and claimed reverence only for the truth which they announced; and that, *not because they announced it, but because God had revealed it.* In a word they were officers in a voluntary association, chosen by the people to manage the affairs of the church, and responsible for their conduct.

But in process of time they came to be God's agents, deriving all their power from Him through their predecessors, and accountable to him alone. They alone were authorized to expound the truth; and men were obliged to believe it, because it came from them as God's ambassadors. The sacraments were seals of the truth, because they were administered by these *divinely authorized agents.*

Through *them alone* could men receive the assurance of forgiveness and of eternal life. They were empowered to transmit by imposition of their hands a *character*, which none could ever take away, and by which others could perform these same wonderful works. They assumed to be priests, and held themselves authorized by divine appointment to offer sacred things to God, on behalf of the people, which were acceptable to the divine majesty simply because thus offered. This was carried so far, that the virtue of any administration was made to depend on the intention of the priest. If he designed to administer a sacrament, it was a sacrament; otherwise not!

There was also a very great change in the temporal affairs of the ministers of religion. In the beginning, they were dependent on the voluntary contributions of the people for support; but in process of time they became rich: at first they looked, as all other citizens did, to the state for protection, and thought themselves happy when they escaped persecution; but afterwards they claimed exemption from civil authority, and often bearded the proudest rulers in their halls of state: while they retained the spirit of their master, they delighted to preach the gospel to the poor; but in after times, they sought to be counsellors and courtiers in royal palaces.

2. The *Rites* of the church as prescribed by Jesus Christ, were few, simple and intelligible, administered in the plainest manner, and with no appearance whatever of show and parade. There were only two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper: No peculiar sanctity was attributed to places; but wherever a body of christians met, whether in a private house, a cave, or a wilderness, there was a place for the worship of the living God. Hence there were none of the mummeries of consecrating burying grounds, and bells, and vestments and chalices, and the brick and mortar of houses, which prevailed in after times. There were no priests, with their mitres and robes, and all the paraphernalia of pontifical dignity; but men of simple manners and simple apparel officiated as teachers of their brethren.

But in all these things changes were introduced, of which the manifest design was to increase the power and splendour of the clergy. The sacraments were multiplied from *two* to *seven*: they were made necessary to salvation; were connected with all the business of life; and made to reach from the cradle to the grave. *Baptism* not only brought the subject into the school of Christ, to be taught his doctrine; but also, *when duly administered*, conferred grace and effected regeneration; while without it, the hapless infant was doomed to perdition! And what added greatly to the mischief here, it was held, as also in relation to the other sacraments, that the grace was not conferred unless the priest intended it: so that if one wished to save his own soul or that of his child from endless ruin, he must keep in favour with his priest!!

After Baptism came *confirmation*, a sacrament contrived to supply any defects that might have existed in the administration of baptism, intended to bestow more grace, and certify those who had been renewed by baptism of the favour and gracious goodness of God towards them.

But it is possible for all this grace to be lost; otherwise there would be no need of any sacrament but baptism. To provide for this case then, it is pretended that our Lord, after his resurrection, instituted the *sacrament of penance*, when he breathed on his disciples, and said "Receive ye the Holy Spirit; whose sins soever ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whose soever ye retain they are retained!" By which words it is pretended that the apostles, and their *legitimate successors* received power to remit sins, and reconcile believers who might fall into sin after baptism. The power of administering this sacrament, and of course, of conferring the grace here necessary, belongs to bishops and priests alone. Here then according to the doctrines received, the poor sinner is at the mercy of his priest; he must receive absolution or be lost!

In the beginning, *the Lord's Supper* was regarded as an ordinance in which the death of Christ, as a sacrifice for sin was commemorated; the faith of the believer was strengthened, and his love inflamed, by partaking of bread and wine, as symbols of Christ's body and blood. But by gradual additions, this plain and simple rite was made the greatest of all mysteries, and the grossest of all absurdities. The *duly authorized priest* was empowered by the magic of episcopal ordination, to convert the bread used into the body and blood, the soul and divinity of the Saviour. And any sinner who, could satisfy the priest of his repentance, and induce him to administer the ordinance, was sure of salvation, at any rate until the bread should be digested! It is not necessary to pursue these particulars farther. The church, by pronouncing *matrimony* a sacrament, took that important rite entirely into its own hands, and by various canons greatly increased the power of the clergy. The decisions respecting *ordination* were well suited to bind the clergy together in one body, and diffuse among them the same spirit. And the sacrament of *extreme unction* enabled the priest, at the last hour, to bring the dying sinner to his own terms.

3. The *whole worship* of the primitive church, was characterized by extreme simplicity. It was manifest that the great object was to carry truth directly to the understanding, and by this means as powerfully as possible to affect the heart. But in the progress of this great change which we are considering, the houses of worship were made to rival royal palaces; the ministers of the church were as numerous as the servants of a king; paintings, and statues, gold and silver vessels, various and most costly instruments of music, scarlet and purple and fine linen, and all things magnificent and expensive were employed to give splendour to divine worship, and cause a strong impression to be made on the senses. Hence throughout the church, there was but little knowledge of the truth, little spiritual service, little vital piety. Worship was a show to entertain the people. Even prayer was offered in an unknown tongue; because forsooth, the minister was a priest whose business it was to offer holy things to God; and the laity had nothing to do but confide their cause to the hands of their priests. The Bible was never quoted in the vernacular language, because, it being the business of the church to interpret the word of God, the people had nothing to do but believe what their priests told them.

4. *The Church of Christ* in the beginning, was as we have seen, a voluntary association, made up of all who had been convinced of the truth, and had felt the power of the Christian religion. It had nothing to do with any matters of civil or political regulation. It rendered to Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, and to God the things that were God's. Not an instance can be shown of any intermeddling with affairs of state by Christ or his apostles. They confined themselves entirely to matters of religion.

But in about three centuries the church became an ally of the state; and owned the authority of the civil ruler in affairs of conscience. This elevation in temporal dignity, however, was only a stepping stone for ambitious prelates. They aimed at uncontrolled supremacy in church and state, and succeeded in their daring projects. *Charles the Bald*, grandson of Charlemagne, was deposed by an assembly of bishops: his subjects were released from their allegiance; and his kingdom was transferred to another. This degenerate prince made no objection to their authority, but only complained that "he had not been *heard* and judged by the bishops, through whose ministry he had been consecrated, who are called the thrones of God, in which God sitteth, and by whom he dispenses his judgments; to whose paternal chastisement I was willing, says he, to submit, and do still submit myself."

The power of the bishops excited the envy of the pope, and the court of Rome set itself to lessen their influence, and to raise itself. In the ninth century the bishops had exalted themselves to the highest pitch of grandeur and power. The policy and art of the sovereign pontiffs were successful in reducing them, and concentrating in themselves a great part of the influence which had been diffused among the prelates. In no period of the world and by no body of men has there ever been a greater display of consummate sagacity, than was evinced in the eleventh and twelfth century by the court of Rome. That system of ecclesiastical domination, which goes under the name of popery, is a stupendous contrivance of human genius. The plan was steadily pursued by one pope after another; and at length it was thought safe to use such language as the following: "As the sun and the moon are placed in the firmament, the greater as the light of the day, and the lesser of the night; thus there are two powers in the church: the pontifical, which, as having the charge of souls is the greater; and the royal, which is the less, and to which the bodies of men only are trusted."

We wish our readers to consider this subject most carefully. Let them take the New Testament, and form a clear, distinct idea of religion as taught by Christ and his apostles, and of the church as organized by them: and then let them contemplate that monstrous picture, of which we have given the outline. What instance in all the annals of the world, can be produced, of similar perversion and corruption? How was this melancholy change wrought? This subject deserves most serious inquiry? For the man of sin is not yet destroyed. The evil is not yet eradicated. There is enough ignorance, and superstition on one side; and enough ambition and love of the world on the other, to afford great opportunities of mischief. And undue pretensions ought always to be marked and resisted.

In the sequel of this number, we shall present a general view of the causes which produced the deterioration of the church, and turned the greatest of God's blessings into the most enormous of all abuses.

1. The first of these in order, we place under the head of TRADITION. Jesus Christ, as has already been remarked, for wise purposes, appointed men to complete the organization of the church. These men were furnished with extraordinary powers, to qualify them for their work. It belonged to them authoritatively to deliver the will of their master. Divinely inspired teachers, they afforded to all believers while they lived, an infallible standard of truth. And it was very natural that the churches, which they had planted, should recur to the body of instruction received from the apostles, and tell others what they had heard from these holy men. This indeed was necessary, until the writings left by the first teachers of Christianity, were put into the hands of believers. Thus was formed the habit of inquiring from those who heard the Apostles, what they had taught concerning Jesus Christ, and his salvation. Information communicated in this way is called tradition. It is a very imperfect mode of preserving and transmitting truth; as is manifest from this; that although the Apostles had the fullest opportunity of hearing the whole teaching of Jesus Christ, they were preserved from error by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Every one knows how a story will grow, in passing through a few hands. Reports concerning the sayings and doings of Christ, were thus spread and exaggerated. The same thing happened in the case of the Apostles: Men of weak judgment and lively imagination from a traditional hint or two, can construct a long narrative which they easily persuade themselves to believe, and repeat to others as unquestionable truth. Thus there was gradually formed a body of traditions, which grew with succeeding ages, and was invested with authority equal to that of the scriptures. So that when the word of God failed to decide a question, respecting which the church wanted a decision, recourse was had to tradition. Often, there were opposing traditions, and the church decided which was most worthy of credit. The Jews had tried this method before. It was pretended by their Rabbins, that besides the written law, Moses had received an oral communication from God, which he, in turn, made to Joshua, and so on through successive centuries, until at last it was reduced to writing, and preserved in a number of ponderous folios. By this body of traditions all questions among the Jews are determined to this day. Christians, at an early period, began to try the same expedient; and apostolical tradition soon acquired great influence in the church. At length it was put on a level with holy scripture. It is so regarded at this day by all *good* catholics; and many a protestant is so trammelled by it, that although he admits the supremacy of scripture, he is afraid to say what the Bible means until he learns how the fathers interpreted it.

It is easy to see that this is the worst of all methods of preserving the truth; and that among ignorant, credulous, and superstitious people, it opens wide the door for every sort of error and abuse.

2. After the death of the Apostles, their writings formed the standard of Christian truth. During their life, the church was preserved free from important errors. The abettors of heresy and schism were put down by their decisive authority. But when they were out of the way, heretics as well as the orthodox could pretend apostolical tradition. Nothing could ensure purity of doctrine and soundness in the faith, but recurrence to the authenticated writings of the Apostles. And nothing can be more evident, than that the preservation of the true doctrine, depends on the right interpretation of the oracles of God. The real meaning of the sacred writings can alone enable us to judge what true Christianity is. This being undeniably true, we assign, as one powerful cause of the corruption of christianity, the fact that *the early fathers were wretched expositors of Scripture*. This declaration may startle some of our readers. But we have, at hand, most abundant evidence of its truths and in the sequel of this Review will produce it, to the full conviction of every impartial mind. Our purpose, at present, is to state the fact with proper distinctions, that all may judge for themselves of its influence in the corruption of christianity. Let it then be understood, that we fully admit that the disciples of the Apostles learned from them, what true religion is; and that, in the beginning, there were brief symbols of faith, containing the fundamental doctrines of christianity, and received by all who were admitted into the church. The fathers too were generally honest and good men, who believed the facts to which they gave their testimony. But a distinction ought to be made between their *testimony respecting doctrine*, and their *interpretation of scripture*. When they declare that a *particular doctrine* was handed down from the Apostles, it ought to be admitted that such was their belief; and their testimony is to be received as evidence, according to their means of knowing the fact. But their expositions of scripture are to be judged of according to the known laws of language, and the established principles of interpretation. The right reverend Doctor, whose work has furnished a Review for these dog days, does not appear ever to have thought of this; but constantly speaks as though he really believed, that the fathers received and handed down the interpretation given by the Apostles to their own writings. So at least we understand him. But they do no such thing. They attempt to interpret scripture, just as men of their stamp do at the present day. They mystify, and allegorize so as to make of scripture a perfect "nose of wax," which one may put into any shape, or turn in any direction that pleases his fancy. Even the most learned among them were strangely misled by Jewish fooleries. Their exegetical writings opened the way for many extravagant opinions, and many corruptions of christian doctrine. Their allegories, and wild speculations bewildered the minds of the people in former times; and a childish reverence for every thing ancient gives them no small currency in the present day. The influence of this evil may be very clearly presented by a familiar illustration. The nature and form of our government are expressed in a written constitution. The framers of that constitution, intended by the words of which it is composed to express a certain

and definite meaning: it was their design to give the government so much power and no more, and to secure their rights to the people. Now, as long as they who administer the government, give to the constitution the meaning which its framers had when they wrote it, exercising precisely the powers bestowed on them and no others; and acknowledging all the rights of the people; the constitution is maintained in its purity. But when a different construction is put on the national charter; when the administration exercises powers not conferred, and withholds chartered rights, the actual character of the government is changed, although its frame may remain unaltered. So when the true meaning of scripture is not given; but another that never was in the minds of the sacred writers, religion is perverted, and the church becomes corrupt. This was the case in former times; not suddenly, but as commonly happens by gradual changes.

These observations have been made to account for the fact, that although christians had in the Bible an infallible standard of religious truth, yet corruption soon began to show itself in the church, and spread in various forms, until the pure and simple gospel of Christ was buried under a monstrous mass of error. The true meaning of the Bible was not set before the understandings of the people. The standard of truth was not applied to the regulation of human opinions. And it is not at all surprising that men professing christianity, should hold unchristian sentiments, and pursue unchristian practices.

3. The next general cause of corruption was, *ignorance of true religion*, and a *predisposition to superstition*. The whole world was divided into Christians, Jews and Pagans. Of the ignorance of the two last classes none can entertain a doubt. As for christians, they cannot be made well acquainted with their religion by a summary of faith, such as the Apostles' Creed as it is called. It is necessary that they should carefully study the Bible; learn its true meaning, and carry its doctrines and precepts to their understandings and hearts. But the wretched system of allegorizing and mystifying was much in vogue. The people understood the scriptures poorly, many had not christian knowledge enough to banish entirely from their minds pagan notions, previously imbibed. But when men have no well settled principles of religion, they are always prone to superstition. And so it was with thousands who professed religion in former times.

These evils were greatly increased, when the northern barbarians made their irruptions into the Roman empire. These savages changed their religion without any change of heart; retained their superstitious feelings, but directed them to new objects; drove before them the Cæsars with all their legions, but trembled in the presence of the priests of the new religion. No state of things could afford fitter opportunities for designing men to practice on the people.

4. It has been before observed that when christianity was introduced into the world, it every where found some form of religion or other established by law. The uncompromising spirit of chris-

tianity, soon drew down on itself severe and bloody persecution. This was renewed in several successive centuries. The church, however, was like the bush which Moses saw in the wilderness; in flames, yet unconsumed. It grew and spread in spite of all opposition. At length it became so numerous and powerful, that an ambitious man thought it would serve his purposes to displace heathenism as the religion of the state, and employ christianity in its room. This, however, was not done, until the church had learned by sore experience what power was possessed by a religion connected with the government. This experience, acquired under persecutions raised by the established religion of the Roman empire, may, then, be set down among the causes of the corruption of christianity. It made the church willing to form a very injurious connexion with the world.

5. This leads us to state as another cause of corruption, the establishment of christianity as the religion of the Roman empire, in place of heathenism. The state was bound not only to protect but support this new ally. The ministers of Christ then found themselves in courts and palaces, the counsellors of royalty; wealth and honour were poured on them instead of poverty and reproach. Ambitious and corrupt men were tempted to seek the offices of christian bishops, and the whole church felt the change. About this time, too, great divisions took place among christians. The wrong principles of interpretation, of which we spoke before, had destroyed the simplicity of the gospel. It was perverted by a misnamed philosophy, as well as by strained allegories, and extravagant *spiritualizing*. Men undertook, for instance, to decide on the person of Christ by reasoning, and not by the plain facts recorded in scripture. The subtilties of logic were opposed by expositions of scripture, which could satisfy no one. Great heats and violent contentions arose. The *Arian* faction nearly divided the church. Civil rulers entered into these disputes. The edicts of emperors decided theological controversies. Every effort was made by both orthodox and heretics to gain the Ruler to their side. Sometimes one party prevailed and sometimes the other. The intrigue, the flattery and corruption of the court were found in the church. In four centuries a most fearful change had taken place in the pure and benevolent religion of Christ.

But all this did not occur without a considerable change in the form of the church. In the beginning, religious societies had been established in the cities, and "Elders ordained in every church;" whose simple business was to teach the truths of christianity, and persuade men to live holy lives. When the number of christians was too great for them to meet in one place, several pastors or bishops were appointed for their spiritual instruction, as was the case at Philippi and at Ephesus. As christianity grew, the churches were enlarged, and the influence of the pastors increased. And the changes of which we have spoken, gave opportunities of which they were not slow to avail themselves. Then it was, that extravagant pretensions were put in, and urged with great perseverance and policy. The teachers of christianity saw that wealth and pow-

er were within their reach. Ignorance of true religion and superstition opened the way for them, and they found it easy to invent plausible reasons, and produce authorities to justify their claims: *tradition* and the *licentious interpretation* of scripture afforded ample means for proving every thing that could be desired. For, instance, Jesus Christ, as we have seen, employed the apostles to complete the organization of the church. They acted for him, and authoritatively announced his will. The aspiring pastors pretended that they had succeeded to the apostolical office, and possessed apostolical authority.

This step prepared the way for another. The apostles by their extraordinary endowments, were enabled to make decisions which should bind the conscience. The spirit of Christ spake through them. They who claimed the succession, asserted similar authority; they had received apostolical traditions; the scriptures were committed to them to be expounded to the people; and it was the business of the people to receive the law, at the hands of Christ's ambassadors.

The next step in this usurpation, was to claim the *priesthood*. This was done by applying to the church and its ministers, the language of the Old Testament respecting the Theocracy, and the abolished service of the Temple. In this way, the ignorant and superstitious multitude were made to believe that their preachers were appointed to offer services to God on their behalf, which were acceptable, because they who officiated bore the priestly office.

This was particularly the case in regard to the rites of the church. They were made efficacious in conferring grace, by virtue of some peculiar authority vested in the priesthood; and gave assurance of salvation because they were administered by men duly authorized.

The possession of this enormous power was one of the most mighty causes of corruption. The clergy having once obtained it, set themselves to the utmost to preserve and enlarge it. They wrested from the people the right, acknowledged and enjoyed in the beginning of choosing their church officers, and claimed this as a part of their prerogative. At length the clergy held and taught that *they* were the *church*, and possessed in themselves all the powers, rights, privileges, and prerogatives, which God had given to his people. As for the Laity, they had nothing to do, but believe what their priests taught, perform what they enjoined, and suffer what they chose to inflict: and then these authorized agents of heaven would give them, by means of the sacraments, assurance of salvation.

This general sketch of the church may afford some assistance to the students of Ecclesiastical History. Let them, with a reference to this subject study the records of the church, and they will find that,

1. When the organization of the christian society was completed by the Apostles and their assistants, the church, as to its political form, *was a REPUBLIC.*

2. In process of time, under the influence of such causes as have been stated, *it was gradually changed into an* ARISTOCRACY.

3. This first step paved the way for another, and the government of the church became MONARCHIAL.

4. The power of this monarchy was augmented by increasing ignorance and corruption, until there was beheld a most frightful DESPOTISM, treading on the necks of kings, and binding in chains the subdued and degraded nations of the christian world.

In comparing this most instructive portion of History with the claims of high churchmen in the present day ; and the authorities by which they support their pretensions, we are most forcibly struck with numerous resemblances. There is a growth in our population, which carries it far beyond the means of moral and religious improvement. There are thousands on thousands in our country, who have no fixed principles of religion ; and little more knowledge of the real character of christianity than the ancient Pagans. They have never read the Bible, have never heard it truly expounded. And while these things are so, there is a growing body of men among us, who claim to be exclusively the *true church* of Christ ; the only legitimate interpreters of scripture ; the successors of the Apostles, the *factors* and *attornies* for heaven, divinely appointed priests, authorized agents, alone empowered to give men assurance of salvation. And, as though these monstrous claims were authenticated by the seal of heaven, they vapour and strut before our eyes, demanding with haughty air, and in arrogant terms, universal acknowledgment of their dignity, and submission to their ecclesiastical authority. As for ourselves, it pleases us well to see men who set up such extravagant pretensions, act so as, in the judgment of all well instructed christians, to disprove their apostolical authority. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them : but it shall not be so among you : but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister ; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Matt. xx, 25—27. But can the reader fail to observe that these are precisely the pretensions set up by the very men, who, in former ages, bore their part in corrupting the church, and bringing in the abominations of popery ?

Again : when opposition is raised against these extravagancies, the attempt is made to vindicate them by the same means, that were employed when the *great* corruption was going on. So the church has always believed, taught, decreed—So say the fathers—*Such is the tradition.* We shall take occasion to show some very curious coincidences between our right reverend author, and some of the ancient pretenders to apostolical powers and prerogatives, before we have done with him. We only wish, in these introductory essays, to convince our readers of the very great importance and necessity of the work, which we have undertaken. With this view we remark once more,

That as in former times there were men, who found their account in admitting and supporting these high claims of the clergy. So it is now. History has enabled us to judge very certainly of the me-

tives of the laymen of other ages, who were willing instruments of enlarging the power of the church. But we do not pretend to form a judgment concerning our contemporaries. The fact is unquestionable ; be the motives what they may. It is confidently said, too, that the most zealous upholders of high church prerogative among the laity of our day, are not over-zealous for vital religion, are not very careful to avoid profanity, to observe the Sabbath, to attend the church, &c. Do they want a religious factor to do the business for them, and save them all the trouble ? Do they want an aristocratic religion, which will distinguish them from the common people ? We pretend not to judge. But we will say that when high church principles were first broached among us, we thought that it was perfectly a work of supererogation to undertake to oppose them ; that in *this country*, their very extravagance, their opposition to the genius of all our political institutions, their obvious tendencies would at once put them down. But they are growing. Their influence is felt even by *evangelical men*. Young preachers, who turned out warm-hearted and liberal, are gradually screwed up to notions and feelings high enough to please a diocesan bishop. We see these things and lament them. It is our duty to expose the error, and give the warning. And as God may give us grace to be faithful, none within the sphere of our labours shall go unwarned.

We have shown by what means the controversy between us and bishop Ravenscroft arose ; and how important to the purity of the church, and to the general interests of society are the questions between us. We now proceed to the consideration of his book. It is our purpose fully to try the strength of its arguments, and show the tendency of its principles.

One eighth part of this ponderous pamphlet is occupied in what the Prelate calls the "misrepresentations" of our Reviewer. Through the whole of this part, vituperation is dealt out in no measured phrase, and with no delicacy of language. We might perhaps think it necessary to notice this *offensive matter* in the first place, had not bishop R. been, before this, engaged in controversy. The course pursued by him in former cases, has completely nullified the formidableness of his charges. This is one of the polemic arts of the diocesan. We have read all his writings that have fallen in our way ; and as far as we have seen, he never feels the pinch of his antagonist's argument, without crying out, "misrepresentation, Sir !" No author, whom it has been our hap to peruse, so completely lays himself open to just and severe criticism ; no one so provokes attack. Hence it is, that ever and anon we hear the same ungracious cry of, *misrepresentation*. In the newspaper paragraph, the pamphlet, and *the dollar and a quarter volume* (in blue paper) it is forever the same monotonous yet discordant sound. For proof of these remarks, we refer to the controversy between him and Professor Mitchell of North Carolina, respecting the Bible Society. He there charges the Professor with a mutilation of private letters which had previously passed between them ; with mutilation and misrepresentation of authors quoted, particularly the cele-

brated Chillingworth. The Professor publishes the letters entire, and shows by ocular demonstration, that the parts which had been previously omitted had no earthly connexion with the matters before the public. He publishes the bishop's quotation from Chillingworth, and proves in the same way, that a part of the passage, which was intended for the very purpose of qualifying the meaning of the author had been omitted. This same passage has been brought out against us, and we shall have to notice it hereafter. We did suppose that the issue of this controversy, would have made the bishop rather ashamed of his expedient: and when we heard the note of preparation from the South, it was our hope to find some amendment from the wholesome discipline which had been administered. But "*we had mistaken our man*"—And hope deceived us!

These circumstances leave it entirely at our option, we think, whether to notice his charges or not. Should it, in prosecution of our design, appear likely to subserve the important purposes in view, we shall animadvert on them; otherwise not. Our Reviewer declares, that, as far as he is *personally* concerned in this affair, he is not at all sorry at the course which the bishop has pursued. He wishes the controversy to attract public attention; and the subjects brought under discussion to be fully considered—And as he is incapable of saying *piquant* things of *this sort*, he has no grief on his own account that the *bishop* has said them. In looking to see how the Reviewer will answer them, many readers may find truths which it will be well for them to know. Still however, he would have been truly glad if this result could have been obtained, without that unnecessary dereliction of the true Episcopal character, of which the book before us affords so mortifying an example.

Our plan then is, in the first place, to bring under review what the author says respecting *the Church*; after which his opinions respecting the *Bible Society*, and the *Interpretation of Scripture* will be examined. We may then, *perhaps*, notice the subject of misrepresentations and perversions of which we hear so much from the right reverend author. But here we cannot help offering a general critical remark on this very extraordinary production. A considerable part of its contents are by no means in harmony with the *official character*, which is *blazoned in capitals* on its *title page*. The book shows in many respects a want of familiarity with the appropriate mode of conducting religious discussions, and surprising unacquaintance with ecclesiastical history. It puts one very much in mind of the manner of a *lawyer*, who unable to make a sound legal argument, *browbeats* the witnesses, and *abuses* his adversary. Whether this internal evidence indicates any thing respecting the secret history of the composition of this work, we will not pretend even to conjecture. The bishop certainly has a great deal on his hands, and may often need assistance; and lawyers, sometimes have leisure—But we will not put our critical sagacity to hazard, by pursuing this subject any farther.

It is on the 21st page of his book, that the writer comes to consider the objections made by the Reviewer to certain points of doctrine laid down in the Farewell and Convention Sermons. He de-

clares that the matter of each of these discourses was well considered, and uttered under a deep sense of the responsibility of his ministerial character. Notice is then taken of a remark in the Review, respecting the injury likely to be done by the fierce spirit of contention breathed into these discourses; after which the writer permits himself to say,

“But as presbyterianism and christianity are not synonymous, at least in my judgment, and what may be considered injurious to the former, may nevertheless be innocuous, if not helpful, to the latter, I trust to stand excused for venturing to dispute so strong an assertion, and for exposing the fallacies with which it is endeavoured to be supported. In your June No. p. 301, you observe—

“In our Southern country, subjects of this kind have been so little discussed, that the great body of the people have no ideas of their true bearing, or of the manner in which they affect their vital interests.”

“Most true sir, and as you doubtless know in whose hands the religious instruction of the southern people, has, almost exclusively, been, for the last forty or fifty years, perhaps you can tell the reason, why subjects of this kind, have been withheld from public discussion. But for this very reason, and because he deems them *vital subjects* and affecting *vital interests* did Bishop Ravenscroft feel it his bounden duty, to present them to those more particularly under his charge, and eventually to the public. And most unquestionably, if they are of this important description, and the people have *no ideas* of their true bearing, it is high time that their attention should be called to them, and every way reasonable, that Bishop R. should stand justified for discarding that false tenderness to the feelings of others, which had been instrumental in keeping back these fundamental doctrines from the edification of the pulpit.”

On this we observe in the first place, that not a single syllable in the Review indicates that its special object was to defend Presbyterianism. The Reviewer, indeed, counts it his honour to belong to that denomination of Christians: not because they are smiled on by the *great*, or followed by the *multitude*. But because, although suspected, feared, misunderstood, and reproached as they are, they hold the gospel in its simplicity; are the true and staunch friends of learning and science, of civil and religious liberty; and *practise* that liberality of which others *boast*. But with these sentiments, the Reviewer never thought of identifying Presbyterianism with Christianity. And if bishop R. does so in regard to his own Society, the Reviewer is happy in having this opportunity of differing from him. There would, he is free to admit, be a church, and true Christians, if there was not a Presbyterian in the world. So too, if there were not an Episcopalian in the world. The Reviewer, indeed, never will shrink from a defence of the Presbyterian church, when called to that service, but in the articles which awakened the wrath of the Prelate, his object was to *vindicate the cause of christian charity and brotherly love*, assailed as it was by hands that ought to have been stretched out in its defence.

In the next place our right reverend polemic seems to reproach us for the fact that subjects of church order and polity have been so little discussed in the southern country, for the last forty or fifty years. We know that some think we have been to blame for our reserve on these subjects. Certainly, we have exhibited exemplary caution and moderation. But it was very ungrateful in *bishop R.*

to reproach us for it. There was a time, when the hostility of Presbyterianism would have been deeply felt by the Episcopal church. Such hostility, however, has never existed, except in the heated imaginations of such men as our author.

It seems necessary here, to state more fully than we have done, the object of our Reviewer in the papers which have awakened so bitter a spirit, and called forth such violent reproaches.—Bishop R. had, in strong terms, denounced all non-episcopalians, as schismatics. He disowned them as brethren, and wished to persuade all Episcopalians to disown them too. They are out of the church; and cannot be acknowledged as fellow-christians. If he is right, all communion between other christians and the denomination to which he belongs, ought to be broken up at once and forever. Now we venture to say, that it is impossible for an impartial reader to examine these Reviews, without perceiving that the leading object of the writer was to prevent this effect; to prevent the increase of bigotry and intolerance, of sectarian zeal and polemic fury in our happy country. And this he hoped to accomplish, by showing that the differences between Episcopalians and other evangelical denominations do not enter into the essential character of the church: that they are points, about which good men and sincere christians may differ, and yet walk together in love. It was declared again and again that the Reviewer had no quarrel with Episcopalians; and on the assumption that they can, in conformity with their modes and forms, and peculiar doctrines, best make their way to heaven, he cordially bade them “God speed,” and prayed that grace, mercy and peace, might be multiplied to them.—It is the design above stated, which has been construed into a fierce and malignant hostility to the Episcopal church, which seeks its gratification by means the most “*base and flagitious*,” by wilful misrepresentation and notorious falsehood! To such terms as these we have nothing to say—We feel nothing but pity for the clergyman who can allow himself to use them.

Our language to Episcopalians is unchanged. If you choose to live under diocesan bishops, and to use the forms of the book of common prayer,—be it so! But we do not believe that this is best for us: we can find nothing in the word of God, to oblige us to adopt the same system of church government and modes of worship; in a word, we think that these things are additions to the simplicity of the gospel; but let us not make them terms of communion. We agree in fundamental points; let us exercise mutual charity, in relation to subordinate concerns, and walk together in love.—But here interposes bishop R., and vehemently affirms that these are not subordinate concerns, they are vital; they are essential to the very being of a church, and to the best hopes of man. And this is the very *git* of the controversy between us.

In the remark quoted in our Review, we had said, that for want of discussion, the people have no idea of the true bearing of these subjects, and of the manner in which they affect their vital interests. The bishop seems to think that this very reason justifies the course which he has pursued. He thinks them *vital subjects*, and

affecting "vital interests," and therefore felt it his duty to bring them before the public.—What is this, but a declaration of his belief that the hope of man for heaven depends on his connexion with the Episcopal church? This we admit is a proof of the good gentleman's sincerity, but none at all of the soundness of his opinions. And the very thing for which we blame him is that he does hold such opinions. If they are wrong, as we expect to prove before we are done with the subject, he cannot be right in holding them, nor does the sincerity of his belief at all justify him.

But what interests we meant, is clear enough from the context.—We spoke of the Bible Society, of the right of private judgment, of religious liberty, as vital interests—Are not these of sufficient importance to be called *vital*? The bearing of bishop R's. opinions on high matters of this kind, we affirmed was not understood. And truly it is so. Even many of our most intelligent men have so neglected the study of Ecclesiastical History, as not to perceive the natural tendency of these doctrines. They do not see that if the claims of the Church (according to the bishop's nomenclature) should be granted in all their extent, nothing but a religious establishment could prevent ecclesiastical power from becoming supreme in the nation. We declared that bishop R. did not himself see the consequences of his own opinions. We are more than ever confirmed in this opinion. The work now under review affords most convincing evidence that the writer is no adept in ecclesiastical history; that he has studied only one side of his subject, using too the aid of none but partizan writers; and that passion and prejudice have greatly blinded his understanding. His unparalleled confidence may possibly mislead the ignorant; but it will surprise the learned: the vehemence of his style may overpower the feeble minded; but men of true discernment will recognise the impetuosity of passion, where they expected the force of argument.

We have stated the most important point of the controversy; but it is necessary to bring this matter forward more distinctly, or this discussion can never be closed. It is certain that the bishop has sadly mistaken our positions; otherwise, pressed as he is by various and important concerns, he would have spared himself much unnecessary writing.

Bishop R. has chosen so to construct his work, that our readers need to be informed what are *not* the matters in dispute between us.

We do not, we never did, we never could deny the *divine origin*, the *covenant relation*, the *sameness* in every age, the *unity* of the church, nor the *divine appointment* of the christian ministry. On the contrary, we maintain all these truths, with as much zeal and consistency as Bishop Ravenscroft; though we thank heaven, with a very different spirit. We do not, indeed, admit that the sameness, or the unity of the church consists in what he supposes it does: we do not believe that the purpose and powers of the christian ministry are what he imagines them to be.

As to the sameness of the church, we confess ourselves at a loss to determine precisely what the bishop thinks. In his manner of conducting an argument he drives on with such Jehu-like vehemence as to

keep himself continually in a cloud of dust, often we lose sight of him altogether. He had, with peculiar infelicity, affirmed that the dispensations under the Old and New Testaments were *identical*. We showed beyond a doubt that this could not be so, unless *different* dispensations could be the *same*. On this subject the bishop thus expresses himself.

"Is the word *identity* never used in the sense of sameness or agreement—not diverse, or implying diversity in the sense of opposition? and in this most common use of the word, is there not an identity of origin, of design and of end in the two dispensations? Do you design to insinuate into the minds of your readers—that either the parties, the purpose, or the means have been so changed—that the opposite of identity, can justly be affirmed, of either to the other? If so—and I see not what else you can have in view—it would be a more manly part to speak it out, and let the public see at once, how much of the unity of revealed truth, as well as of the visible church, must be surrendered, to sustain the great Diana of parity? This sir is no trifling point—though it is so little thought of and applied by christians and christian teachers of the present day. I therefore ask you again—Is not the New Testament dispensation of the grace of God to the world—in such wise connected with, and perfective of the Old Testament dispensation of the same grace—as could with no truth be affirmed of them, were they not *identical*, in the sense of implying the same thing? And if this shall be the judgment of all sound, impartial, and informed christians; what must be thought of the vicious reasoning resorted to, by you on this subject—in order to fasten upon me the absurdity of asserting that the shadow and the substance are the same *identically*, which is no where affirmed."

This passage would afford room for much amusing remark, if on so grave a subject, we might seek for amusement. But as this would be rather out of place, we only say here, that we will give a copy of our Review, when finished, to any man who will make for us a literal translation of this quotation into another language, Latin or Greek, French or Italian. If the bishop were not too busy, it would be a profitable exercise for himself. How, for instance, will the first clause be put into Latin? "Is the word *identity* never used in the sense of *sameness*," &c. Is it not obvious that the question amounts precisely to this, Is the word *identity* never used in the sense of *identity*? But it is vain to hope that the philology of the bishop will ever be improved. We advert to the subject for the sake of remarking that if there is any thing distinctly to be gathered from the passage quoted, it amounts to this, that the identity of the church is such, that it admits of various changes without the destruction of that identity. And this is precisely the general principle for which we contend. Indeed it is impossible to state the proposition, *the church is the same under different dispensations*, without this admission. The bishop's mistake was, the confounding of *church* and *dispensation* in a way very strange for a man who undertakes to write about the church. The use of all this will appear hereafter.

The general doctrine maintained by us, in relation to the sameness of the church is this:—

"The visible church is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." Let this definition be

extended so as to embrace all congregations in which the pure word is preached, &c., and we are perfectly ready to accept it as our definition. Now this church is the *same under every dispensation*, because under all the forms which have prevailed, whether patriarchal, Jewish, or christian, *the same system of truth has been proposed; the same plan of salvation unfolded*. The only difference, in this respect, arises from the different degrees of information communicated in different ages. But as to the external forms, by which this truth is made known, and (as means) applied to the understanding and conscience, God has not confined himself to them; nor made them *essential* to the real existence of the church, or to the efficiency of his truth. In the spirit of this observation, we find ourselves fully supported by the Apostle Paul, Rom. ii, 25—29. "For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.—Therefore, if the uncircumcision (the uncircumcised person) keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?" &c. Now if we understand bishop R. he says, No! If the man is uncircumcised, no matter what he believes or does, he is so out of the covenant, that he has no right to hope for the mercy of God.

But he goes farther, and maintains that a particular external form of the church, is essential to its very being; and that a prescribed mode of administration is necessary to give validity to every ordinance, and assurance of spiritual blessings to the receiver. This prescription includes, as we understand, in every case the person who administers, as well as the ordinance administered.

"Suppose Lot had been desirous to partake of the privileges, blessings and promises made over to his kinsman, and in consequence of this desire, had applied to Melchisedeck to affix the appropriate seal, and he had done so. Would this have availed Lot, and conferred a title to the blessings of that covenant? Could any persuasion of his own mind, or any reasonings of others, or any holiness in the administrator, have supplied the defect of divine warrant to perform the act? Surely there can be but one answer to these questions."

Now our object was to prove that, according to the scriptures, and the plain reason of the case, the church of God was not thus limited, its sameness does not depend on these outward things, and we are obliged to our author for helping our argument by referring to the case of circumcision. We ask in reply to the case stated in the quotation, who regularly administered circumcision in the Jewish Church? Who, for instance, circumcised the child of Moses, Exod. iv, 24—26? Was that child out of the covenant, because the operation was performed by the mother? Where is the law prescribing the person who should perform this rite? We also ask, what was the condition of all the Jews born in the wilderness, since it appears that there was no circumcision from the time of the departure out of Egypt, until the entrance into Canaan? Joshua v, 5.

It is evident that the design of our Remarks, in relation to the unchangeable character of the church were not understood by the bishop; and we shall here endeavour to show their relevancy.

Some of our readers know, and all ought to know that bishop R. connects, the sameness of the church with the ministry. The Presbyterian Church is not of the same body with the Episcopal Church, because the former has not the same order in the christian ministry with the latter; the former owns no distinctions among the ministers of the gospel; while the latter holds three orders. And this is one reason why the bishop regards them as societies so distinct, that one is the church, and the other is not.

Now in a review prepared for a monthly magazine, we could not enter fully into any one of the numerous errors advanced by the bishop; and therefore were constrained to offer general remarks, which would let the reader see that our prelate's opinions were untenable. It has always been, we repeat, our full conviction that the unchangeable character of the church depends on the unchangeable system of truth revealed by God. In support of this opinion, though not formally announced in the review, we adverted to the changes which have taken place under different dispensations, while the church continues the same—identically the same, in every thing necessary to constitute it a church.

Besides, we constructed what we regarded as a good argument *ad hominem*, [an argument best suited to convince bad logicians we admit,] by which we hoped to make the bishop *feel* his error. It amounts to about this. Besides the point, stated above, respecting the ministry, the *Episcopalians* differ from *Dissenters*, in a variety of particulars, which, according to the 39 articles, the church has a right to change according to circumstances. These are, the manner of public prayer; sponsors, the sign of the cross, the mode of applying water in baptism; kneeling at the Lord's table; consecration of churches; prescription of clerical vestments. Besides these, there is in use among them an ecclesiastical rite, which they call *confirmation*, and hold to be necessary, before one partakes of the holy communion. All these points of difference, we remarked, have been superadded by Episcopalians to the institution of Christ. Bishop R. admits that they are, confirmation excepted, "decent ceremonies, *changeable according to circumstances.*" (pa. 25.) Now some of these are slight matters in comparison with others. But we may assume them all to be more or less important. We advert to the *manner* in which the church addresses God in prayer, as a subject of very great interest. The mode of administering the sacraments as seals of God's covenanted mercies ought not to be regarded as trivial. But if God has left such matters as these to the discretion of the church, does it not afford a very strong presumption, to say the least, that the difference between presbyterial ordination, for instance, and episcopal orders is not essential to the truth and real existence of the church. Or, to put the case in a still stronger point of light, if God has by the confession of Episcopalians, left such matters as these to the discretion of the church, can it be believed, without express declarations of scripture, that the hopes of man for eternity are connected with the episcopal *orders*. The identity of the church surely is not so connected with this subject, as to nullify the ecclesiastical character of all associations of believers, who are not under a diocesan bishop.

Our objections, then, are not "as irrelevant to the subject as can be conceived." The bishop did not take the trouble to consider the object in view, and he thought that his assertion was enough for his readers. Or perhaps his passion would not permit him to see.—That he was in anger, is manifest from the language which he permits himself to use. Speaking of these "*primitive, orderly and edifying* ceremonials,*" he says, "Do you not know, that these stumbling blocks to the pride of Presbytery, these bug-bears to the spiritual pride of deluded fanatics, are decreed and practised, as primitive, orderly, and edifying ceremonials," &c.—It must be confessed that there is a right handsome alliteration in the phrase, "Pride of Presbytery!" But ought a man who lives in a glass-house to throw stones? There is too something very lofty in; "*these bug-bears to the spiritual pride of ignorant and deluded fanatics.*" But why, *bug-bears*? We profess not to know; we are able however to tell the bishop, that men are fanatical on more than one subject. They may rage and rave about church order, just as wildly as a *Chrystian* in his highest camp-meeting frenzies rages about inspiration. After the question just recited, the author goes on to put some others, which call for some attention, although they carry us from the subject immediately in hand.

"Where have you ever heard or read, that they are held as the essence of religion, and grounds for rejecting from communion, and christian fellowship any denomination of christians episcopally constituted? How often have you yourself, who certainly do not hold or use them, received the holy communion from episcopal hands? How often have you been told, that the reason why they cannot in return receive at your hands is, not that you do not use forms of prayer, and sponsors in baptism, &c. &c. but because they believe in their consciences, that you have no authority to administer? Why then commit yourself against such plain truth, and give such just cause to say, that you write to mislead? And as the subject I am upon suggests it, let me ask you further; if you can receive the communion once from episcopal hands, with a good conscience, why not always? What possible justification can there be, for separation from a communion, which you can partake of with a good conscience? Are the rites and ceremonies of the church which you decry so bitterly, in such sort sinful, as to warrant breach of communion? Are they in any respect, contrary to the love of God, or to the law of man? If not, how can they touch the conscience? They may indeed offend the pride, prejudice and caprice of unreasonable or contentious men, but they cannot touch the conscience, in any just sense of that much abused word; or furnish an excuse for rending the body of Christ."

As to the first question here proposed, we reply by asking another, what would bishop R. do with one of his presbyters, who should in his ministrations, refuse to administer according to the rubrics?—Perhaps some people in *North Carolina* can help him to an answer. Or would he administer the holy communion to a person who should refuse to kneel at the Lord's table?

*NOTE. How edifying these are, we are yet to learn. Sure we are, that priestly and episcopal vestments never gave us any instruction; we know that they have greatly excited the *surprise* of children! The Sign of the Cross, made by the priest on the child's forehead, has always struck us as a Catholic Superstition. But they are *primitive*.—How does the bishop know this? Did the Apostles consecrate churches, wear episcopal habits, make the sign of the cross, &c. We want much to know how far this word *primitive* extends.

As to the personal matter here urged on the Reviewer, he answers frankly, that he had no hesitation nor scruple to receive the communion from "*episcopal hands*;"* until he plainly enough understood that "*episcopal hands*" would not receive of him:—*that is*, that episcopalians separated themselves from all other denominations, denying their church-membership, their ordination, and the validity of all their administrations. We knew, indeed, that this was the way of high-churchmen: but we supposed that evangelical clergymen entertained better views of this subject. We were strengthened in this opinion, by knowing the fact, that some episcopal clergymen *did* commune with other denominations. But it was soon ascertained that things were to be so no longer.

According to the old bad Latin proverb, *novus rex novus lex.*† And the Reviewer, after much serious deliberation, determined no longer to receive the communion from Episcopal hands, because, in his judgment, *Episcopal practice in this case is schismatical.* It is an effectual rending of the body of Christ. It is a separation of Christians from one another, on account of matters, which, so far from being essential to the being of the church, have never, in any age, conduced to its purity. The spirit of the Episcopal church in this day, would have been regarded as *schismatical* by the fathers and reformers of the Church of England. For they *did* acknowledge the foreign Protestants, as branches of the church of Christ; and they *did not*, by the 19th Article, mean to exclude them from the body of God's covenanted people. Bishop R. says that these are gratuitous assertions, because we did not bring forward our proofs. We thought that there could be no necessity of *proving such well known historical facts*, to readers for whose benefit we wrote. We would not assume so great ignorance in them. And, now, we cannot hope to add much to the knowledge of those, who, because they have received the Episcopal spirit, think that they know all things. But we mean hereafter to treat this subject in such a way, that bishop R. shall be sorry for having compelled us to take it up. At present we content ourselves with repeating our well considered assertion that the Reformers of the Church of England did acknowledge foreign Protestants as members of the church of Christ. But we wish it to be distinctly understood, that the only concern we have on this subject arises from the regard which we entertain for the names of those great and good men, and our solicitude for the honour of the christian religion. We cherish the memory of such men as Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, and their fellow labourers, we reverence their virtues, and are willing that their errors should be covered with the mantle of charity. But if they had laid the stress on the distinctive characters of Episcopacy, which high churchmen do in this country, it would not weigh a feather with us. With the word of God in our hands, and speaking plainly for us, the *world* against us is nothing. We do know, however, that the successors of the English Reformers have lost their spirit; and at this day, they separate themselves from the great

*Episcopal hands here are the hands of a *bishop*.

† It is about as good, however, as the bishop's "*Fast est ab hoste docere.*"

body of Protestants throughout the world. In the U. States Episcopalians are comparatively a small minority. Their ministers do not make a tenth part of the clergy of the country. In Gt. Britain, they do not make a large majority. Indeed we conjecture that, taking in the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian and *Independent* Dissenters from that church, and the Orthodox Dissenters in England, the number of communicants among them, would exceed those who frequent the altars of the established church. And among foreign Protestants, comparatively very few admit Episcopacy to be a distinct order. Chiefly, then, on account of the mere matter of *orders*, Episcopalians cut off from the church of God, and all its covenanted mercies, and all its precious hopes, this great body of Protestants. They separate themselves from this communion of saints, and cast them off from christian fellowship. If this is not *schismatical* conduct, we do not know what schism is. After coming to this conclusion, we could not any longer receive the communion from "Episcopal hands." We do not indeed renounce brotherhood with them. We only refuse to give countenance to this lamentable error. But bishop R. deceives himself most deplorably, if he supposes that our anxiety on this subject arises from any desire to find support for our system, from Episcopal concessions. We have not the shadow of a doubt respecting the validity of our ordination.— And the testimony of all who "add *right reverend* to their honoured names," throughout the whole world would not add a tittle of strength to our conviction that we have just as perfect a right to preach and administer ordinances as bishop R. or the Archbishop of Canterbury. But we wish to wipe away the standing reproach of Christianity; and to let the world see, by the harmony and brotherly love of christians, exhibited under differences in unessential matters, the true genius of our religion. We are, for this reason, and this only, truly desirous that our brethren should let down their high pretensions, but until they do this, we cannot consent to appear before the public to admit their claims. And now, as ministers of the Lord Jesus, we solemnly warn and exhort bishop R. and all who think with him to consider, whether the charge, which, often in bitter terms, they bring against non-episcopalians, and the denunciations, which they fear not to utter against them, may not return on their own souls in another day, when the great Head of the Church will make it appear before the universe, how little value he places on matters merely external, and how highly he values that love, which is the fulfilling of the law. Why will they not learn, that the great end of truth, is to mould men into the likeness of heaven; to awaken feelings and prompt to actions corresponding to its own pure and celestial character; that the mode of its conveyance to the understanding and the heart, whether by the "lawn robed Prelate, or plain Presbyterian," is a matter of no consideration with that holy Being, who looks at the inner man? Why will they attempt to persuade *the people*, that it is not the deep repentance, the lively faith, the warm-hearted charity, the fervent piety *only* of the humble communicant, which warrant the hope of divine acceptance, but also *this other circumstance* that the symbols of a Saviour's love are distributed by a man, on whose head a

Bishop has laid his hands? We do maintain, that it is the holding of the same great system of truth, which constitutes the same church, under every dispensation, and with every variety of external form.

We proceed, according to the method formerly indicated, to observe, that the unity of the church does not consist in what bishop R. supposes. He maintains it to be "unity of *faith* and of *order*;" and in the term *order* he includes the ministry of the gospel with all its administrations. But as all christian societies have their ministry, and their ordinances, bishop R. must mean by *order*, what we commonly call the Episcopal ministry. He holds, then, that a succession of diocesan bishops from the days of the Apostles to the present time, with the two orders of priests and deacons under them, is necessary to the unity of the church; and that all who are separated from a ministry precisely of this character, are separated from the church and the covenanted mercies of God. But let the prelate speak for himself.

"To bring this vital subject however, in some definite shape—and you to your answer; I ask, on what possible principle, is the divine unity of the church of Christ, reconcileable with the existing state of the christian world? Are all the varieties of religious profession throughout christendom, true branches of the true church—the one spouse and body of Christ—or, only some of them? Will you answer this plainly and directly, and give us the grounds and reasons of your determination, whatever it may be, that we may know the extent of that fraternity, which modern Presbyterians manifest for Congregationalists, Independents, Methodists, Baptists, &c. &c.—and may also learn, if it can be communicated, how separation and exclusion, are transformed into union and fellowship? In what does the unity of the visible church consist according to your view of it? Is it in agreement in faith and order, or of faith singly, or order singly? If the unity of the church is not to be referred ultimately, to the authority of Christ, originally lodged with his Apostles, as the root—to what is it to be referred? Is there another principle or root of unity, as a divine character or mark of the church of Christ, which is equally verifiable and conclusive, in all ages, and by all capacities of men? If there be, let us have it, plain and direct.

"Here, sir, is the dividing line between us—it is the point which involves all the rest, as you well know, and decides the momentous question, of church or no church, in a divided christian world. And I have put it thus directly, that by the answer given, my ignorance of the subject may be edified, or the delusion spread over the dissenting community of christians, may be removed."

He then says, in his own peculiar manner, "Sir, my principles are open and avowed—I have no purpose of concealment or deceit to answer. If your principles are of the same character, you will meet these questions with the frank and fearless spirit of the man, who is sincere in what he holds, and who knows that he must be a gainer by the establishment of truth."—As to the insinuations, the egotism, and the boastful spirit of this passage, we have not a word to say—as to the questions, so far as we understand them, we have answers prompt and decisive.

The Unity of the Church, then, let all bishops know, consists essentially in that which constitutes her identity, UNITY OF DOCTRINE *in matters necessary to salvation*. But this answer requires considerable amplification. That all doctrine is not fundamental, is too generally admitted to allow of any controversy. It is conceded that

men may differ as to a number of particulars, and yet be true believers in Jesus Christ, and heirs of salvation. For instance, there was doubtless a difference of opinion in the primitive church, respecting the obligation to conform to the law of Moses, when the Apostles, Elders and brethren came together to consider the matter, as recorded in Acts xv. Paul certainly maintained the abolition of the ceremonial institute. That all could not have been of the same mind is evident from this, that there was much "disputing," that is, arguing on the subject. But who will say that this difference destroyed the unity of the church, or put those on one side or the other of this question, out of the christian society? Again: that *Usher* and *Leighton* and others of former days; that *Newton*, *Scott*, *Milner* and other distinguished ornaments of the modern Episcopal denomination, held *Calvinistic* sentiments is undeniable; that other members of that society (with what consistency we must be pardoned for being unable to see) hold *Arminian* opinions, will not be doubted. But does bishop R. say that these varying, and indeed directly opposing sentiments, exclude either party from the church, and from the covenanted mercies God? He will not say this of the *Arminian* members of the Church of England, we are sure. *Usher* and *Leighton* were both archbishops, and of course were in the church. *Newton*, *Scott* and *Milner* had Episcopal hands laid on them, and received benefices in the church; certainly then they could not have been out of the church! And if differences in *point of doctrine* such as separate *Arminians* and *Calvinists* do not exclude them from the church, that is, do not break the unity of the church, surely it is not destroyed by the difference in point of order between an *Episcopalian* and a *Presbyterian*. But this by the way. There are truths, which *men must believe*, or they cannot be united to Christ. There are others, in relation to which they may differ, and not thereby prevent this union. If bishop R. wishes for our summary of fundamental doctrines, we are ready to give it in distinct articles.

1. The existence and perfections of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as revealed in the Bible.
2. The truth, inspiration, and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.
3. The Apostacy and consequent total depravity of man.
4. Justification by faith in Christ alone, as our only mediator and atoning sacrifice.
5. Regeneration and Sanctification by the Holy Spirit.
6. Holy living as the only satisfactory evidence of justifying faith.
7. The Resurrection of the dead.
8. The final Judgment, in which eternal life will be awarded to the righteous, and everlasting punishment to the impenitent and unbelieving.

We believe that all who, with the whole heart, receive these doctrines, are united to Christ, and belong to that one body, of which he is the Head and King; that they are bound to recognise each other as brethren, and hold communion as disciples of a common Lord; and that any who reject from the fellowship of saints, those who receive and live by these truths, are schismatical and

contentious, laying a stress on outward things, which Jesus Christ has not laid, and thus deeply injuring the true interests of the church which he has purchased with his blood. Here are the principles on which we are willing to hold communion with Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, or Christians of any outward form whatever. We hope that this is frank and fearless enough for the bishop. But we wish to explain this matter of the church's unity a little farther. The Apostle Paul, Eph. iv, 4—6, puts this subject in a most clear and intelligible point of light, when he says, "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." The *one body*, here is the church. Its unity consists in a number of particulars: unity of *faith* in one God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;—unity of *hope*, arising from belief in the same Saviour, and reliance on the influences of the same Spirit;—unity of *baptism*, as binding men to the same body, and to the profession of the same faith. In relation to this last particular, it deserves to be remarked, that according to the rubrics of the Episcopal church, this unity of baptism does not depend on the form of administration, for this may be either *sprinkling* or *immersion*. If the same *truth* is represented by these different modes, it is the same sacrament. And so of the Lord's Supper. If these ordinances are significant of the same saving truth, and seals of the same "righteousness of faith," different modes of administering and receiving make no difference at all material: they certainly do not destroy the unity of the church. We may then acknowledge as fellow christians, one who has been immersed; another who has been sprinkled; and a third who has had water poured on him. We see, then, that the essential matter of the unity of the church consists in unity of doctrine. If the same fundamental truths are received by a living faith, there is the same church, no matter what the differences in external form and order of a particular society. And they who deny this, make a great deal more of outward matters, than Christ and his Apostles did.—We conclude then, that,

The church of Christ is the same, in all ages, and under all changes of outward form, how great soever they were, because its members held the same fundamental truths. And for the very same reason, the different branches of the church, though differing in points of inferior importance, and in matters of outward form, yet constitute the same body. He who denies this appears strangely to misunderstand the true character of the gospel. He has yet to learn that its whole efficiency depends on *the truth* carried to the understanding and the conscience. It is the truth which sanctifies the heart; which lays the foundation for all our hopes; and prepares us to hold communion with God in a region of perfect purity. When we think of these things, it is impossible for us to express our surprise and sorrow, at seeing christian ministers magnify mere modes, and means, and instruments, into matters of vital importance, on which the hopes of man for eternity are suspended.

3. In the next place, we observe that the purpose and powers of the christian ministry, are not what bishop R. imagines them to be.

That the reader may understand our views of this subject, he ought to have distinct notions of the nature and constitution of the church, as it was organized by Christ and his Apostles. We have already given a general sketch of this subject, but it is important that it should be considered more particularly.

Under the old dispensation, a large and important part of the service was intended to foreshow Christ and the benefits which he procures for believers. According to the Apostle Paul, this was the great design of the priesthood and of the temple service. They were types of the Saviour, and the sacrifice to be, once for all, made by him for the sins of men. In all these things, then, as long as the dispensation lasted, there was to be no change, except what the mortality of man made unavoidable in the persons of the priests. In regard to the priestly office, "no man took this honour on himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." And it would have been the most daring presumption for any one to have set himself up as a type and representation of Christ, and to have offered sacrifices to God without special authority from heaven. But in all cases, where the simple office was to afford instruction, we find no such particular prescription. This is evident from the history of the synagogue worship, as set up by the Jews, and recognised by our Saviour.

When he who had been set forth by the priesthood and the temple service came, and completed his work, then the whole Levitical institute was abolished, and a human priesthood forever ceased. We wish our readers to bear this in mind; and therefore we repeat that there is no priest recognised in the gospel but the great "high priest of our profession," Jesus Christ. If indeed we regard the etymological meaning of the word *priest*, and make it synonymous with *presbyter*, there is no sort of objection to the use of it. But this is not its ordinary signification. It is a translation of the Greek word *ιερευς* or of the Latin *Sacerdos*, and designates one who is divinely appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices to God on the part of the people, and to bring back to the people answers from God. Of course, the offering which he makes, and he alone dares to make, is accepted for the people; and they are obliged, on pain of the displeasure of heaven, to receive and obey the answer brought back by the priest. Now there is nothing of all this in the New Testament. And there is no analogy between the office of a priest and that of a minister of the gospel. The Levitical priesthood represented the coming Saviour; and the analogy, in this case, is between their office and the office of the Redeemer. It is a lamentable error, then, for ministers of the gospel to derive conclusions respecting their office and powers, from the priesthood of the former dispensation. There is nothing of all this in the New Testament. The Apostles never thought of assuming this honour; and it was not claimed until the attempt was made to raise the clergy above the station in which their Master placed them.

Having shown that the temple service throws no light on the organization of the church under the present dispensation, let us look now to the New Testament. The word (*εκκλησια*) rendered

church is used in the writings of the Apostles in a *common*, and in a *sacred* sense. In the former, it means an assembly of citizens convened for the transaction of civil business: Acts xix, 38, "in a lawful assembly, *εν τη εννομω εκκλησια*. In the latter sense, it is used to signify, 1. The whole number of Christ's disciples, considered as a body, of which he is the head; Matt. xvi, 18. "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Eph. i, 22, 23. "and he gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, &c." 2. The word means, in its most common acceptation, an assembly, or association of believers, united together for worship, as in 1 Cor. i, 2. "the church of God which is in Corinth." Acts viii, 1. "the church which was at Jerusalem," and many other passages. It deserves remark too, that in the New Testament, when more than one congregation is mentioned, the word is invariably used in the plural number: thus we have Rom. xvi, 4. "The churches of the Gentiles:" 2 Cor. viii, 1. "the churches of Macedonia:" Gal. i, 2. "the churches of Galatia," ver. 22. "the churches of Judea:" Rom. xvi, 16. "the churches of Christ:" 1 Thess. ii, 14. and 2 Thess. i, 4. "the churches of God."—According to scriptural usage then, we are warranted in saying that the church consists of all those throughout the world, who profess the religion of Christ; and that a particular church, such for instance as one of the churches in Judea, consists of a number of persons associated together, according to the law of Christ, for the worship of God, and for holy living.

We have before shown, that an Association of this kind is, *in the very nature of the case*, a VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION. The society is indeed formed under the authority of God; but it is in willing obedience to this authority. It is the greatest of all absurdities to speak of involuntary religious service. Religion, too, is primarily a *personal* concern. When one is made a Christian, it is by learning its truth, feeling its power, and under its influence forming a union with the people of Christ. If, then, we conceive of the organization of a particular church, we must think of it in some such way as this.—A number of persons hear the gospel, study the scriptures, agree as to the doctrines contained in them and the worship prescribed, and associate on the principle of obeying the law of Christ according to their understanding of its true meaning. This they do under their responsibility to God, and to him alone. There is no power on earth to prescribe to them laws and bind them to obedience. If these men truly interpret and sincerely obey the law of Christ, they are owned as his people, and partake of the blessings which he has procured: if they misinterpret or disobey this law, he disowns them. The case is in principle the same, when one joins himself to a church already organized. He is convinced that the true doctrine of Christ is taught in that society and wishing to partake of the blessings of which that doctrine gives him the assurance, he for this reason, unites himself to the Association.

All this implies knowledge of the truth, reception of it, and submission to its requirements. And it never can be too often repeat-

ed that the whole efficiency of religion is the efficiency of truth. Now for the purpose of facility in gaining knowledge of the truth, the Head of the church, in his wisdom and goodness, appointed as *teachers* of his religion, men who had known its power, and were fully instructed in its doctrines. He also gave sufficiently clear indications that the office of teacher was to be perpetual in the church;—the reason of it always exists. Here, then, we see what is the great end of the christian ministry. And really we are unable to see how any one can read the New Testament, without perceiving this truth. From beginning to end, little is said of the polity or order of the church, or the authority of its ministry: but the business of instruction is every where insisted on as their great appropriate duty. “The things which thou had heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou unto faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.” 2 Tim. ii, 2, and verse 24. “The servant of the Lord must be *apt to teach*,” ver. 25, “in meekness, *instructing* them who oppose themselves.” Chap. i, 13. “Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me.” Paul’s epistles to Timothy and Titus are full of exhortations and charges of this kind. And of himself he says, 1 Corinthians i, 17. “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to *preach the gospel*.” Gal. i, 15, 16. “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, &c.” The great business of the ministry is preaching the gospel. This accords precisely with the whole character and design of christianity as a system of truth, and deriving its whole saving efficacy from the power of truth. Clergymen are *teachers* in the school of Christ; and this is their highest character. The Bible is their text book. Hence, the unquestionable soundness of our remark, that he is the best minister of Christ, who most perfectly understands religious truth, most deeply feels its power, and most affectionately commends it to the acceptance of others.—We cannot help remarking that the imposition of a bishop’s hands does no good in this case. We have read and heard a great deal about the virtue of what is called apostolical succession. For the life of us, we never could get down to the meaning of this thing; but we are perfectly sure that it has no efficacy in this most important part of a minister’s office. Undeniable facts afford most decisive evidence that there is no stream of wisdom or knowledge running through the succession, and pouring out its rills, through Episcopal fingers, into those on whom bishops lay their hands.

But it is necessary that we should carefully consider the true character of ecclesiastical power, before we can bring the dispute between us and the bishop to a satisfactory conclusion. This is a subject which all ought to understand, for it concerns them much. The church and the world have suffered infinite evils from the mistakes of the ignorant, and the perversions of the aspiring in relation to this very thing. It is high time that the people should be so informed, as to preserve them from the errors zealously propagated in this country at the present day.

And here we lay it down as an indisputable truth that, in regard to the subject now before us, the great difference between the church

and any other voluntary association is this;—voluntary associations ordinarily have the power of framing their own laws, while the christian society is organized on the principle of *obedience to the laws of Christ*. This observation determines the *amount* of ecclesiastical power at once. There can, properly speaking, be no legislation in the church. The enactments of the Lord of conscience can alone bind the conscience. In regard to things indifferent (*res adiaphoræ*) the church can agree on rules of expediency, but she can make no laws. She can only receive as members of the Association those who profess obedience to the laws of Christ's kingdom; instruct them wherein they are ignorant; admonish and rebuke, in the spirit of meekness and love, the disobedient. And if any are found incorrigible, she can only say, that she owns them no longer as members. Beyond this, the church has no right to go. And we do here challenge any man to show that, as organized by the Apostles, she has any more power than this.

But here is a question of very great importance—who is the depository of this power? This is a dividing point between us and high-churchmen of all orders. We lay it down as a fundamental principle in our system of polity, that *ecclesiastical power is, by the Lord Jesus Christ, vested in THE CHURCH: it belongs to the body of the FAITHFUL PEOPLE*. Our opponents maintain, that it is committed by the Head of the church *directly to the christian ministry*: that the ministry consists of an order of men differing from the laity; and that it is their business to come between God and man, to transact business with men for heaven; authoritatively to interpret for men the word of God; and, by administering the sacraments, to give them assurance of salvation: in a word, they “are substitutes for Christ's person on earth.” Now we hold this doctrine to be utterly popish and heretical, inconsistent with the nature of true religion as a voluntary service, incompatible with christian liberty, and well suited to give an undue influence to the ministers of religion. The general admission of these pretensions, was one cause, and that not the least efficient, in producing the great corruption of the church. It brought about that subjugation of the mind to ecclesiastical power, which was one of the striking characteristics of the age of darkness, through which the church groped for nearly ten centuries. Nor does *religion* alone suffer by the admission of these pretensions. They clothe ecclesiastics with a power, to which nothing on earth is equal, and to which, after an unavailing struggle, every thing submits. What will we not surrender to a man, to whom we have surrendered the right of directing our conscience; and whom we regard as invested with authority from heaven to receive us into the church, or repel us from it; to give us assurance of salvation, or cut us off from the hope of mercy?

No: the power which the Lord Jesus gave, is vested in his church—in the great company of believers; the Society organized according to his laws. Of this we have decisive evidence in scripture. Matt. xviii, 17. “And if he shall neglect to hear them, TELL IT TO THE CHURCH,” but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.” The original word here used is the common one, (*ἐκκλησια*.) and it is admitted by

the best expositors, that it means the society formed by Jesus Christ, for religious purposes. See Lightfoot Hor. Talm. and Vitringa, de Vet. Lyn. Pa. 97. In conformity to this command of our Saviour, the Apostle Paul directs the *Church in Corinth* to cast out the offender, who had brought on them shame and trouble. And in referring to this subject he says, 2 Cor. ii, 6. "Sufficient is this punishment, which was inflicted of many." (*υπο των πλειονων.*) Hence it appears that the power of rejecting members, from this voluntary association, according to the appointment of Christ, is vested in the society.

Again: Paul addressing the church at Rome, Rom. xvi, 17. says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." 2 Thess. iii, 6. "Now we command you brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us." In 1 John iv, 1. we find the Apostle saying, "Brethren, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." All these directions are given to the body of the faithful. They are required to mark the disorderly, that is such as do not conform to the doctrine of Christ; to distinguish true and false teachers, and to reject the latter, while they approve the former. Hence we infer the indubitable right of a church, to choose its own religious teachers; and separate from themselves, members who refuse to submit to the law of Christ's kingdom.

What further evidence is necessary to show that, according to the will of Jesus Christ, the power which he has given is vested in the church? But it also accords with his will, that this voluntary association should execute the great purposes of its organization, according to the obvious dictates of prudence and common sense. In all societies it is necessary that officers should be appointed, to transact the business of the society, according to its constitution. The power of the Association belongs to the whole body of the members. But the exercise of it is delegated to the officers.—What they do, as representatives of the members, according to the constitution, is done by the members. So in general it is in the church. Ecclesiastical power, as far as there is any, belongs to the people; but the exercise of it is committed to the officers of the church. The various duties of these officers correspond to the nature and objects of the Association. By far the most important part of this duty consists, as has already been shown, in exhibition of the truth, as Christ has revealed it. The exhibition of truth includes the administration of the sacraments: because, the sacraments are *significant* actions, which when properly explained, do in the most striking manner represent the truth to our understandings. As for the rest, it consists in admitting members, into the Association, and rejecting from it, those who will not obey the commands of Christ.

That the officers of the christian society have no power separate and distinct from that of the church, appears to us most manifest from the passages of scripture before quoted. The Bible contains

the rule both of doctrine and discipline. Preachers of the gospel are teachers appointed to assist the people in understanding the will of God. If they teach doctrines contrary to this will, the people are bound by the command of God to withdraw from them. They must then be judges in this case; and form opinions under their responsibility to God alone. "Try the spirits," is the precept addressed to the whole body of the faithful. The people associated on the principle of obedience to the law of Christ, must be convinced that what they hear is the truth taught by Christ, or there can be no obligation to obey. And obedience is not rendered at all *because the church officer pronounces the law*, but because he tells what the *law of CHRIST* is. Bishop R.'s plan of verifying the church by the ministry is utterly preposterous. The truth is, it is the Bible which enables us to verify the ministry, and all their administrations. This is the plain scriptural statement of the case according to the passages before quoted. Common sense, too, coincides here as it does every where, with the rules of scripture. The thing is thus—The Bible contains a system of truth, by the moral power of which we are to be fitted for heaven. They are true ministers of Christ who truly preach his doctrine. If any, however they may have been ordained, preach not the gospel of Christ, they are not ministers of Christ. As teaching is their great business, so *teaching the truth* is decisive of their character. It is by this that they are to be verified. And we never can sufficiently wonder that a Protestant should leave these plain principles, and put the hopes of man for salvation on the utter impossibility of proving in any particular case what is called apostolical succession. Yes; it is the Bible which enables us to verify the church, and the ministry, and the sacraments—"I say the Bible is the religion of Protestants." And here we venture to propose a few questions growing out of this subject, which we wish bishop R. to digest at his leisure.

1. If preachers of the gospel, however ordained, teach doctrines contrary to the will of Christ, are the people bound to believe them?

2. If the officers of the church receive into the christian society, adult persons who do not repent and believe the gospel, does Christ receive them?

3. If through ignorance, prejudice or passion they repel from the church those who *do* repent and believe, does Christ reject them?

4. If they administer the sacraments in form, but are utterly ignorant of the spiritual truths represented by them, and administer to equally ignorant people, do they administer, and do the people receive true sacraments?

But leaving the bishop to ponder these interrogatories and pronounce as shall seem good to him; we proceed a little farther with our views of the church. Christ we have seen has left all the power which he chose should be exercised, to the church. But according to the ordinary principles of convenience and prudence this power is delegated to the officers of the church. The particular form, however, of church government is not drawn out in the scriptures. If it is, why can it not be plainly stated, so as at once to settle this much disputed point? But this never has been done

by any of the advocates of divine right, and we boldly say that it never can be done. We challenge any man, or set of men on the earth to do it. A few examples, and a few general principles are all that we find in the Bible. There must be teachers in the church, and there must be discipline. If the church chooses among the teachers, to invest one with the office of inspecting and superintending his brethren, we have nothing to say against it. Only let that one remember, as Jerome expresses it, that he is superior to his brethren by the custom of the church, and not by the appointment of the Lord. If others prefer to follow the original example, and keep all religious teachers in a state of official equality, we do highly approve the determination. But in either case, we would have the teachers to remember that they do not stand between God and man, deriving their authority directly from heaven, and empowered to bind the consciences of their fellow creatures.

Our view of this subject may be illustrated by the case of civil government. Scripture says "the powers that be are ordained of God." This declaration is received very differently by different men. A pensioned advocate of legitimacy uses it to prove the divine right of kings. We are sure that if we chose it, we could bring a better argument for monarchy from the Bible, than our Bishop has done for prelacy. But an enlightened republican sees at once through the sophistry of all reasonings of this kind. The Bible teaches no more than that civil government is agreeable to the will of God, and that it is not a matter to be meddled with by the teachers of religion. If the people prefer a monarchical government, as in England, be it so. If they choose a republic as in the United States, so much the better. But all the time the power is in the people. In like manner, it is the will of God that his church should be under a form of government suited to its nature as a voluntary association formed to give efficiency to revealed truth. And the church is not organized without its officers. The ministry then may be said to be of divine appointment. It truly is ordained of God, because it is the will of the Head of the Church that there should be teachers of the truth in the christian society. But farther than this, the divine right of priests is as great a fable as the divine right of kings. It was originally invented for the same purpose; and we are truly sorry to observe that these old mischievous notions are revived in this country and this age.

Having stated our views thus far, respecting the purpose and powers of the christian ministry, we find this a proper occasion for inquiring, how, according to the scriptures, men are invested with this office. The technical term for this investiture is *ordination*. We are brought to the subject by the following passage in the work under Review.

"In my Farewell Sermon, p. 8—I lay down the following, as the just and only certain method of determining this question. "If the authority by which any denomination of christians minister in sacred things cannot be shown, to be derived from the apostles of Christ, that is cannot be verified as a fact, such denomination cannot be a true branch of that catholic apostolic church, in which we profess to believe." In your Review p. 647, you give your view of the subject in these words;

"If an association calling itself a church, administers baptism, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—celebrates the Lord's Supper, giving

bread and wine to the communicants, as memorials of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus—puts the pure word of God into the hands of the people—teaches the doctrines of Christ, such as “the entire spiritual death and alienation of man from God—the reconciliation of God to the world by the sufferings and death of his only begotten Son—the atonement of his blood—justification by faith—acceptance through the merits of the Saviour—conversion of the heart to God—holiness of life, the only evidence of it, and the grace of God, in the renewal of the Holy Ghost, the sole agent from first to last, in working out our salvation from sin here, and from hell hereafter;” and finally, has a ministry trained for the work, and qualified to impart spiritual instruction—we have no doubt but there is a true church of Christ whether their ministers are set apart to their work “by the laying on the hands of the Presbytery” as in the days of Paul, or by the ordination of a Bishop, as is the practice of some modern churches.”

“Without stopping to notice the abundant matter for animadversion, which this very guardedly equivocal expression of your views on the divine right of the christian ministry, presents; I accept it as an acknowledgment, that you consider ordination *essential* to that office. But as you do not say in what sense you consider it *essential*, I must therefore ask whether it is a mere designation to office for notoriety of the person, or as imparting a character, that you think it essential? On the answer to this much depends, through whatever channel the ordaining power is transmitted, whether through Presbyters or Bishops. As you admit however, that the ministerial office is a divine institution, I must suppose you also to admit, that ordination confers or imparts a character; and as the ministerial character is a divine right to transact the affairs of Christ’s kingdom, ordination must consequently be the only evidence (miracles excepted) of divine right—the substitute to us, for miraculous attestation to the ministerial commission. If this reasoning be correct, it also follows necessarily, that as this evidence of divine right is for the benefit of third persons—it must be verifiable—it must be capable of proof, as a fact.”

The general view which we have taken of this subject is such as this—According to the nature of the case, the efficacy of the gospel, as has already been shown, depends on the truth which it reveals, and on that truth as understood and cordially received. Hence the importance of religious teachers, and the reason why, in every age, it is the will of Christ that men should be employed in the office. But in the church as organized by Christ and his Apostles, nothing is known of a difference of *order*. This is a figment of men in after times, who in their ardent aspirings to power, struck out this invention to secure to themselves greater reverence, and more complete submission on the part of the people. That there were *different offices* in the christian church, and that the duties of one officer ought not to be performed by another, we most readily grant. And the reason is most obvious. “Let all things be done decently and in order”—Let all things be done for edification. But it produces disorder, it prevents edification to confound offices and duties. This is the reason; and as far as we can see, the only reason.—Where in the New Testament is any intimation that by one ceremony of ordination the character of Deacon is impressed; by another that of priest; and then by a different ceremony the episcopal character was communicated? Surely we need not say that there was nothing of all this in the practice of the Apostles. As for difference of dignity and rank, therefore, there was no such thing. It is at war with the whole genius of christianity, and the spirit breathed by Jesus Christ. Matt. xx, 25, 26. “But Jesus called

them unto him and said, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; [διακονος servant] and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant" [δουλος-slave.] "The presbyters who are among you," says the Apostle Peter, "I exhort, who am your fellow presbyter." The Apostles of Christ, after they had received the Holy Spirit, dreamed not of orders and dignities. Such trifles were too low and worldly for them: nor were they thought of, until a secular spirit crept into the church.

But as for the particular point before us, the true meaning of ordination, a careful examination of the New Testament affords the surest means of arriving at the truth.

The following, if our Greek concordance does not mislead us, are the only words of the original, rendered by the English term ordain, applied to ecclesiastical appointments. We quote in each case, the original word, that competent readers may judge for themselves: and we do sincerely hope (such is our feeling for the bishop) that Greek will not be troublesome to him.

Mark iii, 14. "And he ordained [ἐποίησε] twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach." Now any schoolboy, who has read as much Greek as is contained in the *Græca Minora*, knows that the word here used in the original, is about equivalent to the English verb *to make*; and when applied to official situations is certainly as unlimited as the word *to appoint*. If any idea is particularly expressed, it is the sovereign authority of Him who instituted the office.

The next word rendered by *ordain* is found in Acts i, 22. "Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained [γενέσθαι] to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Here the word is as indefinite as the English word *to be*; and the passage might with the utmost propriety be rendered "must one be or become a witness with us of his resurrection."

In the next place, an example is afforded by Acts xiv, 23. "And when they (Paul and Barnabas) had ordained [χειροτονησαντες] them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." The term here in use, signifies literally *to stretch forth the hand*. In the popular governments of Greece, this was the mode in which the citizens, in public elections, gave their votes:* hence the word came to be used in the sense of our English word *to elect*. The sense afterwards became more general, and the word was equivalent to the English, *appoint*;† no matter how the appointment was made.

* See Xenophon's Anabasis, iii. 22. Καὶ ὅτῳ δοκεῖ τὰντα, ἀνατείνω τὴν χεῖρα. Ἀνέτεινον ἀπαντες.

† 2 Cor. viii, 19. Χειροτονηθεὶς συνεκδημος, ἡμῶν, who was chosen of the churches, to travel with us. Philo. De Leg. ad Caium ἐχειρολόνει τοῖς διακομιθῆντας ἀνδρας, He appointed men to carry the letters.

Hence, according to the usage of language, the words of this passage determine nothing as to the nature of ordination; they only enable us to say that Paul and Barnabas appointed presbyters in the churches.

Again: in 1 Timothy ii, 7, Paul says, "whereunto I am ordained [*ἑτέθην*] a preacher and an apostle." Now a bishop need not be told that this is one of the most general words in the Greek language; and that it answers to the English terms, to *place, put, lay, &c.* In the sense of the text, it is spoken of persons appointed or designated for any specific object; whether to do or suffer any thing. Let the reader consult the following passages, and if he can do so in the original. John xv, 16. 1 Tim. i, 12. 1 Thes. v, 9. 1 Peter ii, 8. In the first passage, this word is rendered *ordained*: In the second, it is *putting me into* the ministry: In the third, it is *appointed*: and so in the last. The word employed in these passages, affords, therefore another instance of a term so undefined, as to determine nothing beyond mere appointment to office.

Once more: in Titus i, 5, the Apostle says, "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain [*Καταστήσῃς*] Elders in every city." Here again is a term of very general signification, often rendered *to place or set over, to appoint*. In the sense of the text it means to *constitute, or appoint to any station, duty or office*. It occurs in Matt. xxiv, 45, 47—xxv, 21, 23. Luke xii, 14. Acts vi, 3, 7—x, 27, 35. Heb. ii, 7—v, 1, &c. Let the reader consult these passages also in the original, and mark the usage of the New Testament in relation to this word.

The conclusion to which we are obliged to come from the whole view of the case is this:—The writers of the New Testament, in speaking of ordination use no fewer than *five different words*, all of which are as general, undefined terms as any others in the language; and by no torture of interpretation can be made to signify more than *to appoint, to place in office*.

The use of this induction will be apparent from the following observations.—The high church notion respecting ordination is, that it is a peculiar rite, *impressing a character*; that this character is essential to the ministerial office; that it can be communicated in no possible way, but by a diocesan bishop, who can show his authentic credentials, as derived from the Apostles; that the very being of the church, and all the warranted hopes of man depend on this ordination; and that all who are not connected with a ministry thus constituted, have no reliance on the covenanted mercies of God.—This is high church doctrine; but is it scriptural? Is it at all credible that the inspired writers would have expressed a subject of such unspeakable importance, of such awful bearing in the most general and indefinite terms in the language? It is not in this way they write, when they speak of other matters, which concern the life of the soul. When they treat of repentance, of faith, of charity, of holy living, they speak in terms, plain, definite, decisive. But when they speak of ordination, sometimes one general term, and

sometimes another is employed by them. Is it not manifest then, that what high churchmen think *essential*, the Apostles regarded as comparatively unimportant? We venture to affirm, that an intelligent reader of the New Testament, without any system to serve, on perusing all the passages quoted by us, would not once think of ordination, as bishop R. does. The truth is this; men's minds have been filled with hierarchical notions, and inventions of an ambitious clergy: the plain, unpretending *teachers* of christianity have been metamorphosed into priests of the most high God, accredited agents of heaven, substitutes (vicars) of Christ;—and the scriptures have been construed to suit these previous notions. Our readers may rely on it that high church would never have been found in the Bible, had not the prejudices of men placed it there beforehand.

But there are phrases in the New Testament, which express what is meant by ordination, as well as single words which designate the act. A careful inquiry into the meaning of these is demanded.—The whole subject is however included in a single question, What is signified by the laying on of hands in ordination? The record of the action is made in four or five passages in the New Testament: namely, Acts vi, 6—xiii, 3. 1 Tim. iv, 14, compared with 2 Tim. i, 6—and 1 Tim. v, 22. If there are any other cases in which imposition of hands is used to signify ecclesiastical ordination, they have escaped our notice. Before we proceed to a particular examination of these, we would observe that, in scripture, this rite was observed on five occasions.

1. When a benediction was pronounced. 2. When the special *benediction of pardon* was pronounced. 3. When miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit were bestowed. 4. When miraculous cures were performed. 5. When persons were inaugurated, or inducted into office. The Apostles by the imposition of hands, sometimes intended one of these things, and sometimes the other. But what was the particular import of the rite in ordination? We shall best answer by looking at its origin. That it was a common rite in the Jewish synagogue, and of course familiar to all Jewish worshippers, is well known. In *Num.* xxvii, 15—23, we find a case which probably gave rise to the custom. God especially designates Joshua as the successor of Moses. He is selected, because "*the Spirit is in him.*" And Moses is commanded "to lay his hand upon him, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and all the congregation, and give him a charge in their sight."—"And Moses did as the Lord commanded, and he took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation, and he laid his hands on him and gave him a charge." Now how is it possible for any one not to see that imposition of hands here is for *designation of the person to office?* The appointment had been made before, and the reason of it assigned; *because the Spirit was in Joshua.*—After this we find the prevalence of this custom down to the days of the Apostles.

With these observations before us, let us turn to the first case cited. Acts vi, 6. It is that of the appointment of Deacons: "whom they set before the Apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid

their hands on them.”—A consideration of all the circumstances will show beyond a doubt, that there is nothing in the rite as here stated, but an induction into offices to which the persons mentioned had been elected. If any one affirms that there is something else, we would fain know what it is. These men had, before their election, received the gift of the Holy Spirit, as is evident from the express words of the sacred writer. The Apostles did not therefore lay on their hands, to bestow that gift. And if election by the people was any thing more than an unmeaning ceremony, it gave to these deacons the right, power or authority—the reader may call it what he will—to distribute the alms of the church. The deacons, then, did not receive from the Apostles that which the vote of the people had already given. The laying on of hands by the Apostles was just what we have stated, an induction into office—an investiture. It is needless to reason on the expediency and propriety of adopting some decent ceremony to be observed on such occasions; and we need not stop to remark on the advantage of adopting one familiar to the people.

The second case, Acts xiii, 3, is that of Barnabas and Saul, who were sent out on a special mission to the Gentiles. The following verses clearly state the matter—“Now there were in the church that was at Antioch, certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, *and laid their hands on them*, they sent them away. Now here was a case of ordination to the ministry, or there was not. If there was, it is a case fatal to the cause of prelacy: for then *prophets and elders* ordained an Apostle; that is, they ordained to an office higher than that held by themselves. And so presbyters might ordain a diocesan bishop, if they should happen to wish for one [Quod Deus avertat!] But again: if here was an ordination, then what becomes of the notion that in ordination something is communicated; or as bishop R. and the Catholics say *a character is impressed*? Could these prophets and elders communicate what they had not?—Could they impress the character of Apostolical authority? This will not be pretended. But if there was no ordination here, in the ecclesiastical sense, then imposition of hands was nothing more than designation, after the customary form, to a particular service. This appears to us to be the just view of the subject; for both Barnabas and Saul had, for some years, been employed in the ministry; and surely they did not enter on this service, without having been duly authorized.—Besides; it is well known that, in ancient times, when particular prayer was offered for any one, it was customary, for greater impressiveness, to lay hands on his head. And nothing is more common among truly pious persons of every age, than united prayer for one who is about to engage in any arduous and important enterprise. Such appears to have been the case in the instance now under consideration. But let every one judge for himself. If however, our opinion is correct, it shows that no mystery was made

of this laying on of hands: one while it was designation to office, and then designation to particular service in an office.

In the next place, pursuing our inquiry, we come to 1 Tim. iv, 14, compared with 2 Tim. i, 6. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands." On the first of these passages we remark, that the word rendered *gift* (*χαρισμα*) means any thing freely bestowed of what kind soever it may be. The phrase rendered *in thee*, (*εν σοι*) is a periphrasis for *your*, according to a well known usage of the Greek language, which employs a substantive pronoun, with this preposition before it for an adjective: *χαρισμα εν σοι*, then means *your gift*, i. e. the gift which you have received. By looking at the context, it is evident that by this *gift*, the Apostle designates the office of a christian minister, or teacher. The phrase by prophecy is universally understood to mean that prophetic men had foretold Timothy's entrance into the ministry, and probably his distinguished eminence. "WITH the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery," expresses the manner in which Timothy was inducted into this office. That the preposition *μετα* is thus employed might easily be shown by decisive examples; and if this Review should ever be re-published in a separate form with notes and comments, we will show it. The whole amount of the passage, then, is an exhortation to Timothy to discharge faithfully and zealously the duties of the ministerial office, into which he had been inducted by the Presbytery. [Quere—What would bishop R. give if this word PRESBYTERY could be expunged fairly and honestly from the text, and *bishop* be inserted in its place?] A comparison of the passage above with that before quoted, 2 Tim. i, 6, warrants the belief that when Timothy was ordained, Paul was moderator (chairman, or president, as some would say) of the Presbytery which ordained him, and in virtue of his apostolical powers, communicated the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, here called the *gift of God*. But that ordination communicated any thing mysterious, or expressed any transmission of power or authority from Jesus Christ through the ordaining minister is no where in the remotest degree intimated. The other passage referred to, 1 Tim. v, 22. "Lay hands suddenly on no man," determines nothing as to the particular inquiry now before us. We do therefore maintain that according to scripture, *ordination* is nothing more than induction into an office established by Jesus Christ as Head of the Church.

If it be asked, why then do we hold ordination to be necessary; and why is it ordinarily to be performed by persons already invested with the ministerial office?—We answer,

1. Not because they in a mysterious manner convey a "character of authority" which has been transmitted through a long line of ecclesiastics from the apostles. But,

2. Because it is the will of Jesus Christ that, in his church, every thing should be done decently and in order; that the teachers of religion should be as well qualified as possible for discharging the duties of their office; and that such measures should be adopted for

ensuring this great object as will give confidence to the people that those who come to them as ministers of religion, are sound and capable teachers of the truth. These are plain, intelligible reasons, which show the wisdom of the appointment. For it is obvious to every man of common sense, that they who have themselves been trained, and who have had experience in the work of the ministry are the best judges of the qualifications of candidates for the sacred office. This plain rule was adopted in the organization of the church. It is the only rule sustained either by reason or scripture. The opinion that by the hands of man a *character* is transmitted from one generation to another, was cherished by ambitious and worldly-minded ecclesiastics to increase their power; it was readily received by the superstitious credulity of former times; and has done infinite mischief to the church. As for *authority* to teach Christ's doctrine, children in knowledge ought to know that it is not derived from man. We receive it from Jesus Christ, through his revealed truth. He who has received the gospel and felt its power; has been trained for the ministry, and inducted into the office in a way approved by the church and conformed to the *general* principles laid down in scripture, has all the authority which man can have. He preaches *Christ's* doctrine, administers *Christ's* sacraments, and is therefore acknowledged as a minister of *Christ*. But let us suppose that a man who has been ordained by the archbishop of Canterbury, *does not preach the doctrine of Christ*, but ANOTHER GOSPEL, is he a true minister? Let us suppose that he is a Socinian—such there are in the English church—and that, although he administers the sacraments according to the forms of that church, he teaches his flock to understand and receive them in the Socinian sense:—for instance, although he administers baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, yet he understands, and teaches others to understand that by these words are meant “the supreme God, the man Jesus, and a divine influence,” does he because he was *episcopally ordained* administer, and does the subject of baptism receive a true sacrament? On the other hand, when a presbyterian minister administers baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as one living and true God, does he administer no true sacrament because he was not episcopally ordained? Where in the New Testament is any thing to warrant such opinions as these? In the rule given us by our blessed Saviour, *form* is nothing: *truth* is every thing: it is by the truth we are sanctified; by the truth we are made free; by the word of God, we are begotten to a lively hope.

We are grieved and ashamed that the pernicious superstitions of the dark ages should be revived and propagated among us, as truths connected with the very being of the church of Christ, and the best hopes of man for eternity. With many, the opinions which we combat are mere prejudices entertained without any evil intention; but they are deeply to be deplored, because they narrow the views, and limit the exercise of christian affection; they prevent co-operation in plans of christian benevolence, and impede the progress of true religion.

In reply to all this, bishop R. may say that he holds the necessity of “unity of faith” as well as of “order.” He does indeed lay

down this position in one place in his book; but in another, he unequivocally prefers the *ungodly, fox-hunting parish priest*, to the *most learned and pious dissenting minister*. What the faith of an ungodly, unconverted man is, which unites him with the church, and makes him a link in the chain which preserves the unity of the church, we leave to bishop R. to determine. Certainly there can be no reliance on such a man for true doctrine. He will not preach the pure gospel of Christ. Bishop R. must here resort to his book of common prayer, or his assurance, for unity of faith is gone. And if this is his only resource, has he not been rather rash, in his disclaimer on page 10? He there declaims somewhat furiously about the Reviewer's assertion, that the bishop wished to send the Book of Common Prayer with the Bible. Yet he takes good care to deny nothing but the *authority* of the assertion. He will not deny the wish. But of this more *perhaps* hereafter. We here desire our readers distinctly to understand that our views of ordination have not been adopted because we feel any greater uncertainty as to the succession of presbyters than of bishops. We believe, too, without the least shadow of a doubt, that Calvin and Knox had just as much power to *impress a character* as Cranmer or Ridley. Our opinions are the result of an honest inquiry into the constitution of the church of Christ, as it is laid down in the New Testament. There every thing is commended by the plain and obvious reason of the case. Nothing is mystical; nothing superstitious. The christian religion is a system of truth, which produces its whole effect by its being known, and received in the love of it. For this reason, and to accomplish this important purpose, teachers of this religion are employed. There is no more mystery in the office, than in that of any other teacher. He who best understands the religion, most deeply feels its power, and has the greatest zeal for its propagation, is the best instructor. This is precisely the case in all ordinary affairs. Had the matter always been put on this ground, infinite abuse would have been prevented, and the church had been spared incalculable evil: numerous and bitter prejudices would have found no place; and that suspicion of clergymen, and that hostility which rises in many minds so strongly against them, would appear without the shadow of a foundation. Many difficulties which have perplexed inquirers; many objections urged by infidels would never once have occurred to the mind.

As an illustration of this last remark, we would ask, who can perceive any difference in the ministrations of religious teachers arising from a *difference in their ordination*? What visible difference in the effect of their labours? A pious, zealous episcopalian preaches the gospel: sinners are converted; the faithful are edified; the afflicted are comforted. A presbyterian preaches the same truths; and the same effects follow. No man in the world can point out the smallest difference between the penitence, the faith, the love, the hope, the comfort produced by the instrumentality of these different preachers. The character of holiness formed by the truth in each case is, as far as it goes, precisely the same character. Yet bishop R. and his brethren of the high church would wish us to believe that there is a most material difference in these

two cases, arising solely from this fact, that one preacher was ordained by a diocesan bishop, and the other by a presbytery. The converts made by the instrumentality of the Presbyterian, believe the doctrine, because it is Christ's doctrine; rely on the promises, because they were *made by Christ*; receive the sacraments because they were *instituted by Christ*; cherish the hope of salvation, because it is warranted by the truth which *Christ* has revealed, and the work which *Christ* has wrought by his spirit; yet this hope is unscriptural, because, forsooth, his religious teacher has not received a *character of authority* transmitted through bishops and popes for 1800 years. Whereas the Episcopalian, who exercises the same repentance, the same faith, the same love, and no more; who receives the sacraments as signs and seals of the same covenant of grace, and cherishes precisely the same hope of salvation, has the warrant of heaven for all, because his religious instructor has the *character of authority!* Pretensions like these stumble belief—create offence—awaken suspicion. Men who have no *prelatical* prejudices to warp their minds, look only at the ability of the teacher, and the doctrine taught by him. If these are approved, it does not seem to matter a straw whether the teacher had the hands of *one man*, or of a *presbytery* laid on his head. And if the Presbyterian succeeds in persuading his countrymen, to be good citizens, good husbands, fathers, masters, neighbours; to be kind, benevolent, temperate, honest, industrious; to fear God, and work righteousness, the plain, practical man of the world, who judges of religion by its fruits, is perfectly amazed, when he hears the *bishops of the church* declaring that all this piety, this benevolence, this pure morality goes for nothing, because, truly, these people have not been baptized by a *duly* authorized minister, have not received the Lord's supper from a man, on whose head a bishop has laid his hands! Now, people generally will not take the trouble to search the scriptures, and see whether these things are so. For the most part, they take it for granted that surely the bishop must know. They assume that christianity is really such a religion as its *titled* advocates represent; that it does suspend man's hopes of salvation on these comparatively trivial circumstances; and the inference is, that it is a *superstition* unworthy of a wise man's reception. It is thought incredible that God should connect eternal life with things of so small importance. It is suspected that clergymen put in claims to some mysteriously sacred and elevated character, to raise themselves above other people; and clothe themselves with spiritual power, for the sake of ensuring implicit submission. There is no telling the extent of the mischief thus wrought by high church pretensions.

But let the people know, that according to the scriptures, the truth of God is not thus limited in its saving efficacy: that a sinner does not derive his warrant to believe that truth, and to rely on the promises of God in Christ from a fellow worm. Let them know that there is not a syllable in the gospel to warrant these extravagant assumptions. And as they love their souls, let them not in a spirit of indolence, rely on any assurance, that man can give them, of the favour of God, and the happiness of heaven. Bishop

R. is angry with us,—[a very unepiscopal passion this, Bishop!]
—because we deny all these pretensions; and warn the people against them. As for ourselves, it is impossible for us to partake of his emotion. There is something so *mock heroic* in all this blustering dignity, this pomp and parade, that our greatest difficulty is to refrain from holding up the whole thing to ridicule. The seriousness of the general subject, and reflection on the mischief done by such arrogant claims, often suddenly change our disposition to laughter into sorrow and mourning. It shall be for a lamentation that ministers of religion, in this enlightened age, are running back into the darkness of the 12th century; and that any of our countrymen allow prejudice so to sway their minds, that they admit the claims of men, who set up to be *accredited agents of heaven, and substitutes of Jesus Christ.*

That these are the claims of bishop R. and his high churchmen, is abundantly evident from every part of his book. The following may serve as a specimen.

“What Presbyterian or other^d dissenter, will risk the purchase of property from a distant owner, by power of attorney, upon the mere assertion of the agent that he is empowered to convey the title? Know you of any, who would not require to see the power of attorney—that it was in due form of law, and such as would bind the principal, before he paid the price, or even became bound for it? And know you not of thousands, who bargain for the rich inheritance of the gospel for themselves and their families, without the slightest security, beyond the mere say so of the agent? Alas, how very true are our Saviour's words “that the children of this world, are in their generation, wiser than the children of light.” Episcopalians present these doctrines to their hearers, in the full persuasion, that the church, the ministry and the sacraments, are as distinctly and truly appointments of God, in order to the salvation of sinners, as the faith of the gospel; and that only as these are united in the profession of religion, can the hope thereby given to man, be worthy of the name of assurance. Episcopalians consider the grace and mercy of the gospel, as matters of *strict covenant stipulation*; as bound up with the authority to dispense them, as inseparable from that authority; and only by virtue of that authority (with reverence be it spoken) pledging the glorious source of all mercy and grace to his creatures. But they presume not to pass beyond their written warrant, either to extend or to circumscribe the mercy of God; they know what is promised, and on what conditions, and of that only do they venture to speak. Those persons who profess to be acquainted with the secret decrees of Almighty God, may also be acquainted with the extent and the rule of his uncovenanted mercy, and prefer it to that which is promised; but Episcopalians dare not thus speculate on eternity—and they feel themselves well supported in presenting and pressing this distinction upon their hearers, by the whole analogy of scripture.”—pp. 31, 32.

And here, since the bishop puts the matter on this ground, we demand that he shows us HIS POWER OF ATTORNEY *duly authenticated.* He talks much of pretense titles: let him give us, and the good people of the country (who are called on to submit to the spiritual authority of himself and his brethren) let him give us all, indisputable evidence that he has received authority to assure us of salvation, when we receive the sacraments at his hands. Nothing short of literal compliance will satisfy us, or ought to satisfy the people. As our warranted hopes of salvation depend on our receiving the sacraments from the accredited agents of heaven, we have a right to require him to produce his credentials signed and sealed, so as

to remove all possibility of doubt. Let him understand, too, how far this demand goes. We will state it distinctly,

1. An unbaptized person is not in the church: but, none but true ministers have a right to baptize.—The bishop then must show that he received *legitimate* baptism; otherwise he is out of the church. But to prove this, he must show that the man who baptized him, received *legitimate* baptism; for a man out of the church cannot bring another in, otherwise Lot or Melchizedeck might have administered circumcision, which the bishop affirms they could not do. And thus must he go back to the days of the Apostles, proving in every case the legitimate baptism of every minister in the line. But we are right sure the bishop, with all his aids, cannot do this. For in the first place, it is well known that during the dark ages of popery, not only were *duly qualified priests* permitted to baptize, but even laymen, and in some cases a very convenient and useful class of old women. And what is equally bad, among the changes which have taken place in the church, there is every reason to believe that bishops and archbishops too, were baptized by *dissenters*. This was unquestionably the case with that most admirable man archbishop Leighton, with archbishop Secker, whose works no man can read without both pleasure and profit, and with Tillotson, the glory of the church of England. These instances occur at the moment; research would probably furnish many more.

2. However legitimate a man's baptism, if he has not been episcopally ordained, he has no right to administer the ordinances; and can give no assurance of salvation. The bishop then must embrace in his proof, evidence that every man in the line between him and St. Peter, was not only baptized in due form, but so ordained that there can be no flaw in the *character of authority* impressed on him. But if he is as well acquainted with the history of the English church as he ought to be, he will not dare to deny that there have been ministers in that church, who were ordained by Presbyteries.

3. As none but a bishop, according to our author, can impress the *character of authority*, the right reverend Doctor must go back from himself to the Apostles, and give not a list made up according to probable conjecture—this cannot satisfy us where our hopes for eternity are concerned—but unequivocal evidence in every case, that each bishop in the line, was *duly* baptized, *duly* confirmed, *duly* ordained deacon, *duly* ordained priest, *duly* consecrated bishop. The break of a single link destroys the whole of this long chain. Assumption won't do—We cannot admit conjectures and probabilities. Our souls are at stake. Our hopes of heaven depend on our *knowing* the truth. Do not tell us, then, that the thing can easily be done—but do it.

Really the bishop must summon to his aid more lawyers and better historians, than have yet given him assistance, or we and the good people of North Carolina, will have to wait long before our doubts are removed. Many we fear will die, before the title papers can be made out.

No reader of bishop R's. book can say that we have required more than his principles, fairly interpreted, render necessary. We then repeat our demand—Let us see; let the world see the *bish-*

op's power of attorney fully authenticated. If he will not comply with this demand; if neither charity to us, nor a regard to his own consistency can bring out the document, let him say no more about *pre-
tence titles*. But let the plain man of common sense, look at the New Testament, and say, do our hopes of heaven depend on a broken reed like this?

Every intelligent reader has perceived that a material point of difference between bishop R. and us, regards the purpose and powers of the ministry of the gospel. Well informed christians of every denomination agree that the church is the same in all ages—that it is *one*—that it is the will of Christ, the Head, that there should be teachers in this church—and that it is their appropriate business to administer the sacraments, as signs and seals of the covenant of grace. But bishop R. errs most grievously in supposing that the power and authority of the standing and perpetual officers of the church, are the same, with the power and authority of the extraordinary officers, appointed for special and extraordinary purposes. It did not suit the wise designs of our Lord to commit his doctrine to writing. He made his revelation gradually, as men were able to bear it. Until this religion was written in a book for the instruction of all, it was indispensably necessary that inspired men should authoritatively declare the will of Christ, or, to use the bishop's language, should be substitutes of Christ on earth. This was the case with the apostles. But when they were removed, *their writings were put in their place*. The NEW TESTAMENT succeeded to the apostolic administration. It contains the doctrine of Christ. It possesses the power, lodged no where else, of authoritatively declaring the will of Christ, and determining precisely what men must believe and do, that they may be saved. Does any protestant Bishop dare deny this? However he may boast of apostolic succession, does he presume to put himself in the place of an apostle, and by his authority bind the consciences of men? Is he not obliged to resort to the word of God for this purpose? If, in ignorance of *sacred Hermeneutics*,—We beg pardon, the bishop does not like this word—if in ignorance of the true method of expounding scripture—a case that has often occurred—he should mistake the meaning of God's word, does his episcopal authority bind men to receive his mistake as divine truth? And if an humble Presbyterian or Congregationalist states, in his exposition, the precise meaning of the sacred writer, the very doctrine of Jesus Christ, is there no authority in this statement? Let the bishop weigh these questions well. The apostles, as men commissioned by the Lord Jesus, and inspired with his Spirit, so as to be able infallibly to declare his will, could in *strict propriety* of speech say “We are ambassadors for Christ,” &c. ; we take the place of Christ, and for him declare the truth of God. The apostles delivered the terms dictated by their master, committed them to writing, and published them to the world: so that now they are equally accessible to all. The case of ordinary ministers of the gospel is very different. They bring no new terms: they reveal no truths unknown before: they make no new discoveries in religion. But their simple business as preachers is, to assist their fellow men in understanding the terms of salva-

sion, and to persuade all men to embrace them as they are revealed in the gospel.—The whole authority is lodged in the gospel as a revelation of the will of God; and not an atom of it in man. The case is the same in regard to the sacraments. The observance of them is binding because they were instituted by Christ. They are efficacious, because they convey to the mind of the believer, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, in a very impressive manner, the truths of Christ's religion. They strengthen the faith of the receiver, not because they are administered by man, but because they are God's seals, annexed by him to his own covenant. Any other view of this subject is mystical; is popish; nourishes superstition; and serves effectually to increase undue clerical power. With an inquiring mind too, the high church notions must produce serious doubts, and very troublesome anxieties. For unless the preacher always carries with him *his duly authenticated power of attorney*, there will in some case or other arise a question in the mind of the receiver, whether the administrator bears the character of authority in unbroken succession from the days of the Apostles. The difference between the bishop and his reviewer, in regard to this whole matter, may be thus stated in contrast.

Reviewer. Having been appointed a teacher in the church of Christ, I do declare unto you that *such* and *such* are the doctrines of Christ as revealed in the Bible. Believe them, *not because of my word, but because they are the doctrine of Christ.* It is this which gives them their whole authority to bind your consciences, and regulate your faith. The authority I repeat is not in the *man* but in the *word*. I speak as unto wise men—Search the scriptures, and judge ye, what I say.

Reviewer. As a teacher of Christ's religion, I remind you that he has established a church on earth, which you are bound to enter, that you may partake of all the helps and encouragements which he has provided for his people. And having first given yourself to the Lord, you must then give yourself and yours unto us, according to the will of God.

Reviewer. As a minister of the gospel I teach that Jesus Christ appointed the sacraments as *signs*, to represent the great truths of his religion; and as *seals*, by which he gives assurance of his grace and mercy. You are to receive these as *Christ's sacraments*; as *signs of his truth* and *seals of his favour*; and in

Bishop. I the authorized agent of heaven, the substitute for the person of Christ on earth, do declare that the will of God is so and so; and by the authority vested in me I pledge the God of truth to fulfil these promises of his word. This is a peculiar power vested in me, and in all my brethren, with which no other men on the earth are clothed. If therefore you would escape perdition, and cherish an authorized hope of heaven, receive the truth as I deliver it to you.

Bishop. As Christ's agent, and having his authority in my hands, I require you to come and receive baptism at my hands, that being thus regenerated, and sealed unto the day of redemption, you may be converted and by partaking of the Lord's supper at my hands may be assured of salvation. And I tell you that none but I and my brethren of the episcopal order can admit you into the church, can regenerate you, and assure you of a title to God's covenanted mercies.

Bishop. I, the accredited agent of heaven, administer to you these sacraments, whereby, as Christ's substitute on earth, and clothed with authority for that purpose, "I pledge the glorious source of all mercy and grace" to you, and hereby I give to you the assurance of salvation. And I require you to believe that there is

them you are to consider HIM AS PLEDGING HIMSELF to the humble believer, to do all that is there set forth and promised.

no other authority on earth, save that which is vested in me and my episcopal brethren, thus to bind the God of Heaven to the fulfilment of the promises of his word.

Such is the difference between bishop R. and us in relation to these subjects. Can it be necessary to argue the point with him? Can any one read the New Testament, and doubt a moment where the truth lies? Can any one help being shocked, the bishop's salvo notwithstanding, when he sees what claims are set up for Episcopalians by this their fearless champion. "The BIBLE, the BIBLE is the religion of protestants." The Bible is *their* substitute for Christ's person on earth; because it contains the very words which he spake, the very doctrines which he taught. It is there we find "truth without mixture of error;" there is our warrant for faith, our assurance of hope, our authority for administration. And the ministers of this religion are either teachers to assist the people, as we said, in understanding the true meaning of the word and sacraments; or they are instruments for the administration of those sacraments. The whole authority, and power is from heaven. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man."

These remarks will enable the reader, to understand what answer we would give to such personal addresses as the following.

"Dr Rice—is this any thing like the work *you say you are commissioned by Heaven to perform?* When you baptise, do you not profess to bring an alien into covenant with God, and to seal him to the day of redemption? When you preach, do you not declare the conditions of salvation, denounce the punishment of sin, exhort to repentance, and instruct and build up unto faith and holiness? When you administer the Lord's supper, do you not negotiate afresh the pardon of the penitent, and replenish and confirm the grace of worthy partakers? When you visit the sick and dying, are not the consolations of religion at your disposal according to the circumstances of the case? And in all this are you not an agent—feel you not that you are an agent, deriving your warrant and authority for all you do from the great head of the church, through the visible church on earth? Where then is the wrong, or the error on my part, in this view of the purpose of the church?"—p. 28.

Truly we have no such powers—Heaven forbid that we should ever pretend to them. *We seal no one to the day of redemption.* Let the bishop look into his New Testament and he will find that this is the office of the Holy Spirit. *We do not negotiate afresh the pardon of the penitent.* This strange language implies, as far as we understand it, what we had supposed no protestant ever claimed. The work of procuring pardon is not *ours*, but *Christ's*, "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us;" and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father. *We have no stores of consolation at our disposal*, for the sick and the dying. All that we can do is to direct the sinner to the Lamb of God, to set before him the truths of scripture respecting the plan of salvation, and pray, on his behalf, for the influences of the Holy Spirit. And this, we verily believe, is all that any man has it in his power to do. For the rest, they are the pretensions of another age, revived. And we have

adverted to the subject to let it be seen, that the notions and claims of high church in the present day, are exactly such as were introduced, when the great corruption of christianity was in progress. We challenge any one to show in the New Testament, or in the pure ages of the church any thing bearing the remotest resemblance to pretensions such as are here broadly asserted. No apostle ever dared to say that he by baptism sealed a man to the day of redemption: no apostle ever presumed to think that in administering the Lord's supper, he negotiated the pardon of the penitent. Such daring language was reserved for the revelation of the man of sin. But here let us not be misunderstood. We believe, that bishop R. uses these words in ignorance of the manner, in which they will strike the ear of a protestant; and of the meaning they will naturally convey to the mind. He is but little acquainted with protestant theology. It is a pity that he has not the aid of an experienced theologian in the composition of his works. Lay deputies and lawyers, who mingle much in the world, are very well able to tell what, in pamphlets and sermons, is *too strong for the people yet to hear*; but as they are unacquainted with the technical language of theology, with the usage of the New Testament, or the history of religious controversy, they allow many a passage to pass as good high church doctrine, which savours a great deal too strongly of popery. This is not surprising when all things are considered. In the market place in Dublin once—Ireland is the country of the bishop of Limerick, and other high churchmen—it was proclaimed in good hibernian brogue, “I publish the banns of marriage between the church of England and the church of Rome!”—A voice was heard in the crowd, “I forbid the banns!” For what reason? cried the herald. “Arrah,” rejoined the other, “because the parties are too near akin” It is even so. There is near consanguinity between high church all the world over. And it requires attention and care to discriminate between what may pass for *tolerable protestanism* among high churchmen, and downright popery—*Ah! Sutor, ne ultra crepidam.*

The above Anecdote is intended for every one, who makes the being of the Church, and man's warranted hopes of heaven depend on Church Order. He is not far from Popery.

This remark leads us directly to our subject. *The Parity of ministers of the gospel.* Against this part of the polity of the Church, bishop R. directs all his force. He comes on like a cloud in a dry summer. The heavens grow dark, a mighty roar is heard in the far off forest—we close our shutters, in apprehension of a hail-storm—but soon we perceive the return of sunshine—there was nothing but wind and dust.

It is well here to state distinctly what are the sentiments held by the Reviewer, in common with his brethren, on this point. That there are different *offices* in the church of Christ is maintained by all Presbyterians. Of course they hold, that men appointed by the church to one office, ought *not* to discharge the duties of another office, to which they were *not* appointed. A member of the church, chosen to be a Deacon, that is appointed to distribute the

charity of the church, ought not to undertake the exercise of discipline. A man chosen to assist the Pastor in the exercise of discipline, is not therefore warranted to administer the sacraments, &c. It is just so in our republic. The Legislative, Judicial, and Executive departments are separated, and kept distinct. The welfare of the country, the preservation of liberty requires this. But these different offices do not create any difference in rank, any order of nobility in the Commonwealth. There is no *character* impressed on the officers of state by their appointment. In the church, there is a distinction of offices in regard to importance, that is usefulness, just as in our commonwealth. And it is only in reference to this idea, that we use the term dignity. But we utterly disclaim every thing of *ecclesiastical* nobility. It is the will of Christ that there should be various offices in the Church, to answer the various purposes of the Christian Society. And as we have before shown that the great benefits of Christianity are produced by the power of truth, so we think it clear that the first, the most important office in the Church is that of the Teacher. He who, by the word and sacraments, affords instruction to the people, is employed in doing the most important service that can be performed in the Church. But this is done by every minister of the gospel. There is then, we maintain among all who sustain this office, a perfect equality. There are two important reasons, why Presbyterians earnestly contend for this point.

1. Because they are fully persuaded that such was the polity of the church as organized by the Apostles, according to the will of Christ.

2. Because, the history of the church proves that the elevation of men to a distinct *order*, and giving them *rank* and *power* above their brethren, has done great mischief, has corrupted the simplicity of the gospel, has brought a worldly and ambitious spirit into the church. It is always hazardous to entrust men with power. Ecclesiastical power is of all others the most dangerous. It tyrannizes over the will, the understanding, the conscience of man. It brings him to crouch before his fellow, as a representative of God, as a substitute for Christ on earth; it debases him; and inflates with intolerable pride and arrogance, the poor mortal, who struts among his fellows, and strides over them, in all the superiority of *ghostly* dignity. The case is widely different, when a man is admitted into the ministerial office, with the full understanding that he is on the same level, and must remain always on the same level with all his fellow teachers: that all the authority which he ever can exercise instead of being vested *in him* is derived from the word of God, which he preaches; that the obligation of the people to believe and obey arises from this, that he *preaches the word of God*; that the sacraments which he administers, are *God's signs and seals*, and for this reason alone they are employed to signify the truth, and give assurance to hope. The Presbyterians, and other christian denominations then have good reason for opposing the progress of prelacy in our country.

But let us now hear the bishop of North Carolina. And let the reader prepare for bold assertion, and for that confidence, which bears down weak and uninformed minds.

"No fact can be established by reasoning solely; whatever then hath been reasoned by the ingenuity and research of men contending for parity—is of no moment, until the fact be previously established by proper evidence.—And so sure am I, of the fact being the very reverse of parity, that if in scripture, or in ecclesiastical history, you can point to any branch of the church of Christ in the Apostle's days—or, from thence to the 15th century inclusive, modelled and governed upon this principle, and acknowledged in communion with the catholic or universal church, I will publicly recant every word I have written or spoken on the subject.

"The establishment of imparity however does not necessarily establish any particular number of orders in the ministry—two orders being as good as two hundred to defeat the pretensions of parity. The question as to the number of orders in the church is still open, and is as much a question of fact, as that of one order only; and on this fact I maintain, that the testimony of scripture is direct for three orders in the ministry of that church, which Christ purchased with his own blood, and planted and established in this world by his Apostles.

"That the Apostles were ministers is clear from their own acknowledgment—"Who then is Paul and who is Apollos—but *Ministers* by whom ye believed" 1 Corinth. 3—5. "Let a man so account of us, as of the *ministers* of Christ" 1 Corinth. 4—1. "Who also hath made us able *ministers* of the New Testament" 2 Corinth. 3—6. From the testimony of scripture then, we have these three orders existing and acting in the church from the beginning.

"First—Deacons, who were ordained by the laying on the hands of the Apostles, Acts 6—6, who were authorised to preach and baptize, Acts 8—12—38. Secondly—Presbyters, stiled indifferently Elders and Bishops—why so called is of no consequence as to the fact, they were a distinct order from the Deacons. Thirdly—the Apostles themselves, as that order from which both the others derived their commission and authority. The fact then that there were three orders in the church of Christ, during the life-time of the Apostles, is established by the irrefragable testimony of scripture, and as the fact is all that we are at present concerned with, you must show that I have quoted the scriptures wrong, or lose your cause.—Again therefore I say, if you can produce any branch of the church of Christ, either national or particular, from the time of the Apostles to the 15th century inclusive, and in communion with the church founded by the Apostles—which was not constituted on the principle of *imparity*, and which was not governed by three distinct orders of ministers, I will surrender Episcopal preeminence to Presbyterian parity."—pp. 38, 39.

We perfectly agree with the bishop, that the question here is a *question of fact*. So we have always considered it, and so we will treat it. But all that as Presbyterians we are concerned to do is, to prove that according to the appointment of Christ, the *standing* and *perpetual* ministers of the gospel are on a footing of equality. It is necessary, however, to make a remark or two on the meaning of the word *minister*: and this especially, as the substance of these remarks admits of an easy application to other terms.

The original word (*διακονος*) rendered minister, is a general term, signifying a servant, attendant, &c. and in the New Testament it often occurs in this general sense. But in speaking of the constitution of the church of Christ, its signification is much more limited. Standing without adjuncts, as in Phil. i. 1, the word signifies *Deacons*, namely such persons as are mentioned in the sixth Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, of whom more in a little while. But when it is put in construction with such words as, *Christ, God, the Lord, the Gospel*, it designates religious instructors, persons who preach the gospel; as in 2 Cor. iii, 6. "Who made us able min-

isters of the New Testament" (*διακόνους Ἰησους καινῆς διαθήκης*) see also 2 Cor. vi, 4. xi, 23. Eph. iii, 7. vi, 21, and other passages. Now it is of ministers in this sense that we speak in this discussion; of men set apart to teach the christian religion, to administer the sacraments of the church, and do all things necessary to perpetuate the religion of which they are teachers; in a word we speak of *ministers of the gospel*. Concerning these we affirm that there is, according to the true pattern of the Apostolic Church, no *official* inequality among them, no difference of *rank* or *order*—there are no patents of nobility granted in the Church of Christ.

But let it be remarked that if this part of Presbyterian polity were utterly overthrown, still the system of diocesan prelacy would not thereby be established. For that system not only requires the existence of three orders; *bishops, priests, and deacons*; but demands *indisputable* evidence that, according to the will of Christ, none but a bishop as distinguished from priests and deacons can ordain to the gospel ministry, administer the rite of confirmation, &c. If the bishop of North Carolina then had succeeded according to his wish, and trampled *Presbyterian parity* in the dust, still only half of his work would have been accomplished. But let us see how he executes the first part of his work.

He gravely undertakes to prove that the Apostles were ministers. In this he has beyond a doubt succeeded. For such they certainly were. He then dashes to his conclusion, that there were three orders in the ministry, and afterwards adduces his proofs.

1. He begins with deacons, and appears to think that in two lines and a half he has settled this part of the controversy. After a while, however, he resumes the subject and thus discourses.

"Do not however suppose sir, that I am unaware of the ground you take, to obviate this plain testimony from scripture on these points, as matters of fact—no, sir, the Presbyterian hypothesis, that the order of Deacons was not a distinct clerical office, in the christian ministry, but provided exclusively for the care of the poor, is unsupported by any thing but assertion. I have proved from scripture, that the Deacons in the primitive church, were solemnly set apart to that office by prayer, and imposition of the Apostles hands—that they preached and baptized—that thirty years after the first mention of them, and in a distant church, they are recognised and addressed by St. Paul as an established order in the ministry. I have given you scripture and fifteen centuries of ecclesiastical history, to contest this as a fact, or to produce the slightest ground to believe, that they were chiefly, and as their proper official duty, appointed to the care of the poor—or that this order, is in any sense analagous to that class of men stiled Deacons in the Presbyterian system of government. And unless you can do this, the 6th chapter of the form of government of the Presbyterian church in these United States, is bottomed on a perversion of the texts of scripture, brought to support the assertion there made, as to the order of Deacons, and is also in direct opposition to the judgment and practice of the church of Christ, from the Apostles days to the reformation. Was Stephen, I pray you, serving tables and waiting upon the poor like a Presbyterian Deacon, when, "full of faith and power he did great wonders and miracles among the people?" Was such the occupation of Philip, when he preached Christ to the Samaritans—converted and baptized them—was he thus employed when he baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch. and preached unto him Jesus?"—pp. 41, 42.

Let us now examine this subject for ourselves. The bishop of North Carolina says, (pa. 39) that the deacons mentioned, Acts vi, "were *ordained* by the laying on the hands of the Apostles." We mark this word, because it is not in the text. The Apostles prayed and laid their hands on the deacons. But that they *ordained* them, in bishop R's sense of the word, is not stated in the text. Imposition of hands was very common among the Jews and primitive christians: as when one prayed for another, or pronounced a benediction, for designation of his person, (δεικτικῶς) he laid his hands on his head. Bishop R. means by ordination the impression of the *clerical character*, or, as we would say, induction into the office of *christian teacher*. We do utterly deny that this was done. And the reason is derived from the plain facts of the case. The multitude of the disciples had become so great, that it was utterly impossible for the Apostles to attend to the distribution of the alms of the church among the poor. Some partiality or negligence was manifested by those who performed this service; so that native Hebrews had an advantage over those called Grecians. On hearing this the Apostles told the brethren that it was not right, or expedient (so Οὐκ ἀρεστόν ought to be rendered) for them to lay aside the business of preaching, and attend to *pecuniary affairs*. This is undoubtedly the meaning of the original.* To prevent this interruption of the proper functions of the Apostles, the expedient is adopted of choosing seven men, all Grecians, as is probable from their names, to attend particularly to this pecuniary concern. The proposal pleased the people; the deacons were chosen, and inducted into their office—Now we ask what the office was? Bishop R. says a clerical office;—they were preachers. This makes the whole statement amount to this—The Apostles say, it is not right for us to *quit preaching* and attend to the *distribution of your money*: choose some other persons *for this business*:—"But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." The multitude in accordance with these directions chose seven men for *this purpose*, and the Apostles ordained them *preachers*. This was indeed a strange way of getting rid of the difficulty. If the bishop's book goes to a second edition, it is to be hoped that he will explain to us how the appointing of seven additional preachers, gave the Apostles more time for preaching. If they had said, it is not right for us to give up the distribution of money, and spend so much time in preaching; look out for some others, and we will appoint them to this service—then the bishop would have had some reason for his assertion. But be it known that the Apostles were not like a great many modern bishops, who have so much to do that they cannot find time to preach. No: they thought this their most important business; and left pecuniary affairs to others, that is to

*Τὰς τραπεζαίας διακονεῖν. Τραπεζα is originally a table. In this connexion it signifies a counter on which money was laid. And Τραπεζίτης is a money changer, a broker. The *table* here is, by a very common figure put for what it contained, and hence the phrase quoted means, to attend to money matters.

the deacons. We suppose that a man of common sense and observation will hardly suppose, that in order to enable one to take care of money, and distribute it judiciously, it is necessary to make a preacher of him. The truth is; the facts of this case, and the whole reason of the measure adopted, are plainly and directly against bishop R. It deserves to be remarked, that when the service of the word, and the service of tables was separated, "the word of God increased," &c. see Acts vi, 7. But says he, these deacons "were authorised to preach and baptize, Acts viii, 12—38. It is undeniable that in the passages here referred to, Philip did both preach the gospel, and baptize. No man in his senses ever disputed these facts. But there is a question here of some weight, which our author, in his haste to come at his conclusion, took no time to determine. Did Philip perform these offices as a Deacon, or as an Evangelist? Much depends on the answer to be given to this question. We remark,

1. It is an undeniable fact, that Philip was appointed a deacon, for the express purpose of attending to the pecuniary affairs of the church in Jerusalem; and no other object of his appointment is there mentioned.

2. It is undeniable that Philip was not now in Jerusalem, but first in Samaria; then in the wilderness with the Ethiopian Eunuch; after that at Azotus; and then in other places.

3. It is equally certain that this same Philip is called in Acts xxi, 8, an Evangelist.

We then deny that when Philip was at Samaria, at Azotus, at Cesarea, he sustained the character, or performed the offices of a deacon—He was a *minister of the word*, and not a *minister of the money table*. We consider the facts of his preaching and baptizing, as sufficient evidence of this. But for confirmation of the truth let us consider farther, what was the proper office of a deacon in the primitive church. In the New Testament, the word occurs in the sense now sought for, only three times. Rom. xvi, 1. Phil. i, 1. 2 Tim. iii, 8 and 12. The first passage referred to mentions a woman as a deacon. "I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, which is a *servant of the church* which is in Cenchrea" (*οὔσαν διακονον*, who is a deacon; *diaconissa*.) We learn from Pliny's celebrated epistle, x, 97, that females were employed as servants of the church in his day. "I judged it necessary to inquire by *torture* of two maid servants, whom they called *ministrae*, what was the truth." If the bishop has at hand Cotelerius's edition of the Apostolical Fathers, he will find an account of female deacons in Const. app. iii, 15. Or Bingham. Eccl Antq. will inform him that they assisted in baptizing women, took care of the poor and the sick, and attended to other inferior business of the church. It will be admitted, we presume, by bishop R. that the female deacon (*ἡ διακονος*) was not a clerical character. From the passage in Phil. i, 1, we can learn nothing certain as to the special matter of inquiry now before us. It would seem indeed, that deacons were officers in every regularly organized church; and it does not appear probable that there should be two distinct sets of preachers in one church; or

that the bishops at Philippi, were lord bishops above preaching. Let the reader judge of the circumstance of the case, and say whether it is at all likely that the deacons in the church at Philippi, were ministers of the gospel. And if he thinks they were, let him say what was the office of the bishops in that church?

Turning to the passage in 1 Tim. iii, 8—13. We find something to give us information. In the preceding verses the Apostle lays down the qualifications of a Presbyter or bishop, exactly in accordance with the nature of his office. In the words before us, he proceeds in the same way with regard to the deacon. We say that the deacon was not by his office a teacher of religion, but a minister of the pecuniary or secular concerns of the church. Bishop R. says he was a clergyman. Let the particulars stated by the Apostle in this list of qualifications be examined one by one, and see which assertion, ours or the bishop's, best suits the text.

A deacon must be grave (σεμνός.) This is expected in any officer of the church of Christ.

Not double tongued—not speaking one thing, and meaning another.

This will suit any office-bearer in the church no matter what his calling.

Not given to much wine. A drinking deacon cannot safely be trusted with money—nor can a drinking parson be tolerated in the church.

Not a lover of filthy lucre. This suits also every officer, and every christian. But it applies most exactly, to a man who is concerned by the nature of his office, in pecuniary affairs. The character here reprobated is explained by a Greek writer, as one “who takes from those from whom he ought not, and gives to those to whom he ought not.”

Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. The *mystery of the faith*, here, is nothing more than the Christian religion; and the requirement is that deacons be sincere professors of Christianity.

We do not then find in all this, one single syllable respecting the qualifications of a teacher.—When the Apostle told us what a bishop ought to be, we find him requiring qualities suited to the office of a teacher of righteousness. To those which betoken the sincerity of his christian profession, he adds, by the use of one comprehensive word, those which regard him as a religious instructor, (διδασκικόν) he must be “apt to teach:” But when the inspired writer speaks of *deacons* there is not a word of this. The whole amounts to the requirement, that he be a sincerely honest man, and a good Christian.

But the bishop says, that when the deacons used their office well, they purchased to themselves a good degree, “that is entitled themselves to advancement in the ministry,” &c. (pa. 43.) The words quoted are bishop R's. explanation of Paul's words in 1st Tim. iii, 13. But to this interpretation we object. The original word rendered a *degree* (βαδύιον from βαίω) signifies advancement in any way whatever. Now we grant that if the usage of later times be admitted as decisive, there is evidence enough in the decrees of councils that the term means advancement in office.

But it ought to be remembered that the usage of words three or four hundred years after the days of Paul, when the form of the Church hierarchy was modelled according to the views of ambitious prelates, is a very unsatisfactory way of determining the sense of a phrase as used by the Apostle himself. Accordingly we find the best interpreters, ancient and modern, giving another meaning to this word. Of the ancients, we mention only Theodoret, who explained this advancement (*βασιμόν*) by progress towards heavenly honour and happiness: Others say "a good degree of honour—so that no one hath reason to decline, or despise that office:" namely the office of deacon. But if the word here means *official* advancement, it will not in the least degree serve bishop R's purpose, for nobody in the world denies that a deacon is an officer in the Church. What we deny is, that the deacon is a minister of the gospel, a religious teacher. A deacon who in the course of his service, showed himself to be qualified as a religious teacher, has no doubt frequently been appointed to that office. This, there is every reason to believe, was the case with Philip, one of the seven. But that as a deacon, he was a religious teacher, we utterly deny. We utterly deny that in the apostolical church there was a system of promotion from one *rank* to another. The words used by the Apostle do not imply this—the practice of the first ages do not justify the system of three orders.

In the writings of the apostolical fathers, as they are called Barnabas, Hermas, Clemens Romanus, Ignatius and Polycarp, we cannot find the least evidence that Deacons were ministers of the gospel, in the sense in which bishop R. and we understand the term. But in Clement's 1. Ep. to the Corinthians, we find this declaration. Chap. xlii. (Cotelerius. pa. 170.) They (i. e. the Apostles) as they preached the gospel in different countries and cities appointed their first converts (*Ἰας ἀρχαῖς*) the bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe. This testimony we hold to be in exact accordance with what we find in scripture, as will be more fully considered hereafter. It shows that the apostles considered a church as organized with only two kinds of officers. But did these deacons preach the gospel? Clement says not a word on this subject.

In the *Canons of the Apostles*, for the authority of which many high churchmen have vehemently contended, the rules respecting the administration of Baptism, are addressed only to bishops and presbyters. See Can. xli. xlii. This reference is made for the sake of showing that when these canons were compiled, *deacons were not accustomed to baptize.*

If bishop R. will take the trouble to read the *Apostolical Constitutions*, he will find that the compilers of that work were very far from his opinion respecting deacons. For according to them, it was the business of the deacon to see that all the people took their proper places in the church; that none should run about from place to place, smile, whisper, or nod to each other; to see that the boys who stood near the pulpit behaved well; to take their places on each side of the altar with fly-flaps, to prevent flies from

getting into the cups, and a hundred things of this kind. In a word, according to this work, the deacons were *servants* of the bishops, and not preachers of the word of God.

Justin Martyr in his First Apology, uses words of which the following is a translation, "They who among us are called deacons, give the bread and wine and water, after consecration by thanksgiving, to every one who is present, and carry the same to those who are absent." The original of these words may be found in page 83 of the Paris edition of 1742.

Oecumenius in Acts vi, says, "The Apostles laid their hands on those who were chosen deacons, not to confer on them that rank, which they now hold in the church, but that they might with all diligence and attention distribute the necessaries of life to widows and orphans."

It would be tedious to go on quoting testimony. It is clear that deacons were originally set apart to take care of the alms of the church, to distribute them fairly and judiciously; that there is not a syllable in scripture which supports the opinion that they preached the gospel; that in speaking of their qualifications, the apostle Paul gives not the slightest hint that teaching was their business; that the early fathers are equally silent on this subject; and that in the records of antiquity there is decisive evidence that the office of the deacon was about as different from that of a minister of the word, as the office of a college *servitor* is different from that of a professor. The sixth chapter of the Form of Government of the Presbyterian Church therefore is *not* "bottomed on a perversion of the texts of scripture, brought to support the assertion there made"—it is *not* "in direct opposition to the judgment and practice of the Church of Christ, from the Apostle's days to the reformation." We earnestly advise bishop R. to make himself better acquainted with the practice of the church, before he hazards such assertions again.

But says the bishop, with an air of triumph, "Was Stephen, I pray you, serving tables, and waiting on the poor, like a Presbyterian deacon, when full of faith and power he did great wonders and miracles among the people?" We answer, Were Erskine, Jennings and Addison, ministers of the gospel, when they wrote their able and unanswerable arguments in defence of christianity? Had their arguments been maintained *orally*, would that circumstance have made the slightest difference as to their character? Any christian is bound to defend religion in the best way he can, whenever it is attacked. Stephen's vindication of the truth, and his confutation of the Jews, then, prove nothing as to the point before us. And his working of miracles is nothing to the purpose, until bishop R. shall prove that this power was given to none in the primitive church, but the clergy.—An undertaking in which, if he has any prudence, he will not, *with all his aids*, like very well to engage.

Again, he says with an equally triumphant manner, "Was such the occupation of Philip, when he preached Christ to the Samaritans, converted and baptized them—was he thus employed when he baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch? &c." We reply; nobody ever

thought he was—But was he a deacon *then*? Was he then fulfilling the office to which he had been appointed; taking care of the poor, and allowing leisure to the Apostles to preach the word? Most obviously he was not. But being driven from Jerusalem by persecution, another office was assigned to him, namely that of minister of the gospel; and we find him afterwards doing the work of an evangelist—an office, as we shall show, quite different from that of a deacon.

In regard then to the *first order* in the christian ministry, we have a right to say, that bishop R. has totally failed. There were no preaching deacons in the days of the Apostles. If the bishop will make himself as well acquainted with ecclesiastical antiquity, as a bishop ought to be, he will find that this device of *preaching deacons* was got up for the sake of exalting the bishops. At first all preachers as to office, were on a level. But when distinctions began to be made, when a worldly spirit crept in, it was found that deacons might be raised from their original office to the *first order* in the ministry. Presbyters were placed next. And thus bishops were made to feel themselves highly exalted above the laity. When the work was once begun, the ingenuity of men soon devised additional orders. The elevation of deacons made room for the office of subdeacon; and that of the bishops in process of time prepared the way for archbishops. Until finally the *Catholic Church*, the Family of God presented, in the long list of her officers, a greater variety of ranks, than can be found in the court of any earthly monarch. One of the evils of these incipient steps in the corruption of ecclesiastical polity, was the high spirit wakened up in the deacons. Hence the attentive reader of ecclesiastical history will find complaints of the insolence and haughtiness of this *order*, and attempts to bring them down to their proper level.

In bishop R's. summary mode of despatching his argument, he in the next place, proceeds thus, in proof that there were three orders "Secondly—Presbyters, styled indifferently Elders and Bishops—why so called is of no consequence as to the fact, they were a distinct order from deacons." The Apostles constituted the third order. There are two particulars in this statement, in which we agree with bishop R. 1. That Presbyters were styled indifferently, presbyters or bishops. 2. That they were distinct from deacons: but only as to office. Deacons, as we have shown, were ministers of *Counters*; Presbyters, of *the word of God*.

But that prelacy may gain any thing from the facts here stated, it is necessary that its advocates should prove two things.

1. That the apostles were distinct *as an order*, from other ministers of the Word.

2. That it was intended by the Head of the Church that this distinct order should continue in the Christian Society. Bishop R. has assumed the first proposition without a shadow of evidence; and has brought no satisfactory proof of the last.

But before we proceed to the direct consideration of this subject, we beg leave to offer a few additional remarks on the use of words.

All the terms employed to designate officers in the church are general words in use in common life. Thus *apostle* signifies messenger; *bishop*, means *overseer*; *presbyter* an *aged man*; *deacon*, a servant, &c. These words occur in the N. Testament sometimes in their ordinary or general sense, and sometimes in what may be called their official meaning. The case is the same with many words applied to civil affairs, such as *president*, *judge*, &c. The rule of interpretation here is very plain. If a writer uses, *deacon*, *presbyter*, *bishop*, &c. in speaking of officers of the church, designating their persons, or describing their qualification, the words are to be interpreted accordingly: and an attentive reader can no more be at a loss to ascertain the meaning, than we are to tell whether, when one uses the term *judge*, he means a *civil officer*; or, a *man capable of deciding*.

We observe in the next place, that the officers of the church of Christ in the N. Testament, go under various names of which by far the most common is *Presbyter*. (*πρεσβυτερος*) It requires considerable research to ascertain the precise extent of the application of this term: but this is not necessary to our present purpose. We know that it was applied to *apostles* and *bishops*. For evidence we refer to 1 Pet. v, 1. "The Elders (*πρεσβυτερος* Presbyters) who are among you I exhort, *who am also an elder*," (*συμπρεσβυτερος* a fellow Presbyter.) 2 John 1, and 3 John 1. In both these passages the apostle uses the same word concerning himself; "The *Elder* to the elect lady."—"The *Elder* to the beloved Gaius." Hence it is manifest that the apostles called themselves Presbyters.—That bishops were called Presbyters is manifest from Acts xx, 17, 28. Tit. i, 5—7. But this is universally acknowledged.

Now it admits of a question whether the *Apostle-Presbyters*, were a different *order* from the *Bishop-Presbyters*. It is our opinion that they were not. We do not find any thing in the use of the words, or in the claims of the apostles to warrant the contrary opinion. We have before remarked, that *apostle* signifies *messenger*. This term was applied to the *inspired* teachers, because they were *sent out immediately* by Jesus Christ, to perform a particular service, and furnished with particular powers of an extraordinary character. In this respect, they differed from all other *presbyters*. Still, however, they held the same *rank* with other teachers of christianity. Our views of this subject may be thus illustrated. It was once proposed, at an extraordinary period in the history of our country, to make General Washington, *dictator*. Let us suppose that, on the organization of the government of the United States, *that suggested* had been adopted. He would have then been *President* with all the powers conferred by the constitution, and *Dictator* with the extraordinary powers conferred for a special object by the sovereign people. When this object is accomplished, these powers cease. No similar powers are conferred on any of his successors. They are elected under the constitution, and exercise only the authority with which by that sacred instrument they are invested. Now, the question is, did *President* Washington in the

case supposed, hold a higher rank than *Presidents* Jefferson, Adams, Madison, &c. We say no.—And just so we think it was in the church of Christ. The *apostle-presbyters* such as Peter, Paul, John, and others, were of the same rank or order, with other presbyters; but were sent with extraordinary powers, on an extraordinary occasion. The decisive evidence of their possessing these powers, was their *immediate mission* by the sovereign of the church, with gifts to qualify them fully for their extraordinary work. No man could sustain a claim to such mission, unless he was able to show that Christ had furnished him for the work. Here is the sufficient limitation and guard. The *bishop-presbyters* came after the apostles, without their extraordinary gifts. These were unnecessary; because the whole work of revelation was completed; and the great office of the religious teachers was, to assist their fellow-men in understanding that system of religion, which had been given by the God of mercy to all. Here then we see in the beginning, but one *order* of religious teachers. In other words, there was no difference of rank in the ministry of the gospel. Such things suit the genius of kingly governments; the pomps and fashions of this world; but to christians we repeat the language of the Saviour, "It shall not be so among you."—Accordingly the apostles from the ascension of their master until their death gave not the slightest indication that they ever thought of this idle trumpetry. They demanded nothing but submission to the will of Christ their Lord, as authoritatively announced by them. They claimed nothing on account of *apostolical* rank; but simply because they were inspired, and spoke God's truth as he made it known to them. In all their intercourse with their brethren in the ministry, there was perfect equality, the utmost gentleness and courtesy. "Tobit and his dog" were not among them.*

We have here briefly exhibited our own views of this subject. Let our readers compare them with the facts recorded in the New Testament and then say what becomes of bishop R's three orders.

But let it be admitted that the Apostles of Jesus Christ held a higher rank in the church than other religious teachers; that they belonged to a different order. Still this will serve his cause nothing, unless he can prove that the Head of the church intended to continue this superior office in the Christian Society, through every age: But this we venture to assert that the bishop never can do. On this subject it gives us great pleasure to use the language of the celebrated Dr Barrow in his treatise of the Pope's supremacy. And our readers cannot fail to see, how exactly many of the arguments used by prelates against popery, suit the purposes of Presbyterians and others when they reason against prelacy. Dr Barrow was a very great man. None hold him in higher estimation or are more ready to give him due honour than we. But yet we think it perfectly fair to use his assistance against high church principles, al-

* This expression may appear strange to our readers. We do not choose to explain. It will be understood as it is intended; and will furnish a sufficiently intelligible hint, for the correction of modes of speech very unapostolical.

though at the expense of his consistency. The design of the writer, in the particular part of the work, from which we make the following extract, is to confute the position of the papists, "that St. Peter's Primacy, with its rights and prerogatives, was not personal but derivable to his successors." In accomplishing this purpose, among other things he announces the following proposition.

"The Apostolical office, as such, was personal and temporary; and therefore according to its nature and design not successive nor communicable to others in perpetual descendance from them.

"It was, as such, in all respects extraordinary, conferred in a special manner, designed for special purposes, discharged by special aids, endowed with special privileges, as was needful for the propagation of Christianity, and founding of Churches.

"To that Office it was requisite, that the Person should have an immediate designation and commission from God; such as St. Paul so often doth insist upon for asserting his title to the Office; *Paul an Apostle, not from men, or by man—not by men, saith St. Chrysostom this is a property of the Apostles.*

"It was requisite that an Apostle should be able to attest concerning our Lord's Resurrection or Ascension, either immediately as the twelve, or by evident consequence as St. Paul. Thus St. Peter implied, at the choice of Matthias, *Wherefore of those men which have accompanied with us—must one be ordained to be a witness with us of the Resurrection; and, Am I not (saith St. Paul) an Apostle, have I not seen the Lord?* according to that of Annanias, *the God of our Fathers, hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth; for thou shalt bear witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard.*

"It was needful also that an Apostle should be endowed with miraculous gifts and graces, enabling him both to assure his authority, and to execute his Office; wherefore St. Paul calleth these, *the marks of an Apostle, the which were wrought by him among the Corinthians in all patience (or persevering) in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.*

"It was also, in St. Chrysostom's opinion, proper to an Apostle, that he should be able according to his discretion, in a certain and conspicuous manner to impart Spiritual Gifts; as St. Peter and St. John did at Samaria; which to do, according to that *Father, was the peculiar gift and privilege of the Apostles.*

"It was also a privilege of an Apostle, by virtue of his commission from Christ, *to instruct all Nations in the Doctrine and Law of Christ; He had right and warrant to exercise his function every where, His charge was universal and indefinite; the whole world was his province; He was not affixed to any one place, nor could be excluded from any; He was (as St. Cyril calleth him) an Oecumenical Judge, and an Instructor of all the Subcelestial World.*

"Apostles also did govern in an absolute manner, according to discretion, as being guided by infallible assistance, to the which they might upon occasion appeal, and affirm, *It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and us.* Whence their Writings have passed for inspired, and therefore Canonical, or certain Rules of Faith and Practice.

"It did belong to them to found Churches, to constitute Pastors, to settle orders, to correct offences, to perform all such Acts of Sovereign, Spiritual Power, in virtue of the same Divine assistance, according to the authority which the Lord had given them for edification; as we see practiced by St. Paul.

"In fine, the *Apostleship* was (as St. Chrysostom telleth us) a *business fraught with ten thousand good things, both greater than all privileges of grace, and comprehensive of them.*

"Now such an office, consisting of so many extraordinary privileges and miraculous powers, which were requisite for the foundation of the Church, and the diffusion of Christianity, against the manifold difficulties and disadvantages, which it then needs must encounter, was not designed to continue by derivation; for it containeth in it divers things, which apparently were not communicated, and which no man without gross imposture and hypocrisy could challenge to himself.

"Neither did the Apostles pretend to communicate it; they did indeed appoint standing Pastors and Teachers in each church; they did assume Fellow-labourers and Assistants in the work of preaching and Governance, but they did not constitute Apostles, equal to themselves in Authority, Privileges, or Gifts. For *who knoweth not (saith St. Austin) that Principate of Apostleship to be preferred before any Episcopacy? and the Bishops (saith Bellarmine, have no part of the true Apostolical Authority.*"

This reasoning has never been, and never can be answered. The apostolical office, as such, ceased at the death of the apostles. They then could have no successors as such. And when they died they left in the Church only those religious teachers, who, according to bishop R's own words, were called indifferently presbyters or bishops. Where then are the three orders of ministers of the word, of whom the right reverend doctor R. speaks in terms of so much confidence?

But we have not yet done with this part of our subject. The bishop of N. Carolina, after having, as he supposed determined the point that there were three orders in the christian ministry, observes, "The question however has (is) yet to be settled, to which of the three orders was the ordinary power committed?" The apostles had it beyond a doubt. "That it was not conferred upon the Deacons you will readily admit—It must therefore have been committed either to that order styled indifferently, *Elders, Presbyters,** and *Bishops* in scripture, or to another order, distinguished by possessing this, as well as other ordinary apostolical powers.—On this question you assert, that the ordaining power was transferred to the order of Presbyters. This assertion I deny as a fact, and I support my denial in the following manner from the scriptures."—pp. 39, 40.

We do assert as a fact that the ordinary power was committed to those who, in scripture, are styled indifferently presbyters or bi-

* These are the bishop's own words, *Elders, Presbyters!* Why an *Elder* is a *Presbyter*; the former being the *English* for *πρεσβυτερος*, and the latter being the Greek word *anglicized*. Is it possible that bishop R. is so little familiar with his Greek Testament as not to know this? Or did he in this part get help from another, and in his hurry overlook the mistake.

shops. But to whom does bishop R. assert that these powers were transferred? He has no scriptural name for them. He dare not affirm that they were *Apostles*. Every one knows they were not deacons. The terms presbyter and bishop were applied indifferently to those to whom he denies the ordaining power. He is obliged to describe the order of men on whom the very being of the church depends, the sole depositaries of that power and authority which are connected with all man's dearest hopes, by a very awkward periphrasis—Hear him!—"or to another order, distinguished by possessing this as well as other *ordinary* apostolical powers!" This is indeed amazing. We are to believe, then, that a being of infinite wisdom, in making a revelation of his will, when the organization of the church is to be described, employed no term to designate that very set of church officers, with whom he connected every thing that enables us to verify the church, to rely on the promises of God, or hope in his covenanted mercy! Really the bishop has greatly inflamed our desire to see his power of attorney. We have an intense curiosity to see what title is given to him. Does it purport that he is a clergyman "of another order," &c.?—But we ask our readers, is it credible that a system of government should be framed, without giving a name to the very officers who should possess the whole power, and on whom the very being and all the benefits of the community should depend? Was any such thing ever known in the world before or since?—But we have met with circumlocutions like this before now. We understand them. High churchmen have a sufficiently strong desire that the people should think them Apostles. But even the men among them, who boast that "they blink at nothing" are rather ashamed to put in the claim directly, and therefore *beat about the bush*, in the manner we have seen. But what, we pray, are *ordinary* apostolical powers? The very nature of the Apostles' office, as such, was extraordinary. This, Dr Barrow has most clearly proved. Take away from them this part of their character, and they differ in nothing from the men who were styled indifferently presbyters or bishops. But it seems the bishop of N. Carolina can name the persons, although he has no scriptural term by which to designate the offices.

"The ordination of Timothy, not to say his consecration,* is marked by St. Paul, with such a peculiar character, as is in my view, utterly incompatible with the parity you contend for. Authority is given him over the doctrine, the ministers and the members of the church at Ephesus—"I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other doctrine." 1 Tim. 1—3, from the 11th to the 18th ver. the Apostle refers to his own commission, as entrusted with the Gospel, and at the 18th verse transfers it to Timothy, "*This charge I commit unto thee son Timothy.*" In the 2d chapter he gives him directions as to the qualification of Bishops and Deacons, and at the 14th ver. states the object of his writing

* We commend the reserve of the right reverend author. It was well for him not to say *Consecration*. Because the term induces one to refer to scripture; and there we search in vain for any thing like consecration to the episcopal office. There is not a syllable in the word of God which intimates any thing like different kinds of ordination for ministers of different orders.

—*Reviewer*,

to him, in such wise as clearly designates his supreme authority in that church.—“These things write I unto thee hoping to come unto thee shortly, but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know *how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the church of God.*” An expression which cannot be construed of personal deportment when engaged in the public duties of Religion, and must therefore refer to the exercise of his Episcopal authority over the church. In the 5th chap. accordingly, Timothy is directed “Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father” ver. 1—“Against an Elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses,” ver. 19. His authority over the members generally is evinced by the whole chapter, particularly by ver. 20—“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.” And that the power to ordain was committed to him singly is clear from both the Epistles, particularly 1 Tim. 5—22, and 2 Tim. 2—2, “Lay hands suddenly on no man”—“The things thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”—p. 40.

“This view of the subject, as the plain scriptural view of it, is confirmed by the Epistle of this same Apostle to Titus, “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst *set in order* the things that are wanting, and *ordain Elders* in every city, as I had appointed thee,” chap. 1—5. Directions are then given him as to the qualifications of those to be ordained, and as to his general duty as a governor of the church, of the same character as those given to Timothy, with this particular charge, “A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject.”—p. 41.

So then Timothy and Titus were of that nameless order of men, who with the ordaining power, possessed the other ordinary apostolical powers. It deserves remark, however, that before the bishop gets through the 41st page he forgets his cautious, circumlocutory mode of speaking, and tells us plainly, “that even in the lifetime of the Apostles, *the episcopal office* was instituted in the church, by the Apostles themselves, as a distinct order of ministers.” We must suppose then that the *episcopal office* was different from the office held by *bishops*; for according to our author’s own showing, the term *bishop* was used indiscriminately with the term *elder* or *presbyter*. The bishop’s office then was the elder’s office; and the Episcopal office was something else. This is strange enough. But it was all done to accommodate the modesty of diocesan bishops; who were designed to be successors of the Apostles, possessing their *ordinary* powers and honours, but yet who could never bring themselves to take their names! Nevertheless Timothy and Titus were of *that other order* who are now called *bishops*. But really we do not see how the prelate of North Carolina can free himself from the charge of having proved that there were four orders in the Christian ministry. 1. Apostles. 2. “*Another order.*” 3. Presbyters or bishops. 4. Deacons. Either he must say that *the other order* was the apostolic, or he must acknowledge that his church wants one of the four. But we leave him to settle this point as he can. He insists on it that Timothy and Titus were *bishops* in his sense of the term, and labours hard to prove his position. Let us see how he manages the case.

1. “The ordination of Timothy is marked with such a peculiar character as is utterly incompatible with ministerial parity.” But the good gentleman does not think fit to tell us how this case is.—We hear not a word about Timothy’s ordination in any thing that follows. And if we turn to the account which the scripture gives

us, we find nothing at all extraordinary, nothing marked, or peculiar in the transaction. Timothy was ordained with (*μετα*) the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. Just such an ordination as takes place a hundred times a year in the various Presbyterian and Congregational churches in this country.

2. "Authority is given to Timothy over the doctrine, the ministers, and the members of the church at Ephesus. 'I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.' 1 Tim. i, 3." We take it for granted that bishop R. never for a moment supposed that this entreaty that Timothy should abide still at Ephesus was his ordination; (not to say consecration) as bishop of the church in that place. And we ask any one who understands the force of words, to decide whether the terms used by the Apostle suit the hypothesis that Timothy sustained the episcopal office among the Ephesian believers. If so why should Paul *beseech* him to remain at Ephesus? Where should a bishop be, but in his diocese? Is it to be admitted for a moment, that such a man as Timothy would think of leaving the people committed to his care? Surely men are hard run for evidence that Timothy held the Episcopal office at Ephesus, when they appeal to this passage for proof. But let us compare the circumstances mentioned here, with the record found in the Acts of the Apostles. When Paul was going to Macedonia (1 Tim. i, 3,) he left Timothy at Ephesus. This journey is mentioned Acts xx, 2. But in a few months we find that Timothy is Paul's travelling companion. Does this allow us to suppose that Timothy was bishop of Ephesus? The plain state of the case is this. Paul made a hurried departure from Ephesus, on account of the disturbance raised by Demetrius the silversmith. The church there was in a disturbed state, and was not sufficiently settled in all its parts. Timothy wished to accompany his spiritual father; but Paul having for at least seven years, experienced the fidelity and zeal of Timothy, entreated him to stay for a time at Ephesus to assist in maintaining the doctrine which had been taught by the Apostle, against false teachers, and to complete the organization of the church. But as it is probable that the Apostle had not time fully to charge Timothy in relation to the important functions which he was called to discharge; therefore very shortly after his departure, he wrote this Epistle, for the purpose of giving him full instruction as to his duty. It was then, unquestionably, a temporary service which Timothy was called on to discharge.

The bishop proceeds, "from the 11th to the 13th verse, the Apostle refers to his own commission, as entrusted with the gospel, and at the 18th verse, entrusts it to Timothy. '*This charge I commit unto thee son Timothy.*'" The bishop is most evidently misled here by the usage of the English word *charge*; as though it were an *office* committed; but what will be his surprise when he comes to look at his Greek Testament and finds there the word *παραγγέλια*? This word occurs only five times in the New Testament, and in every instance in the sense of commandment, order, either in the way of prohibition or precept, see Acts v, 28. xvi, 24. 1 Thess. iv, 2.

1 Tim. i, 5, 18. In this last passage it means a direction or precept respecting the discharge of Timothy's duty. The sense is this, I left you for the time, in my place in Ephesus, that you may charge certain persons (*Ἰσὶ*. verse 3) not to teach doctrine contrary to mine; and I commend this direction to your attention. I entrust you with the execution of this commandment. There is no ordination here, no episcopacy.

"In the second chapter, (continues our prelate) he gives him directions as to the qualifications of Bishops and Deacons." There is a mistake here. The second chapter contains directions in relation to public worship. The Apostle prescribes to Timothy here, what he thought necessary concerning the subjects of prayer; and we just observe in passing, that we have abundant evidence that there was no liturgy in use in the church at Ephesus, otherwise these directions would have been quite superfluous.—In the third chapter we have a statement of the qualifications of bishops and deacons. But what inference at all advantageous to his cause, bishop R. can derive from this statement we are utterly unable to see.—Suppose we admit that Timothy had full power to ordain (of himself) bishops and deacons in the church at Ephesus, nothing follows more than Presbyterians have admitted a hundred times. They do not deny the fact. But the conclusion derived from it, that therefore Timothy was prelate of Ephesus. We leave this then just here for the present, intending hereafter to show what Timothy really was.

The 14th verse of this chapter is thought by the author under review, to contain decisive evidence that Timothy had supreme authority in the church at Ephesus. "These things write I unto thee hoping to come unto thee shortly, but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the church of God." This it is said must refer to the exercise of *Episcopal* authority. But why Episcopal authority? The words will suit an evangelist or a presbyter just as well as a bishop. How can a man bring himself to draw *particular* conclusions from *general* terms in this way?—But bishop R. connects this passage with the first verse of the fifth chapter, as evidence of his facts, "Rebuke not an Elder, but entreat him as a father." It is evident that the bishop did not look at the context here, or he could not have supposed that in this case there was implied any exercise of episcopal authority: for *elder* in the text means an aged man. Surely a *presbyter* may exercise church discipline as well as a *bishop*.

We pass on. "Against an Elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses, verse 19." Here is thought to be decisive evidence of Episcopal authority, for in this case the term Elder is admitted to be an officer in the church, such an one as in the 3d chapter is called a bishop. But if one will look at the whole case, he will find it much too slender as a foundation for his hope of covenanted mercy. By comparing the 19th and 20th chapters of Acts with the first Epistle to Timothy, and recollecting that it was not the custom of Paul or any of the Apostles to ordain novices (new converts) as ministers of the Gospel, we shall find that the

case was thus. Ephesus was at that period a great city, and exerted of course great influence on the whole of Asia Minor. It was very important that the teachers of religion there should be well tried and able men. During the Apostle's abode with the Ephesians, he appears not to have appointed any presbyters or bishops, waiting no doubt to find proper men and give them suitable training. But as his abode there was abruptly terminated, he left Timothy as we have before seen, to take his place for a time and complete his work. It would seem that the whole business of organizing the church was to be accomplished, and Timothy receives this letter from Paul, not merely for the purpose of individual instruction but for the sake of giving to others the rule by which a church is to be governed. For this purpose he begins with asserting his Apostolical office, as was his custom generally in his epistles; and then repeats a charge before given respecting false teachers, who had it seems visited Ephesus, the names of two of whom, he mentions. In the second chapter, he gives directions respecting the prayers of the church; and towards the close of it forbids the women to officiate as public teachers. In the third chapter, we find instructions respecting the officers of the church. 1. The teachers, called Bishops or Presbyters. 2. The Deacons. Towards the close of this chapter, the Apostle states the fundamental truth of the gospel system,—* *The pillar and ground of the Gospel is the Divine Nature of Jesus Christ.*

This leads to a prediction of a lamentable departure from the truth by religious teachers at some future time. The apostle then (iv, 6.) returns to the fundamental truth stated iii, 16, and insists that it should be urged with all diligence. In iv, 9, he returns to the same important doctrine, and insists that it be faithfully taught. After adding some particular exhortations to Timothy, he proceeds in the 5th Chapter to speak of the right ordering of the church in regard to the support of widows, the stipends of Presbyters, the exercise of discipline in regard to Elders and others; and various

* We agree with those critical editors of the New Testament, who make the third chapter close at the end of the 15th verse, or at any rate place a period here. The words translated, *pillar and ground of the truth*, are not to be referred to the church: *στύλος* is literally a pillar; and metaphorically it is that particularly on which any thing rests, a fundamental doctrine:—*ἔδραϊωμα* is a basis, a foundation; and in its metaphorical sense is synonymous with the former word. *Ἀληθείας* here is doubtless the gospel, as a system of truth. But in what sense is the church the pillar, or the foundation of the gospel? If it were affirmed that the gospel is the foundation of the church, we could understand the metaphor perfectly. The truth that Jesus is the Christ the son of the living God, according to Peter's confession, is the rock on which the church is built: it is the great fundamental truth. But it is harsh and extravagant to say that the church is the basis or support of the gospel. Accordingly we read the passage before us thus—"The fundamental truth of the gospel—and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness—is, God was manifested in the flesh, justified by the spirit, seen by angels, believed on by the world, (Gentiles) received into glory: (but the spirit expressly saith that in the last time some shall depart from the faith," &c.—continuing the parenthesis to the close of the fifth verse; and with the sixth resuming the subject of the 16th verse of the 3d chapter.

particular matters concerning Timothy personally. From these the Apostle proceeds in the 6th Chapter to other points in the arrangements and regulations of the church, such as the duty of servants who belonged to the church, whether their masters were believers or unbelievers: and with this he severely condemns any who might teach any other doctrine. With particular exhortations to Timothy he mingles other general admonitions to the end of the epistle. Now we ask any judicious reader to determine whether the whole epistle, taken in all its connexions, does not clearly imply this, that Timothy was left as Paul's assistant at Ephesus to organize a church, and make under the instructions of the Apostle the necessary regulations there; and whether this epistle was not intended for the use of the church of that place, and for all other churches and ministers in all ages, as well as for Timothy. And does not the whole history of the case suit the Presbyterian hypothesis much better than the Episcopal? The former is this; that Timothy was an Evangelist; that is a minister of religion furnished with extraordinary powers for the purpose of assisting the Apostles in planting the gospel, and completing the organization of churches; who when he had finished the work in one place, went to another. The latter is, that Timothy was appointed diocesan bishop of Ephesus, with Presbyters under his episcopal authority. In settling this question, let the reader turn again to Acts xx, 17—28, and read the charge given by Paul to the elders or bishops of Ephesus. It is beyond a doubt that when Paul sent to Miletus for the Presbyters of the church, Timothy, instead of being in the bishopric which has been so kindly given to him, was Paul's travelling companion. This whole charge then is given to these men in presence of their supposed bishop. Paul charges them to take heed to that flock over which the Holy Spirit had made them bishops, to govern it well, &c. In a word he addresses them just as though the whole business of teaching and governing belonged to them; he speaks of the church as committed to them by the Holy Spirit and says not a word; gives not a single hint of any duty to be performed to their diocesan Timothy, of any submission to his authority? In page 73, bishop R. says that "St. Paul knew too well what belonged to clerical propriety, to have addressed an epistle to any church collectively, that was under the care of its own bishop!" But where was his *clerical propriety* in this case? Before the face of the bishop of Ephesus to speak to his Presbyters as though the whole authority of the church were in their hands!—to address them as if all the interests of that church were entrusted to their care. What a flagrant breach of *clerical propriety*. The truth is on the Presbyterian hypothesis, the whole affair appears perfectly easy and natural, and every part of the epistle is congruous with the history in the Acts of the Apostles: but on the episcopal hypothesis many things are strained and *detorted*. The prescriptions then respecting ordination, and discipline were not given to Timothy as bishop, but through him as an evangelist for the benefit of all who might be employed in the government of the church. They, every one of them, are just as suitable to a Presbyterian minister, as to an

Episcopalian. And there is nothing in their being addressed singly to Timothy, when we recollect that he had been temporarily left by Paul at Ephesus for the organization of the church. It is also reasonable to believe that Timothy hastened too much to do his work, that he might rejoin his beloved friend the Apostle; and that this was the reason why Paul, though he was anxious to pursue his journey to Jerusalem, stopped at Miletus and sent for the presbyters of the church of Ephesus, that he might fully instruct them, and give them a suitable charge. Had Paul ordained these men during his abode among them, he no doubt would have given all these charges before. But admitting that their ordination was performed by *Timothy*, we can easily see why Paul in his solicitude would even delay his journey, for the purpose of seeing these presbyters, and giving them charges and instructions, of which we have a specimen in the 20th Chap. of Acts. If Timothy then was ordained bishop of Ephesus, he was a bishop without presbyters until he made them himself. And this is a new case in the history of the hierarchy. A bishop *in partibus infidelium*, has been heard of before now; but a *diocesan* bishop without clergy under him is a perfect anomaly in *high church*.

But let us now advert to the account given us in the New Testament of the Life of Timothy, and see whether it conforms to the notion of his being a diocesan bishop or not. It ought to be remembered that according to the hypothesis of our author, there were seven such bishops at no great distance from each other, namely, the bishops of Ephesus, of Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sordis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. Of these, five bishoprics lay within a territory but little if any larger, than one of the counties in the State of North Carolina. Bishops were more numerous in the ancient church than among modern hierarchists. But not now to dwell on this subject: Timothy was bishop of Ephesus. Well, his business was to preach the word, and govern his church. But instead of doing this, we find him proceeding in the following manner. After Paul had taken him as a companion, he went from Lystra to Phrygia and Galatia; thence through Mysia to Troas. From Troas he went to Macedonia, Acts xvii, 1, and visited Samothracia, Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica. From Thessalonica he journeyed to Berea, A. D. 53; thence to Athens; and thence to Thessalonica, A. D. 54, thence through Macedonia to Corinth, (Acts xviii, 5.) After staying near two years at Corinth, he accompanied Paul to Ephesus, and probably from that place to Jerusalem (A. D. 56.) From thence he went through Phrygia and Galatia again to Ephesus, (A. D. 57.) From Ephesus he was sent to Corinth, (A. D. 59) through Macedonia. He returned from Corinth to Ephesus (in the year 60.) He is here left by Paul for a time, and in three or four months goes to him into Macedonia; whence he accompanies Paul on his journey to Jerusalem. We do not know what became of him, after this; but probably he accompanied Paul in his journey. However this may be, we know that he was with the Apostle at Rome, when he wrote to the Philippians, to the Colossians, and to Philemon. And also that he was present when the Apostle wrote his epistle to the

Hebrews. After this, we hear nothing more of him in the New Testament.

The accounts given by the Fathers of Timothy, afford no information to be relied on by an impartial judge of historical testimony. The passage quoted from the Epistles of Ignatius, if we admit them to be genuine, proves nothing but that Timothy was one of the teachers of the Church in Ephesus in the time of the Apostles.—And this no reader of the New Testament ever for a moment thought of doubting.*

Eusebeus only says "it is reported"† that Timothy was appointed by Paul first bishop of the Ephesians. Now Eusebius lived more than three hundred years after the Christian Æra; at a time when the church was rising in worldly favour; after bishops had begun to assume great things to themselves; and when the effort was made to find evidence to support these claims. It is easy for us to form a judgment of the reliance to be placed on reports of this kind by adverting to the circumstances of our own country. It is but little more than two hundred years since the first permanent European settlements were made in North America. Now suppose that a historian of the present day, should, among a number of events which he is enabled to authenticate by proper historical evidence, mention some of the traditions which are in circulation in the

* The words used in the Epistle to the Ephesians which goes under the name of Ignatius are the following. "Ἴνα ἐν κλήρῳ Ἐφεσίων εὐρεθῶ τῶν χριστιανῶν, οἱ καὶ τοῖς ἀποστόλοις παντοῦ συνησαν, ἐν δυνάμει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, παύλῳ, Ἰωάννῃ, Τιμοθέῳ Ἰωαννιστοῦ." I wish that I may be found in the lot of the Ephesian Christians, who always conversed with the Apostles of Jesus Christ, Paul, John and the most faithful Timothy." If this proves any thing more than that Timothy was a religious teacher among the Ephesians, it proves that he was an Apostle. But who pretends this? It ought to be stated that this Testimony is taken from the larger Epistles of Ignatius, which almost universally, by learned Episcopalians, are acknowledged to have been interpolated, and very greatly corrupted. And by comparing the larger and smaller Epistles, it will be found that this passage is forged. Bishop R. is welcome to all the evidence here afforded for his hypothesis.

† The passage from Eusebius is in these words, Τιμοθέος γε μὴν Ἰης ἐν Ἐφέσῳ παροικίας ἰσθροῦναι πρώτος Ἰη ἐπισκοπὴν ἐίληχεναι. Timothy is reported to have received first the oversight of the parish, (church) in Ephesus, Lib. iii. chap. 4. Now Eusebius died in the year 340, that is nearly three hundred years after the event of which he records the tradition. And this is the first mention made of the Episcopate of Timothy in any of the genuine writings of the fathers. It is true that the apostolical constitutions are referred to by episcopal writers; but they are known not to be genuine; and the date of their composition is entirely uncertain. The other authorities referred to are still more remote. Chrysostom died in the beginning of the 5th century. The council of Chalcedon was held in the middle of that century, and Theodoret died ten years afterwards. Photius finished his course in 891, and the author quoted by him is not named, so that nobody knows who he was or when he lived.

These are the authorities relied on by the prelatists in support of the episcopal character of Timothy. The reader can see at once the probability that they all originated from the tradition of Eusebius. Can such traditions weigh a feather against the plain account of scripture?

country respecting events which happened during the first forty or fifty years after our forefathers came to this land; and suppose farther, that these traditional stories should twenty centuries hence become a matter of controversy, who would risk his estate on the testimony of that historian who thus reported the floating traditions of his country? What would be thought of the legislator who would make these traditions the foundation of a law respecting titles? This is a just statement of the value of ecclesiastical traditions.—Nay they ought to be received with an additional abatement: because before the time when they were committed to writing, the spirit of ecclesiastical ambition had been wakened up among the fathers. Most of them wished to exalt the dignity and increase the power of the diocesan bishops, and therefore were ready to record every tradition which served this purpose.

It deserves to be remarked, too, that Episcopalian writers can be brought to no agreement as to the real character of Timothy's authority. Eusebius only makes him bishop of the parish in Ephesus. But Chrysostom would have us believe that he was archbishop of Asia Minor. Theodoret is of the same opinion. Hammond and others among the moderns fight on the same side. But others again vehemently oppose this notion, and make Timothy no more than a diocesan bishop. Let the prelatists agree among themselves what office Timothy sustained, before they assault us in the unmerciful way of the bishop of North Carolina.

If we may turn once more to scripture, we shall see how much it differs from the prelatists of all ages. It is held by Episcopalians that Epaphroditus was bishop of Philippi; and we have seen the remark made with peculiar complacency, that Paul calls him the *Apostle of the Philippians*; (see chap. ii, 25, in which it is said that ἀπόστολον ought not to be rendered *messenger* as it is in our translation, but *apostle*,) and this for the sake of showing that sometimes a bishop is called an Apostle. Here now is a remarkable instance of Paul's disregard of what bishop R. calls clerical propriety. In answer to our inquiry, where was the bishop of Rome, of Corinth, &c. when the Apostle wrote his letters to them, he admits that these churches had no bishops at that period; otherwise Paul would not by any means have addressed the churches at large. He would have sent his letter to *the bishop!*—But here is a letter addressed to the church of Philippi, and its officers, and sent by the hands of their bishop. All the instructions and charges are given to the church at large, and not a word said about the authority of their diocesan! Really if bishop R. had lived in the times of the Apostle, we fear that Paul would have fared about as bad as our Reviewer has done! (See page 73.)

But we have not stated the worst of the case. The letter to the Philippians was written while Paul was prisoner at Rome; at least four years after bishop R. supposes that Timothy was ordained (not to say consecrated) bishop of Ephesus. Well; the Apostle not only commits the flagrant breach of clerical decorum just adverted to: but he promises to send the bishop of Ephesus (as soon as he well can,) to the diocese of the bishop of Philippi, that he

might know their affairs! What does the bishop of North Carolina think of this? How will he reconcile it with clerical propriety? We fear that it will gravel him almost as sorely, as some of the doctrinal passages in the Epistle to the Romans. But is it at all to be believed that Timothy was bishop of Ephesus?

The question then is, what office did he sustain? We reply that he was an Evangelist. But hear what bishop R. says on this subject.

"Equally unwarranted by scripture and ecclesiastical history is the usual subterfuge resorted to by contenders for parity in the christian ministry, against the episcopal character of Timothy and Titus. They were Evangelists it is said, and not Bishops—and as Evangelists only, were clothed with a special power to ordain and govern in the church."

"This, sir, also, is mere assertion—and you are required to show, either from scripture or the records of antiquity, that there was a distinct order of ministers in the church styled Evangelists; and as such possessed of authority distinct from, and superior to, the order either of Deacons or Presbyters—unless you can do this, you must be aware sir, that the reasoning founded on this assertion, and the conclusions drawn from it, are equally gratuitous with the assertion itself; and very wonderful indeed it would be, that an office, which from the very nature of things, must run parallel with the gospel, so long as there was a heathen land into which to carry its joyful sound, should have been discontinued in the church. But as the work of an Evangelist cannot cease, so long as the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ are *unheard* by any nation, kindred, tongue or people, so neither can the office. Every Deacon, Presbyter or Bishop, proclaiming these glad tidings to such, is thereby, and not in virtue of any official designation, an Evangelist, in the proper scriptural and only just meaning of that word. Nor was any other notion ever annexed to the word—until it was found convenient, by the contenders for parity, to consider an Evangelist as a distinct office in the church, in order to evade the clear and direct precedent for parity, given in the case of Timothy and Titus."—pp. 42, 43.

One who did not know this writer would suppose from his bold and peremptory assertions, that all christian antiquity is as familiar to him as his prayer book. But let us see what reason there is for his confidence. Rarely indeed does he afford us the evidence on which he relies—And he must excuse us, and all who think with us, for not believing matters of history on his assertion. But let us inquire for the proof: and,

1. As to scripture, Eph. iv, 11. "And he (Christ) gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some EVANGELISTS, and some pastors and teachers." Did bishop R. recollect this passage of scripture; or was this part written by some lay assistant not very familiar with his Bible? Were not Apostles officers? Were not prophets, were not pastors and teachers? And is it according to the usage of any respectable writer to place between words of distinct and appropriated meaning, in this way, a general and indefinite term which comprehends all of every kind? Bishop R. seems to have great horror at our innocent word *Hermeneutics*; but we cannot help recommending it to him to pay some attention to the *thing*. The term Evangelist occurs in two other places, 2 Tim. iv, 5, and Acts xxi, 8. In the first of these, Timothy is expressly called an Evangelist. And in the second the same title was given to Philip, who had once been one of the seven deacons of the Church in Jerusalem. So much for the use of the word in scripture.

2. Let us look to Ecclesiastical Antiquity. Bishop R. will then please to take up his Eusebius and turn to the third book, and thirty-seventh chapter (pa. 133 Edition of Reading.) He will there find an account of Evangelists, to this effect. "Many of the disciples of that age with a vehement love of divine philosophy which the word of God had excited, fulfilled the Saviour's command by distributing their substance to the poor. Then leaving their own country and going abroad, they performed the work of Evangelists, (*ἔργον ἐπέτελούν ἐναγγελιστῶν*) being eagerly desirous to preach Christ to those who had never heard the doctrine of faith, and to deliver to them the sacred scriptures. And after they had laid the foundation of the true religion in foreign parts, and appointed others as pastors, they committed the new converts to their care, and went on to other regions, &c. In this testimony, both Theophylact and Theodoret concur in their commentaries on Eph. iv, 11. So that we are fully warranted in asserting that Evangelists were extraordinary teachers set over no particular churches, but employed as assistants of the Apostles, and sent from one place to another, for the purpose of organizing churches; or strengthening them in their faith: or as Theodoret says, *ἐκείνοι περίιοντες ἐκίρυττον*: they went about and preached. What are we now to think of bishop R's bold assertions about scripture and antiquity? Is it unkind in us to advise him to read more, before he writes on these subjects?

The case of Titus is so similar to that of Timothy that we cannot think it necessary to dwell long on it. It is universally understood that "a Bishop has a certain district under his government called a diocese, beyond the limits of which he has no authority at all." Now our author maintains that Titus was bishop of Crete. But let us look at the New Testament. We there find that Titus was sent by the Apostle to Corinth, when things were in great disorder there, as is evident from Paul's epistle to that church. [See 1 Cor. i, 12. iv, v, vi, xi, xv, xvi, for an account of their divisions, their false teachers, their immoralities, their neglect of discipline, their going to law before the heathen, their abuse of the Lord's supper, and of their miraculous gifts, their errors about the resurrection, &c.] Here it would seem was work for a Bishop. And if we are to be guided by things instead of names, must we not say that Titus was bishop of Corinth? Timothy indeed was also sent to that place, but his abode was short; whereas Titus tarried a considerable time; and then went to Paul in Macedonia (2 Cor. ii, 13. vii, 5, 6.) He brought a good account of the Corinthian Church, and was then sent back (2 Cor. viii, 6—See also xii, 18.) After this we find him at Rome; and from thence he is sent to Dalmatia. 2 Tim. iv, 10. Either before or after this, he is in Crete. But he does not stay there—He is required to be at Nicopolis; and what became of him afterwards the New Testament does not mention. His Episcopate in Crete is not mentioned until after the year three hundred. But then, as in Timothy's case, it is not settled whether he was in truth bishop or archbishop. Eusebius, Ambrose and others are for the former; Chrysostom, Theodoret and their fol-

Towers favour the latter ; Chrysostom expressly says that the whole island was committed to him, that he might exercise power and jurisdiction over so many bishops. Every school-boy knows that Crete was very populous ; that it was famous for its hundred cities ; that the people were licentious and dishonest even to a proverb. Of course bishop Titus would have quite enough to do governing so many clergy, and so corrupt a people. What was exactly the ecclesiastical rank of Titus we leave to be settled by those who are better versed in these matters than we are. But really for the credit of these two eminent ministers of the gospel, Timothy and Titus, we do hope that their episcopacy will be given up. Who can believe that the spiritual government of the Dioceses of Ephesus and Crete was particularly committed to them, and that they yet went about the world, minding every body's business but their own ?

This whole case is plainly this—The planting of a Church of Christ was an extraordinary work. Men of extraordinary qualifications were employed in it. But as the work was too great for the Apostles, they were authorized to select assistants of extraordinary gifts and attainments, whom they sent from one place to another, with full powers to complete what they themselves left unfinished. And, most naturally, the Apostles wrote to them according to their real character, endowments, and duties. The error of bishop R. consists in supposing that officers of the church raised up for an extraordinary occasion, and endowed with higher gifts than usual, were intended to be perpetual : that is that men who were designed to guide and regulate the churches, until the canon of scripture should be complete, and all christians allowed access to the writings of the Apostles, were intended to be continued, when such provisions were unnecessary.

Bishop R. seems to place some reliance on the subscriptions to the Epistles to Timothy and Titus ; for he thus expresses himself.

“Neither are the subscriptions to the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, any more “forgeries,” as you venture to pronounce them, than the headings of the chapters in the Bible, or than the divisions of the Bible into chapters and verses. They are not Scripture, nor considered as such, but as declarations of matters of fact, sufficiently attested by other evidence, to render it both safe and useful, to give the information to the readers of Scripture. Eusebius, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Hilary the Deacon, as quoted by Bingham, *Eccles. Antiq.* vol. I. Book 2d, chap. 1st, page 20, folio edition, all declare, that Timothy was ordained Bishop of Ephesus by St. Paul—most of the same authors agree in the same declarations as to Titus, that he was ordained Bishop of Crete by St. Paul also. Therefore, another assertion of yours that, “at least three hundred years past off before any thing was heard of the Episcopate of Timothy and Titus,” is not the truth, these writers being witnesses with the scriptures.—Nor yet is it true that “there is nothing but uncertain tradition to support this notion”—both which rash and unfounded assertions, you make at p. 647. The tradition for “this notion,” as you call it, being evidence just as certain as that, on which all christians rely for the authenticity of the canon of Scripture, and for the fact, that it is a revelation from God.”—p. 72.

Surely no writer ever was so reckless as our Diocesan. Either he supposes that his readers are totally ignorant ; or he himself has

never spent time in making himself acquainted with the Fathers, whose writings he thus refers to ; or with the former history of the church, concerning which he makes such bold assertions. As to the subscriptions to the Epistles, the Bishop says that they are not forgeries, nor yet are they scripture. How then came they in the New Testament ? How is it that they are printed, as sometimes they are, in a way entirely to mislead the common reader ? To say that they are to be considered in the same light as the headings of the chapters, or division of the Bible into chapters and verses, is egregious trifling. But they are "declarations of matters of fact sufficiently attested by other evidence, to make it both safe and useful to give the information to the readers of Scripture."—Well let us examine this matter a little. And we hope that while the bishop is reading this part of our Review he will keep his *critical edition* of the Greek Testament open before him, his Mill, or his Wetstein, or his Griesback. Doing this, he will perceive, at once, that the manuscripts vary so much as to render it impossible for him to determine what the matters of fact here attested are : and it is an odd sort of testimony that leaves us at a loss to know even what are the facts of the case.

In the next place, it cannot but occur to one who is able to make such strong assertions respecting antiquity, that the inscription at the end of the first epistle was placed there more than 250 years after the death of Paul ; because the term *pacatiana* was not in use until the reign of Constantine the Great. We will not dispute about the word *forgery*. But when an unknown transcriber dates a letter at a place, near three hundred years after it was written, what is the worth of his testimony ?

The inscription affixed to the second epistle is wanting in all the most ancient and valuable manuscripts of the New Testament. And in those of a later date, the variations are very considerable. It is therefore spurious ; it bears on the face of it the character of later times. And we must be pardoned for telling the bishop that this appeal to these inscriptions will excite the surprise of all who have made Biblical Criticism a subject of study. Many too will laugh at a *bishop*, who, in this age, gravely refers to evidence of this sort to support his high pretensions. We are really sorry for this—but how can we help it, if the bishop will expose himself ?

But there is something more surprising than this—The bishop says, "Eusebius, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, Jerome, and Hilary the deacon all declare that Timothy was ordained bishop of Ephesus by St. Paul, &c.—Therefore another assertion of yours, that "at least three hundred years past off before any thing was heard of the episcopate of Timothy and Titus," is not the truth, these writers being witnesses with the scriptures." !!!

We have shown that there is no evidence for this in the scriptures ; except these *famous inscriptions*, which are not scripture ; but have been foisted in to support prelatical pretensions ; and which are retained when every man, who knows the least thing about these matters knows that they are spurious. And as for the list of witnesses given above, we have nothing to say more than adduce the following facts.

Eusebius died Anno Domini, 340. Chrysostom, 407. Epiphanius, 402. Jerome, 420. Hilary the Deacon wrote about 384, when he died is uncertain.

Will the bishop be so good as to explain to us how these old Fathers could have testified to the facts which he wishes to make them prove, before they were born? Do let us hear how they bear witness that our assertion is *not true*. We say nothing of the clerical propriety of the bishop's terms. We only wish to know how witnesses who lived in the 4th century can disprove the truth of our assertion.

We have now shown that

1. Deacons were not ministers of the word.
2. That the Apostles were not of a different order from Presbyters; or if they were, that they were extraordinary officers, who as such had no successors.
3. That Timothy and Titus were not diocesan bishops but evangelists; not of a different order from presbyters, but employed also as extraordinary officers for the particular occasion.

And from all this it would seem to follow that according to our Reviewer, the permanent teachers in the church were those who, according to bishop R's own confession, were styled indifferently elders or bishops. But we have still more to say on this subject.

Our reviewer had said "The whole language of the New Testament is such, as to have extorted from many learned Episcopalians the confession, that bishops and presbyters were the same."

To this the bishop thought it consistent with clerical propriety, to reply in the following terms.

"Sir, I am sorry that any man having a character to lose, whether for christian candour or literary fairness, should so commit himself. For what is this but the threadbare, exploded argument, from the Community of Names, which no Episcopalian pretends to dispute. But you cannot bring forward a solitary learned Episcopalian, by whom the confession ever was made, that Bishop and Presbyter were the same order in the ministry. Far less can you establish your assertion either from scripture or antiquity.

"Were you conversant with the writings of Mr Charles Leslie, I think, that even the necessity of your case, could hardly have driven you to so weak a defence of your cause, as you have here resorted to. And as the objection is old and unadorned with any thing new or even ingenious in its support, I shall reply to it in his words, as I find them in the discourse before mentioned.

"If the Presbyterians will say (because they have nothing left to say) that all London (for example) was but one Parish—and that the Presbyter of every other Parish, was as much a Bishop as the Bishop of London, because the words Bishop and Presbyter are sometimes used in the same sense, they may as well prove that Christ was but a Deacon, because he is so called; Rom. xv, 8. And Bishop signifies an overseer, and Presbyter an ancient man or elder man—whence our term of Alderman. And this is as good a foundation to prove that the Apostles were Aldermen, in the City acceptance of the word; or that our Aldermen are all Bishops and Apostles, as to prove that Presbyters and Bishops are all one; from the childish jingle of the words.

"It would be the same thing if one should undertake to confront all antiquity, and prove against all the histories, that the Emperors of Rome were no more than the Generals of Armies, and that every Roman General was Emperor of Rome, because he could find the word *Imperator*, sometimes applied to the general of an army.

“ Or, as if a commonwealth's man should get up and say—that our former Kings, were no more than our Dukes are now, because the stile of Grace, which is now given to Dukes, was then given to Kings.

“ And suppose that any one was put under the penance of answering such ridiculous arguments, what method would be taken, but to show that the Emperors of Rome, and former Kings of England had Generals of armies, and Dukes under them, and exercised authority over them?

“ Therefore, when we find it given in charge to Timothy, the first Bishop of Ephesus—how he was to proceed against his Presbyters when they transgressed—to sit in judgment upon them, examine witnesses against them, and pass censures upon them, it is a most impertinent logomachy to argue from the etymology of the words, that notwithstanding all this—a Bishop and a Presbyter are the same thing. Therefore, that one text 1 Tim. v, 19, is sufficient to silence the pitiful clamour of the Presbyterians. Our English translation reads it “against an Elder”—which is the literal translation of the word Presbyter—“against a Presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses, and them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.” Now upon the Presbyterian hypothesis we must say, that Timothy had no authority or jurisdiction over that Presbyter, against whom he had power to receive accusations, examine witnesses and pass censures upon him; and that such a Presbyter had the same authority over Timothy; which is so extravagant, and against common sense, that I will not stay longer to confute it; and this is enough to have said concerning the Presbyterian argument from the etymology of the word Presbyter and Bishop.”—pp. 66, 67.

It is surprising, that whenever a high churchman meets with the argument for ministerial equality derived from the community of names, it invariably appears to put him into a passion. But why should that which is perfectly insignificant produce such excitement? Why, too, did it not occur to our prelate, that the character of our Reviewer, whatever it may be, had nothing to do with the force of the argument? The bishop here is at his bold assertions again. He says that we “cannot bring forward a solitary learned episcopalian, by whom the confession was ever made, that bishop and presbyter were the same order in the ministry.” Why will not this prelate according to the charge of Paul to Timothy “give himself to reading?” There are many, very many things in the writings of learned episcopalians, which bishop R. knows very well that he never saw: why then will he subject himself by confident affirmation to continual exposure? Did he ever read Sir Peter King's *Inquiry into the Constitution of the Primitive Church*? He was once Lord Chancellor of England; a man of very extensive learning. He proves beyond a doubt that in the primitive church, a presbyter had the whole power of a bishop; and that the difference between them was that the bishop had a pastoral charge, and the presbyter had not.

What does bishop R. think of Bingham—was he learned? Well, he says that “the Church of England does by no means damn or cut off from her communion, those who believe bishops and presbyters to be the same order. Some of our best episcopal divines, and true sons of the Church of England, have said the same, distinguishing between order and jurisdiction, and made use of this doctrine and distinction to justify the ordinations of the Reformed churches, against the Romanists.” But it is needless to pursue this subject farther. Let bishop R. borrow from any presbyterian

neighbour of his, Dr Miller's *Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry*, and read from page 246 to 285; and without taking the time to peruse all the works of all learned episcopalians, he will find that he ought not to make assertions so readily as he allows himself to do.

As for the argument borrowed from Leslie, we had seen it before we ever heard of bishop R.; and had seen it answered in a manner most perfectly satisfactory. We do request it as a most particular favour of bishop R. that on this subject he would read what is to be found in the *Christian's Magazine*, vol. 1, pp. 187—211. This is a *Review of Essays on Episcopacy* from the pen of the celebrated Dr Mason of New York. Were the bishop conversant with the writings of Dr Mason, we do not think, that even the necessity of his case could have driven him to so weak a defence of his cause as he has here resorted to. We feel that we have a right to re-echo the bishop's words. No man who understands the use of language, and considers this subject without prejudice, can sincerely scorn the argument for parity derived from the *community of names*.

We have before remarked, that the names of officers in the Christian church were general terms, as is the case with many words used to express offices in civil life. In some cases, these words are used in their ordinary sense, while in others they are restricted. A remarkable case of this kind occurs in 1 Tim. v, 1 and 19. The word Elder in the first verse evidently means an *old man*; in the 19th it means a *particular officer* in the church. The context enables any one not a mere child to perceive this at once. The rule which has been laid down is this; when a writer's subject is the church in any part of its polity, then we take it for granted that the terms of office are used in their restricted sense: otherwise their general meaning is to be attributed to these words. It is just so in civil cases. Congress, assembly, judge and the like are general terms admitting of various applications. But when we speak of our government, then these terms at once become restricted; and any but an idiot can understand their definite application; and the peculiar powers belonging to the several offices held under the government. Indeed it is impossible to speak intelligibly in relation to this subject, without giving to words that restricted meaning on which we insist. Why does it appear absurd to show that *Christ* was but a *deacon*, if the general term *deacon*, is not restricted in its application to a particular church officer? For the same reason and for that only it appears absurd to say that apostles are aldermen. We annex a definite idea to the term apostle, we think of a particular officer in the church of Christ: So also in using the word *alderman* we think of a particular officer in a city corporation; and hence the obvious absurdity. So then, the episcopalians cannot use their favourite arguments to turn us in this case into ridicule, without admitting the very principle for which we contend. We say that the word bishop, signifying, in its general sense, an overseer, when applied to an officer in the primitive church is definite in its meaning; that it does not signify

an *apostle*, nor a *deacon*, but in the restricted sense of these terms, one who has the oversight of a particular church. In like manner, the word *presbyter*, when used in the same way, has a definite meaning, so that *presbyter* for instance cannot be commuted for *deacon*. But while official terms have this restricted signification, it is evident beyond dispute, that bishop and *presbyter* are used indiscriminately for the same office. The only difference between them being this, that the word *presbyter* conveys an idea of the authority with which one executes his office; and *bishop*, (*ἐπισκοπος*) the actual discharge of official duty.

Or to express our ideas in other terms—when we find in scripture, the terms *apostle*, *bishop*, *deacon*, applied to officers in the church of Christ, it is evident that *bishop* cannot be used in place of either *apostle* or *deacon*: the case is the same with *apostle*, *presbyter* and *deacon*: but *presbyter* and *bishop* may at any time be substituted one for another without in the least degree hurting the sense. This is done twice by the apostle Paul; once in the 20th of Acts, and once in the Epistle to Titus. If then language can convey any definite ideas, we are warranted in saying that bishops and presbyters, according to the New Testament, are officers of the same order.

The additional instances given by Leslie are not fairly stated: no presbyterian ever thought of proving parity after this fashion. If *imperator*, although for many years it signified the general of an army, yet when in the degenerate days of Rome the soldiers elected the chief of the empire, became restricted in its signification, then we might certainly know that *imperator* meant emperor. And supposing that the term Augustus was also used, after the days of Octavius Cæsar, to designate the emperor, then it would follow undeniably that Augustus, and Imperator expressed precisely the same office. But no, say the episcopalians, *imperator* signifies a general, and it is pitiful trifling to pretend that it means emperor. The reader can easily see on which side the sophistry lies.

Just so in regard to the instance of king and duke. It is a manifest perversion of the case. No commonwealth's man, no presbyterian ever reasoned in this pitiful way. But thus—formerly the kings of England were distinguished by the style of *grace*. When therefore a writer speaks of the king, he means the person styled *his grace*: and when he uses the term *his grace* he means the king. *His grace*, and *king* then mean the very same office and authority. Is this too ridiculous to be answered? But says Mr Charles Leslie, the term *grace* is now applied to dukes, and therefore a duke and a king cannot be the same. A very sapient conclusion indeed! *Bishop* and *presbyter* once were applied indifferently to the same church officer; but since that time, the meaning of the words is changed; *bishop* now signifies an officer of the highest order, and *presbyter* one in the next rank; therefore, before this change took place, they meant officers of different order: that is, when they were used indiscriminately for the same officer, they meant officers entirely different. This is the sort of reasoning in which bishop R. perfectly coincides. We can only say that he manifests wonderful facility towards his own party.

As for all the rest about Timothy, we have sufficiently answered it already.

But now we come to his ten instances from the scripture of diocesan episcopacy.

These are the cases of Timothy and Titus—*two*.

Of the angels of the churches in Revelations—*seven*.

Of the episcopacy of James in Jerusalem—*one*.

In all *ten!*

We hope that our readers, by this time, know well enough what to think of the first two.

In regard to the angels of the seven churches, the bishop writes thus,

“In the lifetime of John, the beloved disciple, we have further proof of Diocesan Episcopacy, in the seven churches of Asia, to whose respective Angels, or chief Governors, were addressed, through St. John, the admonitions of the great Head of the Church. I enter not into the unprofitable and childish jangle, raised on the word Angel, in order to support the Presbyterian hypothesis. Sufficient it is for me, that the Church of Ephesus is in the number of the seven thus admonished; in which, we have already seen from Scripture, that a Diocesan Bishop was appointed; and have good reason to believe, that the succession from Timothy was acted upon before the Apocalyptic vision; because upwards of thirty years elapsed, from the appointment of Timothy to the government of the Ephesian Church, to the giving the Revelation to St. John; and we well know, that the primitive Bishops, or Angels of the Churches, had but a short space given them by the persecuting powers.

“If then, the Bishop or chief governor of the Ephesian Church, is addressed in a revelation from Heaven, as the Angel of that Church, and is commended for the just exercise of his episcopal authority, in trying them which said they were Apostles, but were not, Rev. ii, 2, the same official character and station must be assigned to the Angels of the other six Churches—We have therefore at once, and from Scripture too, six additional testimonies against your “indisputable fact.”

“If to this we add the testimony which Ecclesiastical antiquity gives in support of the diocesan character of these Angels, it is not easy to understand upon what principle it can be resisted. For we have extant, the Epistles of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, ordained by the Apostles, to three of these Apocalyptic Churches, the Ephesian, the Philadelphian and the Smyranean, in all of which he recognises the three orders of the Bishop, the Presbytery and the Deacons—particularly in that to the Ephesians, he speaks of Onesimus their Bishop, who of course must have been such subsequent to Timothy. And in that to the Smyrneans, of Polycarp their Bishop, who was also apostolically ordained to his office of Angel or Bishop. To this we can add the testimony of many witnesses, particularly of St. Augustine and Epiphanius, that by the Angels of the Apocalyptic Churches, the chief rulers or Bishops of those Churches were always understood.

“Another testimony to this point, less objectionable perhaps in your eyes than the early historians of the Church, is found in the more modern ecclesiastical historian Mosheim; in his commentaries on the three first centuries, Vidal's translation, p. 227, 228, note—he thus expresses himself, ‘In support of this opinion, (that Episcopacy was established during the lifetime of the Apostles and with their approbation) we are supplied with an argument of such strength, in those ‘Angels’ to whom St. John addressed the Epistles, which, by the command of our Saviour himself, he sent to the seven churches of Asia—as the Presbyterians, as they are termed, let them labour and strive what they may, will never be able to overcome. It must be evident to every one, even on a cursory perusal of the Epistles to which we refer, that those who are therein termed ‘Angels,’ were persons possessing such a degree of authority in their respective churches, as enabled

them to mark with merited disgrace, whatever might appear to be deserving of reprehension, and also to give due countenance and encouragement to every thing that was virtuous and commendable."—pp. 70, 71.

If we admit that the symbolical term *angel* is to be restricted to a single person, there is nothing in the phraseology, which may not be applied to a parochial as well as to a diocesan bishop. Should we choose to adopt the language of the apocalypse, and address letters to the angel of the church in Raleigh, in Fayetteville, in Hillsborough, our communications would be just as appropriate to Presbyterian clergymen in those places, as to the episcopalians. But bishop R., with all his prelatical friends to help him, can never prove that the term *angel* as a symbol is restricted to the clergy. A single term when used symbolically, *most commonly*, if not universally, expresses a collective body. Now, as there is not a single instance in all the preceding parts of the New Testament of an epistle directed to the bishop of a church; but all are addressed to the churches collectively, as for instance to the Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, &c.; we shall believe until better evidence than has ever yet been adduced, shall be set before us, that the apostle did not depart from the common practice.

It would be amusing, if we had time for it, to show how the high going churchmen differ in their explications of this passage. They deal much, very much in what bishop R. (who certainly did not know all that learned episcopalians have written on this subject,) calls "unprofitable and childish jangle:"—in "the sophistry of names." Has bishop R. read Potter on Church Government? He will find *jangle* enough there, on the word *angel*. But he relies on the fact that Timothy was bishop of Ephesus. This is what a great man used to call a *false fact*: and therefore his argument falls to the ground. Timothy's episcopacy is to the bishop what "the great goddess Diana" was to the Ephesians. It is about as good, too, for proof, as Diana was for a divinity. But really there is something original in the argument which follows. 'A diocesan bishop had been appointed—namely Timothy—and upwards of thirty years had elapsed before John wrote by direction, the epistle to the church at Ephesus,' therefore "the succession from Timothy was acted upon;" and the angel of the church was a diocesan bishop. If our author expects to convince any but prejudiced partizans, by such arguments, he certainly has the poorest way of complimenting their understandings that we ever heard of. Let bishop R. either prove that *angel* can mean nothing but a diocesan bishop—which he never can do:—or let him give up the authority derived from a symbolical word altogether.

But here we have a most notable instance of the "art of sinking" in argument. We were promised ten *undeniable* instances from *scripture* of the establishment of diocesan episcopacy by the Apostles. We accordingly were looking with all our eyes for scripture evidence; when behold we have the testimony of Ignatius, Epiphanius, and Augustine. Surely undeniable evidence from scripture needs no such support as this. As for Ignatius, every one ought to know that there is a dispute yet unsettled respecting the genuineness of his epistles. We shall not enter on this subject,

however, at present. A witness whose credibility is not admitted, makes but a sorry figure in support of undeniable scriptural facts. But we are prepared to show at the proper time, that, waiving this objection, Ignatius does not sustain diocesan episcopacy. As for Epiphanius and Augustine, they can depose to what the Apostles did, just about as well as bishop R. can give testimony as to the matters in dispute, in the days of Charles the 1st of England, between the advocates of the *star chamber*, and *high commission*, and the friends of civil and religious liberty.

But, as young rhetoricians are pleased to say, the bishop "caps the climax," when he brings forward the testimony of *Mosheim as translated by Vidal*, to prove what the Apostles established in the church—a witness who lived more than seventeen hundred years after the event to which he testifies! Mosheim was a very learned man, and his *opinion* is entitled to respect. He, however, was not free from prejudices, as any one may see who reads his Ecclesiastical History. His opinions then will be carefully examined by every one, who wishes not to be misled. But all this, is nothing to the point before us. We are promised evidence from the scripture, and are gravely told of Ignatius, and Epiphanius, of Augustine and Mosheim!

The author gives us his tenth instance from the New Testament in the following words.

"Another and decisive proof from Scripture in favour of Diocesan Episcopacy, is furnished in the constitution and government of the first Christian Church that ever was gathered in the world, the Church in Jerusalem. The converts to the faith in that City, are counted by thousands in the New Testament, so that it was impossible they could all assemble in one place, and must, for convenience, if not for safety, have had different places of worship. Over these separate congregations, with their respective Presbyters and Deacons, a near kinsman of our blessed Lord presided, as is evident from the manner he is spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles.

"That James, the Lord's brother, as he is called in Scripture, was truly the Bishop or chief governor of the Church in Jerusalem, and ordained thereto by the Apostles themselves, is attested by all antiquity. By Hegesippus and Clemens Alexandrinus in the second, and by Chrysostom, and your favourite Jerome, in the fourth century. To this I will add the testimony of the same Mosheim before mentioned, extracted from the same work, p. 229, 230, note—"As the early churches are well known to have taken all their institutions and regulations from the model exhibited to them in the Church of Jerusalem it appears to me, that scarcely a doubt can be entertained of their having been also indebted to this last mentioned venerable assembly, for the example of appointing some one man to preside over the Presbyters, and general interest of each individual Church, and that the first instance of any one's being invested with the Episcopal office occurred in that city."—pp. 71, 72.

Our readers cannot fail to observe that this last "*decisive proof from scripture*," is patched up by the testimony of men who lived from a hundred to seventeen hundred years and more after the time. We have wondered much whether bishop R. ever took pains to become acquainted with the character of his authorities. Where, for instance, has he seen the testimony of Hegesippus? Does the bishop know that there are only five very small fragments of the work of Hegesippus preserved by Eusebius, and that even these remnants are sufficient to destroy his authority. Let bishop R. turn

to his Eusebius Lib. 2, c, 23, and he will find a long, fabulous account of the martyrdom of James: and if he will trouble himself so far as to consult the learned Dupin's *Bibliotheca Patrum*, he will find that even candid Roman Catholics admit that such is the character of Hegesippus. But the testimony of the *fathers* will be considered in a subsequent part of our work. At present we are only concerned with the scriptures. Our author contents himself with the bare assertion that James, the brother of our Lord, presided over the several congregations in Jerusalem "as is evident from the manner he is spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles." Our reader's who are acquainted with Mosheim, may well be surprised that bishop R. who quotes him for authority, took no notice of his proof that James could not have been bishop of Jerusalem. We have no copy at hand of Vidal's translation; but we are sure that the passage to which we refer, cannot be very distant from that quoted by bishop R.

"If this is sound reasoning, James held the chief authority in the church in Jerusalem, therefore he was its bishop; we must assent to this conclusion also, the twelve Apostles governed the church at Jerusalem, therefore they were all bishops of that church. Why many words? *There is a very great difference between the office of bishop and apostle*; and therefore I think that James, who was an Apostle, did not sustain the office of bishop in Jerusalem. I am of opinion rather that the Presbyters governed the christian people in Jerusalem; in such a way however as to do nothing of great importance without the counsel and authority of James: and as they had before shown themselves obedient to the whole college of the Apostles, so also they did to him. Although therefore we judge that the ancients committed some mistake when they adorned James with the title of first Bishop of Jerusalem, yet it may without difficulty be demonstrated, that the church in Jerusalem, had a bishop sooner than the other churches, and that therefore the episcopal dignity had its origin in that city."—(*Mosheim Com. De Rebus Christ. p. 135.*)

No *man's* authority is of any value with us; but facts and sound arguments have great weight. James was an apostle, and therefore was not a bishop in the official sense of that term. The argument derived from the Acts of the Apostles, is stated by bishop R. in terms so general and vague that it calls for no refutation. Other writers on his side have adverted to particulars; for instance to the council held on occasion of the deputation from Antioch, Acts xv. But a slight examination will convince any one that this is a slender support indeed for a building as high as that of prelacy. The argument is founded on the speech of James, "wherefore my sentence is, &c.;" and this is thought to be a judicial sentence, pronounced *ex cathedra*. But it is no such thing. James, according to the true force of the original, did no more than give his opinion; as others had done before him. This opinion pleased the other Apostles and Elders, and it was adopted. This is all that can be gathered from the words used by James.—But it is wonderful that in this case, it has not occurred to the advocates of prelacy, that the question here to be decided, respected a people who were

out of the jurisdiction of bishop James. The case was brought up from Antioch. Was there no bishop in that great city? Or is it pretended that James was bishop of Antioch?—There is no end to the mistakes of men, who have formed their opinions respecting the constitution of the primitive church under the influence of high church notions and practices; and then undertake to judge of the times of the Apostles by their own. The *episcopate* of James is the mere dream of such men as the *fabulosus* Hegesippus, the Pseudo-Ignatius, and others who are fond of catching at every figment to support a hierarchy, which has no foundation in scripture.

We shall in our next number proceed to show by decisive testimony, that in the primitive church presbyters exercised the powers which are supposed to distinguish bishops from them as an ecclesiastical order. And we intend to hold bishop R. to his word: not rigidly indeed, but as far as it is in the heart of gentle spirited presbyterians to do the thing. "If," says his right reverence, "you can produce from the records of ecclesiastical history, for fifteen centuries, a single instance of presbyterian, as contradistinguished from Episcopal ordination, in any acknowledged branch of the Catholic Church, I surrender the cause I maintain, and with it, every claim or title to covenanted mercy." It is only the first part of the surrender to which we intend to hold the bishop. As for the rest, worlds would not tempt us if we could, to take from him his title to covenanted mercy, or weaken in the least possible degree his hope of salvation. But we wish to fix the bishop on a foundation much firmer than that on which he relies. He places his confidence on the assurance which man gives; on episcopal authority and succession; on something communicated by a bishop to give validity to the sacraments, and make them seals of God's truth and faithfulness. Now all these *fabulæ aniles*, these antiquated notions, we wish bishop R. to surrender, together with his *Dissente-phobia*, and come and take his seat with us at the table of our common Lord, and rely on the *word of God*, the *scriptures of eternal truth*, for his hopes of salvation. Not that we would persuade bishop R. to become a presbyterian: this we never do: besides, we think that the bishop would not submit with very good grace to the discipline of a presbytery,* after he has *felt* episcopal

* Bishop R. thinks that the exercise of discipline on ministers of the gospel, where all are equal, is absurd and impossible. In page 68, he thus expresses himself: "If then, as is asserted by you, Episcopal power and authority, in the proper acceptation, belonged to these Presbyters of the Ephesian Church, in virtue of their office as such—it is most unaccountable, that not the remotest allusion is made to it by St. Paul, at this particular and very proper time. And still more unaccountable, how, if they possessed it, they could have exercised it upon each other. If all had equal right to rule, to judge of doctrine and conduct, to censure and absolve—who were to obey and submit themselves? The very idea of such a state of things is so absurd as to refute this argument in favour of parity." Are not all members of Congress equal in power and authority? And cannot they discipline and rule each other. Are not all members of a presbytery in a state of perfect official equality; and if a presbyter teaches false doctrine, or commits immoral actions, is there no authority that can be exercised on him? Why could not the presbyters of Ephesus do, what presbyterians can and actually do perform every time the occasion calls for it? We

power. And we are not without the hope of ensuring bishop R's high commendation and thanks for our most exemplary moderation, when we shall have compelled him to feel that he must make the unconditional surrender to which he has pledged himself before the world. If we prove, what we are sure that we can do, the bishop is bound to surrender all his claims and hopes of covenanted mercy. Now instead of this, we shall only insist on his surrendering his dislike of *Dissenters*, his episcopal pride—and acknowledging that he is superior to his presbyters not by the appointment of God, but solely by the custom of the church. Let him do this, and we will freely *let him off*, for the rest.

We shall now endeavour to show that bishop R. is bound, according to his own terms, unconditionally to surrender his cause. Our readers will bear in mind the pledge which he has given.

But we wish first to make a remark or two, the justness of which will, at first sight, appear to every intelligent mind.

Bishop R. cannot, no man on earth can show from any record of the Church for two hundred and fifty years any trace whatever, of a *second ordination*. Be it remembered that according to bishop R. ordination impresses a character; and precisely that character which is intended by the ordaining minister. One act of ordination impresses the character of a deacon, and nothing else: a different act impresses the character of a priest; and a third (called consecration) impresses the character of a bishop. Now according to the whole history of the church, for nearly three centuries, there is nothing which even hints at Episcopal consecration. When a man was once ordained to the gospel ministry, nothing that man could do, made him more a minister, or gave him any higher power than he possessed by his induction to office. Episcopal consecration is the device of later ages. If bishop R. denies this, let him from the undisputed records of the early ages produce evidence of the fact.

2. In all languages, changes take place in the meaning of words. The signification of a term which has undergone a change, is not to be retained after the change has taken place. Thus if the word *bishop* has a different meaning *now*, from that which it had in the first three centuries; the modern meaning ought not to be given to the term, when used by writers of the primitive ages. Otherwise these writers will be made to say what they do not mean. This is too plain to admit of illustration or proof.

We now proceed with our proof of Presbyterian ordination. And in the first place we appeal to Scripture. Timothy was or-

should have thought that bishop R. knew better, from his experience in the christian society of which he was first a member. But however this may be, it is laughable indeed that he should, with the presbyterian church existing before his eyes, gravely produce such an argument as this against ministerial parity. One of the old objections against presbyterianism has been founded on the rigor of its discipline.—One of the practical arguments against episcopacy, as the dispute has been conducted in England, is derived from the want of discipline; while one of the boasts of this society, at least in this country, is its *liberality*. We do wish that bishop R. would read Church History.

dained "with the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery;" 1st Tim. iv, 14. On this fact we wish to offer a few remarks.

1. This is the only instance recorded in Scripture, of the specific manner in which *ministers of the gospel* were ordained in the days of the Apostles. The fact of ordination is several times mentioned; but no other reference is made to the manner in which it is done.

2. The Greek word (*πρεσβυτεριον*) presbytery, according to the uniform usage of the ancients, signifies a company of Presbyters; that is of persons who in New Testament language sustained the office of presbyter.

3. The Greek phrase here employed, signifies as has been observed elsewhere the manner in which Timothy's ordination was performed.—ὁ ἐδόθη σοι—μετὰ ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν. Κ.Τ.Λ. It would be easy to prove this by the citation of numerous passages from the New Testament, and also from profane authors. Acts ii, 29. εἶπεν μετὰ παρρησίας, expresses for instance the manner of speaking, *with boldness*. [See also v, 26. xvii, 11. xxiv, 3. 2 Cor. vii, 15. Tit. ii, 15, &c. &c.] If then the language of the New Testament can in any case convey a definite meaning, it is certain that, in this instance, the thing done was done by the *Presbytery*. The pretence that ordination was performed by the Apostle; and that the presbyters present, only laid their hands on Timothy in concurrence with the Apostle, betrays ignorance of the usage of the language, and of the proper force of the words here employed, of which a Biblical critic ought to be ashamed. Here then is a decisive instance of ordination by a Presbytery, on which we would be willing to rest our whole cause.

But to put the matter beyond all controversy, we will undertake to show that there was no ordination performed in the church at all from the days of the Apostles until at least 250 years after Christ by any but presbyters. During the first two centuries, the modern distinction between bishops and presbyters was utterly unknown to the church. The exclusive power of ordination claimed by diocesan bishops is a usurpation in the church, supported by nothing but decrees of councils, and contrary to the whole practice of the pure primitive age of Christianity. But here we plainly give notice, that no reliance can be placed on disputed, and manifestly interpolated works, such as Ignatius' Epistles, the Canons and Constitutions of the Apostles, &c. We will have nothing to do with witnesses, whose credibility has been impeached—not, as some suppose, because they decide the point against us; but because we cannot bring ourselves to place confidence in Testimony of this character.

The point which we wish to establish, was stated in terms sufficiently explicit by Jerome, the most learned of the fathers, nearly fourteen hundred years ago. In his Commentary on Titus, he boldly maintains that, in the days of the Apostles, presbyter and bishop were the same; and states it as a fact known in his day, that presbyters were inferior to bishops *by the custom of the church, and not by the appointment of the Lord*.

"Hæc propterea, ut ostenderemus apud veteres eosdom fuisse Presbyteros quos et Episcopos. Paulatim vero, ut dissionum plan-

taria evellerentur, ad unum omnem solitudinem esse delatam.—Sicut ergo Presbyteri sciunt se ex ecclesiæ consuetudine ei, qui sibi propositus fuerit, esse subjectos, ita Episcopi noverint se magis consuetudine quam dispositionis dominicæ veritate, Presbyteris esse majores.” He also asserts it to be a fact, that at Alexandria, from the days of Mark the Evangelist to the bishops Heraclas and Dionysius, *the presbyters always chose one of their number*, placed him in a higher station, and named him bishop. But the bishop of North Carolina may see this whole matter more fully considered, in the works of the learned Selden, (vol. ii, 419—527.) who gives a translation of “Euty chius’s Origin of the Church at Alexandria.” According to the account given by this writer, it is clear that there were for about 250 years, no bishops at Alexandria, but such as were ordained by presbyters.

But this matter is merely adverted to in passing, because Euty chius *substantially* agrees with Jerome. This father, bishop Ravenscroft is pleased to call our favourite—we suppose because his testimony is so decisive in favour of Presbyterianism. But if the bishop will consult as high an Episcopalian as Dr Cave, he will find what, from the early part of the 5th century, down to the present day, has been the character of Jerome among the learned. He has been often called, “the teacher of the world,” “the most learned of the fathers,” &c. &c.—so that we have reason enough for our favouritism. Let us, however, go back as near to the times of the Apostles as possible. The undisputed writings, which have come down to us from this early period, may be mentioned in the following order.

1. The epistle of *Clemens Romanus* to the Corinthians. Clement is a writer of the first century. He lived with the Apostles. His first epistle to the Corinthians, is universally admitted to be genuine, and is regarded as one of the most precious relics of ecclesiastical antiquity. The letter of this apostolical man was occasioned by the grievous contentions which disturbed the peace of the Corinthian Church. It was addressed to the whole body of the faithful at Corinth. Either, then, there was no bishop at Corinth, or Clement was as negligent of “clerical propriety” as Paul had been before him. But we will let that pass. Bishop R. is obliged to admit that in the days of the Apostles, ministers of the gospel ordained and settled in the churches, were styled indifferently, presbyters or bishops. The case was precisely the same in the time of Clement of Rome. For he says (chap xlii. pa. 170. Cotebr. Edit, Le Clerc.) “They (the Apostles) preached in countries and cities, and appointed their first converts, after they had proved them by the spirit, as bishops and deacons of those who would afterwards believe. Nor was this a new device, for from old times it had been written concerning bishops and deacons; for thus saith the scripture, “I will appoint their bishops in righteousness, and their deacons in faith.” Here, be it remarked, are only two kind of church officers. In chap. xliv, he says “And our Apostles knew by our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be contention on account of the *episcopal office*; and for this reason, having received perfect foreknowledge, they appointed the aforementioned, and

in doing so, they gave the *rule of succession*, that when they should fall asleep, other approved men might succeed to their ministry.—We do not therefore think it right, that *they* should be cast out of their office, who were appointed by them, (i. e. the Apostles) or afterwards by other approved men, with the consent of the whole church; who have ministered to the flock of Christ, blamelessly, with humility, and not in a niggardly manner; and who have for a long time; received a good report from all men. For our sin will not be small, if we eject from the *episcopacy* those who have performed their service in a holy and blameless manner. Happy the *presbyters*, who have, before this, finished their course, who have obtained a fruitful and perfect discharge! For they will never fear that any will cast them out from the place prepared for them.”—The attentive reader cannot fail to perceive how exactly these words of an apostolical man, accord with the view which we have given by the organization of the primitive church. The *Apostle*—*presbyters* appointed persons duly qualified as religious teachers, and ministers of tables, in all the churches. The teachers set over particular churches, were *bishops*—*presbyters*, called indiscriminately by either name, but most commonly by the latter. They were bishops, because they had the *oversight* of a particular church; but yet so common was the title of *Presbyter*, that it is given to men who were ejected from the episcopal office. Clement, after adverting to the fact that the Corinthians had *deprived* some of their bishops, exclaims happy the presbyters who have finished their course, and who never will fear that any will deprive them. The *episcopal office* then according to Clement is precisely the office held by a presbyter, when he is set over a particular church. And the rule of succession as laid down by the Apostles is obvious.—These presbyters appoint others, with the approbation of the church.

In chap. xlvii. pa. 174, this venerable writer says, “Beloved, it is shameful, yea very shameful to be heard, and unworthy of your conversation in Christ, that the most firmly established, and ancient church of the Corinthians should, on account of one or two persons, rise up against the Presbyters.”—He then adverts to the reproach thus brought on them, and the name of Christ; exhorts them to take away this reproach; gives a very striking description of christian charity; and breaks out thus—“Who then among you is generous, who is compassionate, who is full of love? Let him say—if sedition and discord, and schisms have arisen on my account, I depart, I go away wherever you wish, and do what is required by the people; only let the flock of Christ live in peace, with the *Presbyters* placed over it. μετὰ τῶν καθίσταμένων πρεσβυτέρων.” And in the lviii. chap. he says, “Do ye therefore, who have laid the foundation of this disturbance, be *subject to the presbyters*, and be disciplined to repentance.” pa. 178.

Now we ask, does any thing in all that Clement says, bear the least semblance of diocesan episcopacy? And where was the bishop of Corinth when Clement wrote? Not a trace of him is to be found in this letter—not a word of him in the letters of the Apostle Paul.

But every thing in full accordance with *genuine Presbyterianism*.—Presbyters appoint others to the sacred office, with the consent of the people. It is most generally believed that this epistle of Clement was written about the year of our Lord 96, after the persecution of Domitian.

2. *The Epistle of Polycarp.* This is supposed by Lardner to have been written about the year 108. It is admitted to be genuine, and has received high praise from both ancients and moderns. The writer was a disciple of the Apostle John, and may well be called an apostolical man. This letter, contrary to our bishop's notions of clerical propriety, is addressed to the "Church of God which dwells at Philippi." It is from "Polycarp and the Presbyters with him." In the whole of it, there is not a word about bishops. But there is mention of two officers in the church, presbyters and deacons. "We who know that God is not mocked, ought to walk worthy of his commandment, and according to his will; and in like manner, the deacons ought to be unblamable in the sight of his holiness." And in the same chapter he says "wherefore it behoves you to abstain from all these, (carnal desires) and be subject to the presbyters and deacons, as unto God and Christ." And in the next chapter it is subjoined, "Let the presbyters be full of compassion, merciful to all; restoring wanderers, visiting the sick, not negligent of the widow, the orphan, and the poor, but always providing what is good before God and man, abstaining from all anger, respect of persons, and unjust judgments, far from avarice, not ready to believe any thing against any one, not too severe in judgment, as knowing that all are sinners." So the apostolical Polycarp speaks of presbyters, giving not the slightest hint that officers superior to them in the church existed in the church.

3. Proceeding in the course we have adopted, we next come to the fragment of *Papias*, preserved by Eusebius. But on this we forbear to offer any remark, save this only, that where he uses the terms employed to designate officers in the ancient church, he uniformly speaks of presbyters, and not of bishops. See *Eusebius* iii, 39, or *Lardner* i, 336, 4to.

4. In the next place we refer to Justin the martyr. He suffered about the year 160; and is generally supposed to have presented his apology about twenty years before. In describing the order of Christian worship, he mentions only two officers, the one who presided (*προεστώς*), and the deacon. The presiding officer is manifestly the pastor or bishop of a particular congregation; the presiding presbyter. The deacons are not preachers of the word, but distributors of the sacramental emblems; as is clear from the words of Justin. "On the day called *Sunday*, there is a meeting together in one place of all (believers) who dwell either in the city or the country; and as far as time permits, the *Commentaries* of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read. When the reader has finished, *he who presides* (*ὁ προεστώς*) gives an admonition, and an exhortation to imitate these excellent things. Then we all rise up together, and offer prayer. When we have finished praying, bread, wine and water are brought; and *he who presides* presents sup-

plications and thanksgiving, to the best of his ability; and the people consent by saying, *Amen*. There is then a distribution of those things, in relation to which thanks were given. They who are present participate, and a portion is sent to those who are absent by *the deacons*." After this, he says there is a collection made, and the amount deposited with the presiding officer, who relieves orphans, widows and the sick poor. Now Justin manifestly intends this to be a full and fair account of the order and worship of every Christian congregation. It was of the utmost importance, in this case, that he should "tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Any deviation or concealment would have been easily detected, and highly injurious to the cause, which he was pleading before a heathen ruler. In the days of Justin, then, we are not warranted in the belief that there were three orders in the christian ministry, bishops, priests, and deacons. The evidence lies all the other way. In Justin's days, too, there could have been no prescribed liturgy; for, each, *προεστώς*, presiding presbyter, prayed to the best of his ability.

5. Our fifth witness is Irenæus. His works may be dated between the years 170 and 180. They came to us chiefly under the grievous disadvantage of a barbarous translation; the original being lost, except some fragments preserved by Eusebius and others. In one respect, however, the testimony in favour of ministerial parity is strengthened by this circumstance. The translation must have been made some time after the original was written. But as we recede from the days of the Apostles, we find a gradual rise in the claims and pretensions of the clergy. The translator then would not be likely to express himself so strongly in favour of the primitive equality, as Irenæus himself did. He was also, if one may judge from his style, an African; and any thing from that quarter, after the middle of the third century, in support of parity, may be considered as extorted by the force of truth.

If we are not mistaken, Irenæus first introduces the subject on which we wish for his testimony, in the third book. His great object here is to show that the church held the true doctrine, in opposition to the heretics. To this end he shows in the first chapter of this book, that the church received the gospel from the Apostles, In the second chapter he says that the truth, delivered by the Apostles, was preserved by the *successions of the Presbyters*." "Cum autem ad eam iterum traditionem, quæ est ab Apostolis, quæ per *successiones Presbyterorum* in Ecclesiis custoditur, provocamus eos; adversantur traditioni, Dicentes se non solum Presbyteris, sed etiam Apostolis existentes sapientiores, sinceram invenisse veritatem." "But when we bring them back again to the doctrine, which was handed down from the Apostles, and is preserved in the churches by the *successions of the Presbyters*, they set themselves in opposition to this tradition, saying that they, being wiser not only than the *Presbyters*, but even than the *Apostles* themselves, have found out the pure truth."

This is very near the close of the 2d chapter, and in the one immediately following, the writer undertakes to show that the

church had preserved the truth taught by the Apostles, by giving the succession of ministers in the two churches of Rome and Smyrna. But the *succession of Presbyters* previously mentioned, is in the 3d chapter called the *succession of Bishops*: and we have then a list of the names of Linus, Anacletus, Clemens, (the one who wrote the epistle to the Corinthians) Euarestus, Alexander, Sixtus, &c. all of whom stand in the catalogue of Popes among Catholics; of diocesan bishops among high churchmen; but by Irenæus are called indifferently bishops or presbyters. Or according to the presbyterian platform, which seems to agree exactly in this point with Irenæus, when spoken of indefinitely as ministers of the gospel, they were called presbyters; but when their relationship to one particular church was in view, they were designated bishops.

Again; in chap. xliii of Book the 4th, Irenæus says, "Wherefore they who are in the church, ought to obey the *Presbyters*, who have *succession from the Apostles*, as we have shown; who together with the succession of the *episcopacy*, have received the certain gift of the truth, according to the good pleasure of the father." This *succession of Presbyters*, is in the very next sentence denominated *principal*. And in the following chapter (xliv.) he speaks of Presbyters, elated with the pride of the highest honour—*principalis sessionis* tumore elati. Also in the close of this chapter, he says, "the church nourishes *Presbyters* like those of whom the prophet speaks, "I will give your rulers in peace, and your *bishops* in righteousness." In Book v. chapter 20, this father begins by saying that all the teachers of heretics, are greatly inferior to the *bishops*, to whom the apostles committed the churches; and in a few sentences affirms that "they who leave the church, bring a charge of ignorance against the holy *Presbyters*."

Eusebius in Book v. chap. 20. 24, has preserved two fragments of letters from Irenæus, which deserve particular notice. In the one to Florinus, we find the following: "These doctrines, they who were *Presbyters* before us, and who were *disciples of the Apostles*, by no means delivered to you." Then referring to Polycarp, whose disciple, it seems Florinus had been at the same time with Irenæus, he says "And I can testify before God, that if that *blessed and Apostolical Presbyter* had heard any such thing, he would have stopped his ears, and after his usual manner have exclaimed, good God! for what times hast thou reserved me, that I should have to bear such things."—This apostolical *Presbyter*, was the *bishop of Smyrna*. Clearly therefore, with Irenæus, there was no difference between the presbyter and bishop.

But the next letter is perfectly decisive on this subject. It was addressed to Victor, bishop of the church in Rome, now by the Catholics called pope Victor. The subject is a controversy respecting the observance of the day at present called *Easter*. "The *Presbyters* who preceded Soter, and who presided over the church, which you now govern, I mean Anicetus, and Pius, Hyginus and Telesphorus and Sixtus, did not observe this festival, on the day in which the bishops of Asia observed it," &c. Again: "But the *Presbyters* who preceded you, although they observed it not, yet sent the Eucharist to those who did observe it." Once more; he

says when Polycarp came to Rome, "he could not persuade *Anicetus* to adopt the same observance; for he said that the custom of the *Presbyters*, who went before him, ought to be retained."

Now all these persons, Soter, Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Sixtus are, in modern times, honoured with the title of Popes by some; others make them diocesan bishops; while honest old Irenæus, again and again calls them *Presbyters*; and says that they were Presbyters, who governed the church at Rome. It is perfectly clear that the word Presbyter is here used in its official sense. And it is equally evident that there was, in the days of Irenæus, no higher officer in the church than a Presbyter. There is no getting over this conclusion. If then any ordination took place at all; and on this subject there can be no doubt, it must have been performed by Presbyters. Thus far the usage of scripture language was kept up in the church, and we find no order of men superior to those who, as bishop R. admits, were in the New Testament styled indifferently bishops or presbyters. The church had not in 170 years found out a name for that other "order," which the prelate of North Carolina found it so difficult to designate by any appropriate scriptural name.

In tracing the history of church government through the writings of the ancient Fathers, he who begins at the beginning and reads with no object but to find the truth, can scarcely fail to notice the following particulars,

1. Officers, with extraordinary powers, were appointed for the extraordinary occasion of introducing a new form of religion: these were the Apostles and their assistants, the Evangelists, who had no fixed charge, but the world for the theatre of their labours.

2. In the churches reared up by them, persons were appointed to the office of religious teacher, who in the New Testament are called indiscriminately, bishops and presbyters. There is reason to believe, that in all the important churches, more than one teacher was appointed at the same time. See Phil. i, 1.

3. The undisputed writings of the early ages, put it beyond all doubt that until about the close of the second century, religious instructors were denominated, precisely as they were in the New Testament, indifferently bishops or presbyters—so that the bishop was a presbyter; and the presbyter was a bishop, without any difference of order or authority.

4. These presbyters, in their collective capacity, were denominated a *presbytery*, and to them was committed the whole government of the church. They were appointed for this purpose with the consent of the people.

5. In every meeting of the presbytery, there was a *president*, *chairman*, or *moderator*, as is the case in all bodies of this kind.—He was in early times, most usually designated by the term *προεδρῶς* or *ὁ προϊστάμενος*. This usage is derived from the New Testament. See Rom. xii, 8. 1 Thess. v, 12. 1 Tim. v, 17. But it never entered into the minds of the primitive christians, that this moderatorship conferred any rank, or constituted any thing like a different order. It was a case exactly like that in our free institu-

tions, where the speaker in a legislative assembly, the chairman of a corporation meeting, the moderator of a presbytery, &c. is of the same order, with all his fellow-members.

6. It is easy to see, about the close of the second century, and the beginning of the third, some change in the usage of ecclesiastical writers. The change is this—the word (*ἐπισκοπος*) *bishop*, which for two hundred years had been, as we have seen, used indiscriminately with (*πρεσβυτερος*) *elder*, becomes somewhat more appropriated to the presiding presbyter. But in all the writings belonging to this period, it is manifest that the bishop is no more than the presiding presbyter of each particular church; and so the word is to be understood, when it occurs in writers of this age.

7. In process of time to repress divisions and factions, it seems to have been agreed that the presiding presbyter or bishop should possess powers, not granted to other presbyters—such as the power of baptizing, of ordaining, and the like. So that presbyters could not baptize without the permission of the bishop. But this step only increased the power, but did not elevate the rank of the bishops.

8. It was not until the latter end of the third, and the first part of the 4th century, that we find any real distinction in point of order between bishops and presbyters. But when bishops were thus distinguished, and the church became allied with the state, prelatical pride and insolence grew with rapid strides. Yet in the fifth century, the most learned of the Fathers had the courage and honesty to affirm that the presbyters *knew*, and the bishops *ought to know* that the superiority of the latter to the former was founded on the custom of the church, and not on the appointment of the Lord.

These remarks will show that the word *bishop* is to be interpreted in three different ways, according to the time when it is used.

1. In the New Testament, and the undisputed writings of the Fathers to about the close of the second century, bishop and presbyter mean the same office.

2. For nearly a century after that time, bishop means the *presiding presbyter* of a particular church.

3. From about the beginning of the 4th century down, the term is generally used to designate a minister of the gospel superior to presbyters. It is very important to make, and keep in mind these distinctions: otherwise, we shall suppose the ancient writers to mean something which they never thought of at all. There have been bishops ever since the church of Christ was organized—but a bishop in the first and second centuries, is as unlike a modern prelate, as old *Cincinnatus* was unlike one of the *Cæsars*; or as a plain Scotch presbyter is unlike the archbishop of Canterbury.

But now we will proceed with our examination of the ancient writers—although enough has already been done, to oblige bishop R., according to his pledge, to surrender all his pretensions.

6. Our sixth witness is *Clemens Alexandrinus*. He lived about the close of the second, and beginning of the third century. This Father does not directly speak of the *order* of the church, but in several places *incidentally* mentions the various offices in the christian society. In his references to this subject, there is no evidence

of any distinction of rank among religious teachers ; but indeed the contrary. It was about his time that we find the first intimation that the title of bishop was beginning to be appropriated to the presiding presbyter of a particular church. But the very terms employed by him, show that "clerical propriety" was but little regarded in his day. For he speaks in one case of bishops, presbyters and deacons ; and in another, of presbyters, bishops, and deacons, not caring who came first. But in every other passage of his works, relating to this subject, we find a mode of speaking exactly accordant with that which had been used before. In *Pædag.* i. 99. D. Edit. Sylburgii. 1641, he says, "we are shepherds, who govern the churches, after the pattern of the good shepherd ; and you are the sheep." Again, *Lib.* iii. 248. B. Speaking of ladies who wear curls of other people's hair, he asks, "On whom does the *Presbyter* lay his hand ; and whom will he bless ? not the woman thus adorned, but the hair of some other person," &c. We pretend not to decide what is meant by the imposition of hands here. It was certainly an act of ministerial authority, so far to bestow a benediction. In what respect, then, did this presbyter differ from a bishop ? The next passage to be referred to, occurs in *Lib.* iii. 264. C. "Very many other precepts, appertaining to particular persons, are written in the holy books ; some to elders, some to bishops, some to deacons, and some to widows." It admits of a question here, whether the author uses the first term in its general or official signification. It will scarcely be pretended that the *widows* mentioned last, were officers in the church ; and why may not *elders* in the first place, mean *old men* ? Clement was very conversant with the writings of Paul, and why may he not have had in mind, the fifth chap. of 1st Timothy, where elder means an old man, ver. 1. and a minister of the gospel, ver. 19 ? But if no stress ought to be laid on this, the next passage is very decisive. *Strom.* iii. 464. D. The subject here is marriage ; and Clement strongly maintains that every one must be the husband of one wife, "whether he be presbyter, or deacon, or layman" *κᾶν πρεσβυτέρως ἢ, κᾶν διάκονος, κᾶν λαϊκός*. These words certainly are designed to include all sorts of men in the church ; and if presbyter was not regarded by him as the same with bishop, we can in no way account for his leaving out *ἐπισκοπος*. The reader will observe that in pa. 459. C. and 472. D, this writer does use the word *ἐπισκοπος*, bishop, for the presiding officer of a church ; while in the passage just cited, he uses *presbytery* for the whole clergy. Here is decisive evidence of our doctrine : while no difference of order is noted, the word bishop was beginning to be restricted in its application. In pa. 667. B. (*Strom.* vi.) he describes a true presbyter, and adds, "although he should not on earth be honoured with the *first seat*, yet he shall *sit* on the four and twenty thrones, judging the people, as John says in the Revelation." Here is a plain and incontrovertible reference to the presiding elder mentioned by preceding writers. And in pa. 700. D. he speaks of the offices of the church in relation to their objects ; of which one is to promote emendation of life ; the other is merely the rendering of obedience ; and he says that

the former of these belongs to the *Elders*; the latter, to the *deacons*. There is no distinct office here assigned to bishops. They are not mentioned at all. On the whole, there was no such thing as episcopal order, superior to that of presbyters, in the days of this learned Father.

7. In the next place, we take up Tertullian. This Father, who lived till near A. D. 220, does not furnish much on the subject now before us. But, taking all that he says together, it is apparent that the form of the church, in his day, was just what we have previously stated. There was no difference of order among the clergy but the presiding elders were very commonly called bishops. He sometimes, however, as he wrote in Latin, uses the term *antistes*, which exactly answers to the *προεστως* of Justin and other preceding writers. We are assured that *presbyters* presided in their religious assemblies; that the presidents alone baptized and administered the Lord's supper; and that he did this three times a week. This president he sometimes calls bishop; and the succession of such bishops he traces back to the Apostles. It would be tedious to continue the quotation of particular passages from every writer that comes in course. We therefore content ourselves with the assurance that every affirmation here made is capable of the most rigid proof. The Edition of Tertullian, from which we were prepared to make extracts, is that of *Rigaltius*. Paris 1664.

8. *Cyprian*, bishop of Carthage, suffered martyrdom, as is generally believed, about the year of our Lord 258. He affords a striking example of a man pious, zealous, yet rather too fond of power, and strongly desirous to increase the authority of bishops; but withal too honest to pretend that all power was in his hands. It is easy to see, by comparing his writings and sentiments, with these previously noticed, that the term *bishop* was more and more appropriated to the presiding presbyter; and that the claims of the president of the presbytery were considerably extended. Yet still, the bishop was no more than parochial bishop—His authority did not extend beyond a single congregation; and he could do nothing without the consent of his fellow-presbyters. The following references to the Oxford Edition of Cyprian's works 1682, will fully bear out these assertions, pp. 168, T. 202, E. It is not allowed to any but the bishop, or president of the church to baptize. *Nos tantum qui, domino permittente, primum baptismum credentibus dedimus, &c.—Quod nunc quoque apud nos geritur, ut qui in Ecclesia baptizantur, præpositis Ecclesia offerantur, et per nostram orationem ac manus impositionem, Spiritum Sanctum consequantur, et signaculo Dominico consummentur.* In instances too numerous to be mentioned, Cyprian calls the presbyters of the church of Carthage his *fellow-presbyters*. But it is needless to multiply words for the proof of that which is indisputable; namely that Cyprian was a parochial bishop. At the same time, it is freely conceded that in the writings of Cyprian, as we now have them, a distinction is made between the bishop and presbyter, which is found in no undisputed writings before this period. There is indeed much reason to believe that Cyprian laid the foundation

for the establishment of a new order in the church. A statement has been made on this subject, which presents to us every appearance of truth and reason.

When a *presiding presbyter* was appointed in a church, it was by the concurrence of the presbytery and the people. The presbyters by no means raised him to a higher order; he was only *primus inter paris*, the *first among equals*. The whole authority of all presbyters, throughout the world, was derived from the word of God, or, which is the same thing, from the appointment of Christ. But the presiding member was raised to the first seat, and inducted by his co-presbyters. The case of Cyprian, however, was one of singular character. His popular talents occasioned his election to the office of presiding presbyter, or bishop, very shortly after his conversion from heathenism, a considerable majority of the presbyters of the church of Carthage opposed this election; probably because they saw his aspiring disposition. This opposition seemed to exasperate the bishop of Carthage not a little. His 43d letter affords ample proof of this. And he seems to have set himself to exalt the bishop's power, and depress the presbyters as much as possible. From him we first hear of a new ordination, by which a presbyter was raised to be a bishop. His talents and influence were great; and he caused them to be felt through the whole christian world. We cannot help attributing to him the acceleration of that change in the polity of the church, which has produced incalculable mischief to the true interests of religion through many successive centuries.

Yet after all the efforts made by this Father to enlarge episcopal power, much remained to be done after his day to complete the fabric of the hierarchy.

For we find, near the close of his life, a letter written to him, on occasion of his dispute with Stephen, bishop of Rome, by Firmilianus bishop of Cæsarea, in which the old doctrine is clearly stated, Ep. lxxv, pa. 221. "Sed et ceteri quique heretici, si se ab Ecclesia Dei sciderint, nihil habere potestatis aut gratiæ possunt, quando omnis potestas et gratia in Ecclesia constituta sit, ubi *president majores natu* qui et *baptizandi* et *manum imponendi* et *ORDINANDI possident potestatem.*" The sense of which is, if heretics of any kind separate themselves from the church of God, they possess nothing of power or grace; since all power and grace is seated in the church, where *presbyters* preside, who possess the power of *baptizing* and *laying on the hand* and *ORDAINING*. The phrase *majores natu* here must be taken as a translation of *πρεσβύτεροι*, used too in its official sense; for *old men as such* did not preside in the church; much less did the power here specified belong to them. *Baptizing*, *laying on of hands*, and *ordaining* were official acts. Firmilianus then does expressly affirm that Elders had the *power of ordaining*.

It is unnecessary to pursue this detail farther. We have seen that for 250 years, presbyters were bishops, and bishops were presbyters. About the close of this period, the change began which issued in the establishment of high church principles. It crept on slowly for a while; but afterwards made rapid increase,

so as to be pretty firmly established in the 4th and 5th centuries. Had our limits permitted us to make a more complete deduction, the evidence would have been much stronger.

The examination here made of the question before us, has been pursued through the original writers. Nothing has been taken on trust, and we have been brought to our conclusion by a deduction, which we conscientiously believe to be fair. And now we must be excused if we turn to our "favourite" Jerome, and compare his account of this matter with our own. But we wish it to be understood, that we have nothing to do with Jerome's account of the church in his own time. It is readily admitted that between the death of Cyprian in 258, and the days of Jerome, who died in 420, great and injurious changes had taken place in the order and discipline of the church. At the period of Jerome's death christianity had been in alliance with the imperial government of Rome for nearly 100 years. We wish to know what the most learned of the Fathers, he "whom all good men loved and admired" testifies concerning the *pure, primitive, apostolic church*, and the manner in which its government was changed. This information may be obtained from his commentaries, and his celebrated epistle to Evagrius. There he expressly treats of the very questions now under consideration. In other parts of his writings, he speaks of the church as it was in his day, when the primitive form was changed. We hope to be excused for giving the testimony of this Father at full length, because of its importance.

"Let us diligently attend to the words of the apostle, in which he says '*That thou shouldest ordain presbyters in every city, as I had appointed thee*'—Discoursing in what follows on the sort of man that ought to be ordained presbyter, he says, '*If any be blameless, the husband of one wife,*' &c. and afterwards he adds, '*For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God.*' A presbyter therefore is the same as a bishop; and before there were, by the instigation of the devil, parties in religion, and it was said by the people, '*I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,*' the churches were governed by the COMMON COUNCIL OF PRESBYTERS. But afterwards, when every one supposed, that those whom he baptized, belonged to him, and not to Christ, it was decreed through the whole world, that one chosen from the Presbyters should be set over the rest to whom the whole care of the Church should belong, that thus the seeds of schisms might be taken away. Should any one suppose that it is *my doctrine*, and not that of the *scriptures*, that *bishop* and *presbyter* are the same, and that one is the name of age, the other of office, let him read again the words of the Apostle to the Philippians, where he says, "*Paul and Timotheus, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons, grace to you and peace, &c.*" Philippi is but one city of Macedonia, and certainly there could not be more than one bishop in a city, as bishops are now styled. But at that time, they called the same persons bishops and presbyters, therefore he spoke, without distinction, of bishops as presbyters. This may appear doubtful to some, unless it be proved by additional testimony.—In the Acts of the Apostles it is written, that when the

Apostle came to Miletus, he sent to Ephesus, and called the presbyters of that church, to whom, among other things, he said, "take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Here take particular notice, that on calling the *Presbyters* of one city, Ephesus, he styled them *bishops*."

"If any will receive the epistle which is written in the name of Paul to the Hebrews, there also the care of the church is equally divided among *many*, since he writes to the people, 'Obey *them* that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for *they* watch for your souls as those that must give account, that *they* may do it with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.' And Peter, (called thus from the firmness of his faith) in his Epistle, saith, "the Presbyters which are among you I exhort, who am also a Presbyter, 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, not by constraint but willingly." These things have I written for the purpose of showing that among the ancients, PRESBYTERS and BISHOPS were the SAME. But that by *little and little*, (PAULATIM,) that the plants of dissention might be plucked up, the whole care was devolved on one. As therefore the *presbyters* KNOW that they are subjected to him who is placed over them by THE CUSTOM OF THE CHURCH; so the BISHOPS should know that they are superior to *presbyters* RATHER BY CUSTOM, than by any real appointment of the Lord, (magis consuetudine, quam dispositiones dominicæ veritate,) and that they ought to rule the church in common, imitating Moses, who, when he might have ruled the people of Israel *alone*, chose seventy with whom he might judge the people." Thus does our "favourite," "the most learned of the Fathers," "the prince of divines," state the doctrine and the fact, in his commentary on Titus.

The celebrated epistle to Evagrius furnishes the following extract. "I hear that a certain person has broken out into such folly that he prefers deacons before presbyters, that is before bishops; for when the Apostle clearly teaches that *presbyters* and *bishops* are the same, who can endure it that a MINISTER OF TABLES and WIDOWS should proudly exalt himself above those at whose prayers the body and blood of Christ is made. Do you seek for authority? Hear that testimony, "Paul and Timothy servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons"—Would you have another example? In the Acts of the Apostles, Paul speaks thus to the priests of one church—"Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, that you govern the church, which he hath purchased with his own blood. And lest any should contend about there being a plurality of bishops in one church, hear also another testimony, by which it may most manifestly be proved, that a bishop and a presbyter are the same—"For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain *presbyters* in every city as I have appointed thee. If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, &c. For a BISHOP must be blameless, as a steward of God." And to

Timothy—"Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." And Peter also, in his first epistle, saith, "The Presbyters which are among you I exhort, who *am also a Presbyter*, &c. to rule the flock of Christ, and to inspect it, not of constraint, but willingly according to God;" which is more significantly expressed in the Greek; *ἐπισκοποῦντες*, that is superintending it, whence the name of bishop is derived. Do the testimonies of such men appear small to thee? Let the evangelical trumpet sound,* the son of thunder, whom Jesus loved much, who drank the streams of doctrine from our Saviour's breast—"The Presbyter to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth."—And in another epistle, "The Presbyter to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth."—But the choosing of one *afterwards*, who should be set above the rest, took place as a remedy against schism; lest every one drawing the work of Christ to himself, should break it in pieces. For at Alexandria, from Mark the Evangelist to Heraclas and Dionysius, the bishops thereof, the Presbyters always named one, &c."† [as given before.]

We deem it necessary to make no comments on this passage. It is a plain statement of facts, and a series of arguments founded on these facts, which never can be refuted. The history of the church for 400 years bears out this *favourite* of ours, in every important particular. The truth of the case may be brought into a nutshell. In conformity with the maxims of our Lord, and with Apostolical appointment, the ordinary and perpetual ministers of the gospel were all equal—This continued until the church began to grow in worldly power and influence; when the plan of having a number of equal Presbyters in one church, produced factions, divisions, and frequent schisms—For the prevention of this evil the power of presiding Presbyter was enlarged, and he was called *bishop*. This advantage being given to the president of the Presbytery, he used it to raise himself; so that out of this arrangement, diocesan episcopacy sprung up. In process of time, the bishops were thought to need some head, and Metropolitans were appointed—after that Patriarchs; and finally a Pope. The expedient to prevent schism turned out so badly, that at the Reformation, most of those who broke their allegiance to the pope, thought it much the best way to return to the primitive simplicity of ancient times. Unhappily for us, the Reformation in England was the work of the *government* and not of the *people*. The eighth Harry, and queen Elizabeth, took the place of the pope, and became heads of the church, unfrocking bishops with as little ceremony as diocesans use towards their Presbyters. But it did not suit the notions of these *Defenders of the Faith*, to have the ancient discipline restored. The republican system of Geneva alarmed the jealous spirit of these monarchs and their successors; and hence many features of the prevalent polity were retained.

* This is a rhetorical description of John the Apostle.

† The translation of this passage has been borrowed, with very slight verbal alterations, from Dr Miller's Letters.

But now let us look back for a moment. The only instance recorded in the New Testament, of the specific manner of ordination states explicitly, that the ceremony was performed by a Presbytery.—The pastors of churches, invested as they were with full powers of government, were styled indifferently bishops or presbyters. In the undisputed writings of the Fathers for 250 years, there is no hint of a distinction between bishops and presbyters; and there were no other ministers of the gospel in the church: the succession of ministers is traced through them; and they are appealed to as men who preserved the apostolical doctrine.—It is expressly affirmed that they had power of baptizing, laying on hands, and *ordaining*.—It has been made evident, too, that the raising of men to episcopal superiority was an innovation on the practice of the church as followed for 250 years. So then, if there was ordination at all, it was done by presbyters. And now we appeal to our readers, whether bishop R. is not obliged to give up his pretensions. Nay more;—presbyters know (if we may adopt in part the language of our favorite Jerome,) and *bishops ought to know*, that as diocesans they derive no power of ordination from the appointment of the Lord; the word of God gives them no authority. Their whole ordaining power, according to the scriptures, is derived from this, *that they are presbyters*. They are bishops, that is they are of a superior order, *solely by the custom of the church*. And if our episcopal brethren choose so to manage their affairs, as to appoint one of their presbyters to a higher station, and call him bishop, entrusting him with the general superintendence of their affairs, we are among the last who will say a single word against it. But when men thus elevated, pretend that they have a divine right, that Apostolical succession is in them alone; that all who are separated from them, are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise; when they put themselves forward as substitutes for the person of Christ, and claim that authority, which since the death of the inspired Apostles, is vested in the word God alone, we do think that it is the interest of the whole church in all its departments, that these monstrous pretensions should be put down.

It is due to candor to say, that while we have no quarrel with Episcopalians at all; and would say nothing against that *legitimate* episcopacy, which owes its origin, and all its authority to the custom of the church, we certainly do think that the primitive ministerial equality is by far the safest.

Before we proceed to notice bishop R.'s defence of his conduct in regard to the Bible Society, there are a few other particulars in relation to the Church, which claim our attention.

Our readers know that the uninterrupted succession of bishops, from the days of the Apostles, according to this prelate, affords the only means of *verifying the Church of Christ*; and indeed is essential to its existence. Whereas we hold that, wherever there is a society receiving the doctrine taught by Christ and his Apostles, and obeying his precepts, there is a Church of Christ; and that the system of truth embodied in the writings of the Apostles, and given to men for their instruction, furnishes means of easy application, by

which the Church may be verified. The case appears to us too plain almost for reasoning.—After the revolutions of 1800 years, and the violent changes which the Church has undergone; after long periods of barbarian ignorance and superstition; the total loss of many of the works of Christian writers, and the corruption of others, we yet have the New Testament uncorrupted—There we find the truth in its primitive purity and simplicity. And shall we turn from this fountain of living waters to a broken cistern? Shall we resort to tradition, and to the most unsatisfactory parts of ecclesiastical history, to ascertain whether we are warranted to hope for the blessings which God has promised, in his word, to bestow on the penitent believer? Let us suppose that after the lapse of twenty centuries, and a thousand changes in this country, the Constitution of the United States should be preserved without corruption, and the people of that future age should elect a President according to the mode prescribed in that sacred instrument, could they not determine whether he were duly authorized to administer the affairs of the nation, without going back through every age, and ascertaining whether the ruler of the country had been duly elected, and the Chief Justice, who administers the oath of office duly appointed in every case? And does the President derive his authority from the Chief Justice, who officiates at his inauguration?

In order to increase the weight of the difficulties, which hang on the bishop's scheme, our Reviewer referred to the case which occurred at the Era of the Reformation. There *seemed* then, at any rate, to be a breach in the succession; for the English Reformers were, one and all ex-communicated, and cut off from the holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Bishop R. "mistakes his man" again, when he supposes that this was intended as an *argumentum ad invidiam*—it was rather designed ad hominem, and merely, as was said, to multiply difficulties in the way of our diocesan. We advert to it here, for the sake of setting this whole matter in what appears to us a just point of light, and adding some information which may be useful to our readers.

In pa. 50, bishop R. says, "I must take the liberty to contradict your assertion that all the world knows, that the British Church received her orders from the Bishop or Pope of Rome; for that is the notion invariably attached to the words "Church of Rome" by ninety-nine in the hundred, who either hear or read them. Whether that is the meaning you meant to convey, you best know, but in this the most common acceptance of the words, *it is not the fact*, and therefore neither you, nor all the world can know any such thing."

We are not prepared to say what meaning ninety-nine in the hundred attach to the words "Church of Rome;" but we know that our Reviewer did not mean by them, *the Pope*. We do not admit that all the bishops, presbyters and deacons in the world constitute a Church, much less that one man can do so. No: we meant plainly what we said. And we humbly protest against this change in our words, made one would think for the pleasure of contradiction. It is nothing to us, nor to our cause, whether the "succession of any Protestant hierarchical Church is derived through the person of the

Bishop or Pope of Rome," or not. Bishop R. may state this matter as he pleases. But he says (pa. 50) "It is not an unreasonable or unfounded assumption—that in the wide and extended boundary [query—why a *wide* boundary?] of the western Church, the ordaining power was canonically transmitted in the regular succession from bishop to bishop, without contracting any *fancied contamination* from the person of the Pope."—On this we have only two very brief remarks to offer. 1. In a case of this kind, where our hopes of salvation are concerned, "assumption" passes with us for nothing—We must have proof. 2. The person of the Pope has nothing to do with the statements of our Reviewer. The bishop proceeds—"With respect to the succession of the British Church in particular, and so far as that flows through the Western Church—we know that the bishop of Rome had, personally, little or nothing to do with it up to the 7th century; it was an independent apostolical Church under its own bishops. Its connexion with the Church of Rome commenced with Augustine the Monk, who was consecrated the first archbishop of Canterbury, not by the bishop of Rome, but by the archbishop of Arles, in France, early in the 7th century."

We do not stay to criticise language here. The correctness of this statement as far as it goes is admitted. But the bishop gives his readers a very inadequate view of this part of Ecclesiastical History. It seems now to be generally admitted that Christianity was introduced into Britain at a very early period. Many believe that *Caractacus*, the British king, who was carried captive to Rome in the reign of Claudius, and after being detained for several years, was honorably dismissed, carried the blessing of the gospel to his native land. These events took place between A. D. 52 and 57; about the very time when a Church was being organized at Rome: long and long before any distinction was made between Bishops and Presbyters. The Church in Britain was then organized in its primitive simplicity, when the pastor of every Church was a bishop. Others, following the venerable Bede, say that the Church was planted in that Island in the early part of the second century. Religion must have made considerable progress in England, as appears from the numbers who suffered under the persecution of Diocletian.

In the year 450, that country was invaded by the Saxons. The consequences are well known—the original inhabitants were driven into *Wales*, and the Saxons, a pagan horde, took complete possession of England.

Augustine the Monk was sent by the bishop of Rome to convert these heathens, about the year 597. That he was a superstitious and very credulous man, is evident from his letters to Gregory, bishop of Rome, to whose interests he appears to have been devoted. Having obtained some little success, and being full of hope, he went over to France, and got himself consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, when there was not a single bishop in all England. From that time the connexion was established between England and the Church of Rome, which continued until the glorious Reformation.

In process of time some intercourse took place between the con-

verted Saxons and the native Christians in Wales; but it was an intercourse of Contention, on the ground that the Britons would not submit to the Church of Rome.

But in the meanwhile, the establishments of the Culdees were made in Ireland, the Western islands, and Scotland; and Missionaries were sent by them for the conversion of the pagans in the northern parts of England. The *Culdees* differed from the adherents of Rome both in *doctrine* and *order*. As to the former, the characteristic difference was, the sufficiency of the Scriptures and a resolute rejection of tradition:—as to the latter, they were in all *important* respects Presbyterians. With them, a man ordained to the work of the ministry, was a *Presbyter*; and the Presbyter, when appointed to the Pastoral Charge, was called a *bishop*. This ordination and appointment were uniformly made by Presbyters. “Such was the case with respect to Corman, bishop of the Northumbrians, as well as Ardan, Finan, and Colman, who succeeded each other. From the testimony of Bede it is evident that, by means of Scottish Missionaries, and of those whom they had instructed and ordained, not only the Northumbrians, but the Middle Angles, the Mercians, and East Saxons, all the way to the river Thames, that is, the inhabitants of by far the greatest part of the country now called England, were converted to Christianity, and for some time acknowledged subjection to the ecclesiastical government of the Scots. The latter lost their influence, merely because their Missionaries chose rather to give up their charges, than submit to the prevailing influence of the Church of Rome, to which the Saxons of the West, and of Kent, had subjected themselves.” It was about thirty years after the commencement of the missions of the Culdees among the Saxons, when they were obliged to submit to Rome, or retire. All but one bishop chose the latter part of the alternative. But among the Scots, they continued for six or seven centuries, and left an impression on the national character, which showed itself at the Reformation. This glorious religious revolution was brought about in Scotland by the people, in England by the arbitrary power of the government. The population of Scotland from the beginning manifested a determined preference for *Presbyterian Parity*, the government of England for *Diocesan Prelacy*.

After the retirement of the Presbyter-bishops from the north of England, the influence of Rome soon became paramount, and the Church as completely Popish, as the sovereign Pontiff could wish. Yet as one of these Presbyters remained in his bishopric, and as there were innumerable multitudes of their converts from the borders of Scotland, to the Thames, it is very possible that a high Churchman, deriving through the English succession, may meet in his course, a Presbyter of Jona, instead of a Prelate. But this by the way.

The Church of England became as completely Popish as the Church of Italy. But bishop R. thinks that even if the Church of England derived Orders directly from the person of the bishop of Rome, inasmuch as he “had a true succession from the Apostles of Christ, the transfer of that succession was not nullified by his usurpations, or even by his personal ungodliness.” It is not at all

surprising that an unintelligible subject should cause a man of considerable sagacity to use very strange language. To have a *true succession*, and to transfer that *succession*, are phrases which bishop R. ought to explain. What sort of *thing* is this, which a man holds, and transfers to others? But the bishop cannot get along here, without a fling at Calvin. And as it has been some time since we gave a specimen of the style and manner of our Prelate, we *treat* our readers with the following extract. After the sentence last quoted, he proceeds thus,

“Among the many and grievous corruptions of that church, is the succession of its Bishops to be so considered? I suspect if this is properly searched into, the most grievous corruption, the succession of the christian ministry from Christ's Apostles, as the root of the ordaining power in the visible church, is capable of—will be found to originate with those men, who in the sixteenth century, usurped the power of committing to others, what never was committed to themselves—what they never possessed in any previous age of the church, and for whose right to exercise the ordaining power, not the shadow of a proof has ever been produced, either from scripture, rightly interpreted, or from antiquity, and whose author cannot be shown, ever to have had orders of any kind, Popish or Protestant. If such an uncertainty (not to say breach) could be asserted of the ministerial succession through the line of Bishops, as can be asserted and assigned too, in the line of Presbyters, so far as Calvin is concerned—no sincere man could contend for it. He would have to look elsewhere than in the succession of the Western Church, for that appointment of Heaven which alone gives certainty to the church, as the one undivided spouse and body of Christ—To that truth, of which it is the pillar and ground—To the faith once delivered to the saints—To the sacraments as seals and pledges of covenanted engagements and means of grace—To the hope of man, as founded on revealed mercy, and built on the firm and unsevered foundation of the faith and order of the gospel mutually confirming each other.”—pp. 51.

We have shewn that Presbyters had, and exercised what is called the ordaining power, from the days of the Apostles to the year of Christ 250; that they possessed and exercised it, in parts of the Church remote from the corruptions of Rome, for centuries afterward; and it follows that the exclusive exercise of this power by diocesan bishops is an usurpation. They have a right to ordain, not because they are bishops, but because they are Presbyters. And the exercise of this right by Presbyters in the 16th century, was a bringing back of primitive order; placing the Church on the true Apostolic foundation.

Besides; the Presbyterian Church does not derive, nor pretend to derive any authority from Calvin; they do not trace their ordaining power to him. They owe nothing to him except what they owe to the Reformers in general—save only that they regard him as the most enlightened among them, and amidst errors common to all, the one who most clearly understood the system of truth taught in the scriptures. The “judicious Hooker” says of him—“whom, for mine own part, I think incomparably the wisest man that ever the French Church did enjoy, since the hour it enjoyed him. His bringing up was in the study of the civil law. Divine knowledge he gathered not by hearing or reading, so much as by teaching others. For though thousands were debtors to him, as touching knowledge in that kind, yet he to none but only to God, the author

of that most blessed fountain, *the Book of Life*, and of the admirable dexterity of wit, together with the helps of other learning, which were his guides." Preface, pa. 80. London edition, 1821.—Again, pa. 86, "We should be injurious to virtue it-self, if we did derogate from them, whom their industry hath made great. Two things of principal moment there are which have deservedly procured him honor throughout the world: the one, his exceeding pains in composing the Institutions of Christian religion; the other, his no less industrious travels for exposition of Holy Scripture, according to the same Institutions. In which two things, whosoever they were that after him bestowed their labor, he gained the advantage of prejudice against them if they gainsayed; and of glory above them if they consented." To assail the reputation of this great man, is now thought by many the way to raise themselves. One consolation is, that this commonplace railing carries its own condemnation with it; because it carries evidence that the revilers of Calvin are ignorant of his *life* and *writings*. They retail only the second-hand reproaches of old enemies of the Reformation. We cannot think it necessary to employ time in proving that Calvin was ordained to the Ministry.

Bishop R. proceeds in his usual style, and remarking that the power claimed by the Pope was unlawful power, maintains that this does not nullify the power rightfully and lawfully possessed by him. And he thinks that it is worthy of himself and his cause to say "Certainly, sir, you know that it is a maxim of the soundest reason, though I doubt whether you will acknowledge it, that usurped power cannot pass into lawful authority." We mark this sentence simply for the sake of letting our readers occasionally see the spirit of the book we are reviewing. It abounds with offensive things of this sort, which would greatly irritate men of a different spirit from ours; but which our imperturbable good humor enables us to pass over without an angry feeling.

The bishop goes on to observe that the Pope's supremacy was an usurpation; and that his brother bishops had a perfect right, to resume their independence of character, when they had discovered the corruptions on which this antichristian domination was built up; and then proceeds thus,

"While therefore Bishop Ravenscroft would not admit the ordaining or any other power, of an excommunicated and deposed Bishop, he would yet take the liberty to examine and determine whether such excommunication and deposition were lawfully and regularly pronounced, and thereupon decided for himself. Nothing like a superiority of spiritual power or authority is known or owned among christian Bishops. The Episcopate is one, of which each Bishop holds a part. This part is equal in each, and includes all powers originally annexed to the office by its founder, "the shepherd and Bishop of our souls." These original powers do not include the tremendous power of excommunicating each other—no single Bishop can exercise it towards another Bishop—where it becomes necessary to resort to it, it must be the act of that particular body or church, to which the offending Bishop belongs, and if regularly and canonically pronounced, will be respected by the church catholic. But if founded upon usurped power, or uncanonically and irregularly pronounced, it cannot rescind and annul the power conferred on a Bishop or Bishops, by their regular and canonical consecration. And this is a necessary consequence from the very nature and

fundamentals of society, or associated individuals, whether the purpose of their association be, civil or religious. If, for example—the Bishop and Clergy of the diocese of North-Carolina, should undertake to fulminate a Bull of excommunication against a particular Bishop, or against all the American Bishops—would it in any way, or in the judgment of any sound mind, be entitled to respect, or considered as at all affecting their lawful power and authority? And precisely of the same worth, is the excommunication of the reforming Bishops, clergy and people, by the Bishop of Rome, and his consistory of Cardinals. It was a mere nullity, sanctioned by no principle of reason or religion, and is of no avail, even to a contender for parity, in assigning it as a breach in the apostolical succession of the Protestant Episcopal Church.”—pp. 52.

We really respect the ingenuity and ability displayed in this part of bishop R's book; and sincerely give him our praise for managing his argument here with admirable dexterity. Still, however, in our judgment, he has not relieved his doctrine of succession from the difficulty started by our Reviewer. The Church is one—says bishop R. and the Episcopate is *one*; of which each bishop holds an *equal part*; [no matter how many or how few.] Here then, we observe by the way, our bishop is a decided advocate of *parity*; as fierce for it as any Presbyterian. But the original powers belonging to bishops do not include the tremendous power of excommunication—“*this must be the act of that particular body or church, to which the offending bishop belongs.*” So then there is a *church*, as well as *THE church*. But we wish to know what is meant by a *church* here—Is it a company of faithful men, believers in the Lord Jesus? Or is it a body of clergymen, without a bishop? Or is it a number of bishops? But we would ask, how is this particular Church constituted, and its limits fixed, so as to determine the extent of ecclesiastical jurisdiction? It must be either by a submission to the civil power, and a compliance with their prescriptions; or by the voluntary consent of those who constitute the Church. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Convention of North Carolina is coextensive with the boundaries of the State; because it was agreed by Episcopalians that it should be so.—It is so in relation to the general convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States. Sure we are that the New Testament does not require that any regard should be paid to geographical limits, in constituting Churches. In England, as far as the Church is not a creature of the State, the submission of the bishops to the Archbishop of Canterbury is a matter of agreement; and it is this voluntary association which brings the bishops and clergy within the reach of the Canons of the Church.—Otherwise, why should not the acts of one part of the Catholic Church bind another universally? Well; for centuries preceding the Reformation, that branch of the Church which was in England, by its own voluntary consent was a part of the Church of Rome, had fully embraced all its doctrines, and acknowledged the Pope as possessing authority over all other bishops; as now, the Archbishop of Canterbury has supreme spiritual authority in England. There was a general consent of this kind through the whole of what was then called the Church. In England when Henry VIII, began his work, a majority of the bishops, and almost the whole body of the inferior clergy

were violently opposed to the measure; and maintained their allegiance to Rome. Henry assumed the Pope's place as supreme head of the Church in his dominions: Cromwell (a layman) was his vicegerent, and accomplished in the King's name a considerable part of the work of Reformation, such as it was in that day.—At length he who was acknowledged chief bishop, proceeding according to the Canon law, then submitted to by the Christian world, and with the hearty concurrence of almost all the bishops in the world, excommunicated the bishops of England. And to this day the bishops of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, &c. &c. acknowledge the validity of this sentence of excommunication. On the same principles, then, on which a sentence of excommunication pronounced by the Archbishop of Canterbury on a bishop say of Llandaff would be held valid by the whole body of English, Irish and American Bishops, may the validity of the sentence of the Pope be maintained.

But our argument here may be made very brief. England was to all intents and purposes a part of the Romish Church. Now that Church was either true or false. If true; that is, if the Church of Rome really constituted the Church of Christ; then this excommunication, pronounced by the bishop of Rome and his Cardinals, with the concurrence of almost all the bishops in the world, does seem to be a valid excommunication. But if the Church of Rome was not true, that is no Church of Christ; then what is called the Church of England, being an integral part of this Church, submitting to all its discipline, and receiving all its doctrine, cannot be considered a true Church, and of course had no valid orders at the Era of the Reformation.

This was felt to be a very great difficulty at that time. Some of the very wisest and best men engaged in that work, were satisfied that the church of Rome was not a church of Christ. Indeed this is fully declared in the Book of Homilies set forth in the days of Edward VI and Elizabeth, and referred to in the xxxvth article of the Episcopal Church, as containing "a godly and wholesome doctrine. See "the second part of the Sermon for Whitsunday,"—pp. 293, 4. American edition, and particularly the following sentence; "Now if you will compare this with the church of Rome, not as it was in the beginning, but as it is at present, and as it hath been for the space of nine hundred years and odd, you shall well perceive the state thereof to be so far wide from the nature of the true church, that nothing can be more." This church was every where the same. Every false doctrine maintained at Rome was received in England; there was every where, the same corruption of the clergy, the same oppression of the people, the same fierce spirit of cruelty. And what though it was not from the Pope, that the English prelates derived their ordination, it was from the church of Rome, fully as corrupt, as alien from the Spirit of Christ, in England as in Italy. If the church was so far wide from the nature of a true church, that nothing could be more so, the departure was just as great in one country as in another. English ordination up to the time of the Reformation was popish ordination; and it is not possible for any dissenter to be farther from the true church,

than the Homilies describe the Romish church to be. And if a false church can give true orders, then a pious presbytery certainly may, as well as an ungodly bishop.

But on the other side, most of the English bishops in the days of Henry, were apprehensive of the canonical power of the Pope. These difficulties led the excellent Cranmer to maintain an opinion, for which, were he under the authority of the bishop of North Carolina, we have no doubt he would be degraded. If bishop Burnet is to be credited, or rather, if he has not falsified the ecclesiastical documents of the church, that great reformer, when primate of all England, maintained that ordination or consecration was not necessary to constitute the episcopal character, but that election by christian people, or appointment by a christian prince is sufficient. Is not this pretty strong evidence that the difficulty which we press on bishop R. was felt in the very beginning of the church of England? As for us, we still think, that according to bishop R's principles, if the Roman Catholic church was a true church, then the Reforming bishops of England were canonically excommunicated; and if it was not a true church, then the ordination received by the English bishops was not valid.

A particular case may illustrate our view of this subject on Episcopal principles. Let us suppose that bishop R. were by common consent made Archbishop of North America, and the canons of the church modified to suit that state of things. Let us farther suppose that some bishop, not for private reasons, but in the sincerity of his heart should be devoted to Bible Societies on the "no comment principle." But before this, Archbishop R. had influence enough to procure the adoption of a canon condemning these societies. Well, the offending bishop is summoned to appear in the Archepiscopal court, to answer for his breach of the law. He refuses to appear; and is deprived and excommunicated for contumacy—Is he not canonically excommunicated?

But since we are called to notice difficulties of this kind, there is another, which bishop R. ought to clear up, when he writes another book. We have before stated the facts, that in England, the Reformation was not carried on by the Church, but by the civil power. Indeed the whole authority spiritual and temporal was assumed by the King. Bishops were appointed by his letters patent, and commissions were taken out accordingly. If we are not greatly mistaken, in the reign of Henry VIII, these commissions were taken out by the year. It is certain that Cranmer supposed his commissions to have expired with the death of the King who appointed him; and that he refused to act on the accession of Edward VI, until reappointed.

When Mary came to the throne, all the bishops who refused to follow the Court in their return to Rome, were deprived, and a new set appointed. In the short reign of this bloody bigot, popery was so firmly seated in the high places of the Church, that, on the accession of Elizabeth, there was only one bishop in England willing to crown her Queen of England. As for the other Clergy, to the number of more than 9000, they were *Protestants* under Ed-

ward, good Catholics under Mary, and Protestants again under Elizabeth.

The articles of Religion too were enacted by Parliament, in opposition to the opinions and exertions of a number of the bishops.—In a word, “the Church of England is really a Parliamentary Church—it depends entirely upon the acts and authority of Parliament for its very essence and frame. The qualifications of its ministers, their power to officiate, the manner in which they are to administer the sacraments, are all limited and prescribed by Parliament; and this authority which first made can alone alter and new make it; can abolish or add to its articles or rites according to its pleasure, even though the whole body of bishops and clergy should ever so much dislike or protest earnestly against it.”

Farther yet; so much is the Church the creature of the state, that all the bishops in England, with all their apostolical powers, dare not consecrate a new bishop without the authority of the King; nor raise a foreigner to that sacred office without an act of Parliament. Accordingly, when there was some hesitancy in acknowledging the episcopal dignity of good old bishop Seabury of Connecticut, and, (that the true succession might be secured in this country,) application was made to the English bishops, it was beyond their power to do any thing until an act of Parliament was passed, giving them a legal capacity to comply with this request.

One is tempted to think that it was poorly worth while to be at all this trouble, when the source of English episcopacy is explored. The whole hierarchy of that Church depends on Archbishop Parker. Now it is a very serious question, whether he received *canonical* consecration or not. The reason of this doubt may be very briefly stated. The persons who consecrated Parker were not bishops at the time of performing the service. The persons who performed this office were *Barlow* and *Scory*, bishops elect of *Chichester* and *Hereford*, *Coverdale* a deprived bishop of *Exeter*, and *Hodgkins* suffragan of *Bedford*. On this subject it has been remarked, that “Elizabeth deprived the bishops whom she found in the Church, and their *episcopal character ceased*. In like manner had the episcopal character departed from the bishops whom Mary deposed. For if it was right in Elizabeth to put down bishops, and take from them their episcopal character and rights, it could not be wrong in Mary to do precisely the same thing. Was not Mary as much the sovereign of England as Elizabeth? If the latter could deprive bishops, so could the former; and if Mary could deprive, what becomes of Parker’s consecration, the root of all episcopacy in England?”

Parker being in this way raised to the See of Canterbury, proceeded to consecrate fourteen bishops in place of those who had been deprived by queen Elizabeth as supreme head of the Church. Here, then, we see that almost all the bishops of England, though canonically consecrated, were displaced by the civil power, and others put in their stead, by a single bishop whose consecration is seriously questioned. If there is no spiritual power in a layman, or a laywoman, then Parker as Archbishop of Canterbury could deprive almost the entire episcopacy of England, and bring in new

bishops in compliance with the views of the queen. Is this canonical? Suppose that the legislature of North Carolina should make the governor of that state head of the Church; and the governor, in exercise of authority thus conferred, should displace bishop R. and appoint some other person bishop of the diocese. In case the bishop of Virginia could be induced to consecrate that other person, would he be rightful bishop of North Carolina; and would this consecration be held to be canonical? We doubt it much.—When one enters minutely into the history of England, and takes into view all the changes, from the extermination of the Church by the invasion of the Saxons, to the reign of his present Majesty George the IV. (defender of the faith!) he must acknowledge that what bishop R. calls apostolical succession has been sadly *boxed about*, and subjected to many foreign influences. To trace this succession and find evidence that it is *true* in every case is, the bishop may rely on it, a very perplexing and difficult job. He had better go to the Bible, and direct others there, than rest his hopes of salvation on so sandy a foundation.

That difficulties were felt in relation to Archbishop Parker is evident from this fact; that seven or eight years after his consecration, this whole matter was brought before Parliament, and an act was passed confirming its validity, and that of the consecrations performed by him. There must have been important reasons for this, or such a body as the British Parliament would hardly have adopted this measure. This was done about 1566 or 1567.

On looking into this subject, it has occurred to us that the Church of England ought not to be called an Episcopal Church; nor the bishops successors of the Apostles. The succession must be in the King and Parliament, where really all the authority is vested. But the King and Parliament are representatives of the nation. It is then something like a great Congregational Church, with the power originally vested in the people, but exercised by the King and Parliament, who prescribe who shall be bishops, and what the bishops shall do, and how they shall pray. We do hope that our good friend of North Carolina has a better warrant for heaven, than he can receive through such a source as this. He had better do at once what we exhort him to do; that is to rely solely on the promises of God for salvation; and instead of claiming to be bishop by divine right, acknowledge that he is superior to his Presbyters by the custom of the Church.

But in opposition to this, we have the "invincible arguments" of Mr Law against bishop Hoadley, from page 53 to 60 of this huge pamphlet. The insinuation that our Reviewer borrowed from Hoadley is without foundation. When *he* gets aid he acknowledges it. Our Reviewer knows something of the general history of the Bangorian controversy, but has never read the works on either side. Does bishop R. know any thing of them, except what he has learned from the "Churchman Armed?"

We readily acknowledge the acuteness and subtlety of Mr. Law's reasoning; but it creates no difficulty with us; because he assumes many things, which he ought to have proved. We can easily see how a prelatist might think these arguments conclusive. He takes for granted the very same premises, which Mr. Law assumes.

The argument here borrowed is intended to establish two things.

1. The absolute necessity of a regular succession of ministers from the days of the Apostles, in such a way as to be capable of proof, in each particular case.

2. The existence of a *particular order*, as alone possessing the ordaining power, and the necessity of a regular succession in that order.

The force of the whole argument consists in this proposition, that authority from Christ to preach and administer ordinances, can be derived in no way but that of an unbroken succession, in the line of bishops. This we totally deny. For,

1. We have before shown that bishops as such, that is as distinct from presbyters, were not known in the primitive church; and that, according to Jerome's doctrine, the distinction is founded on the *custom of the church*, and not on the *law of Christ*.* There is therefore no necessity of a succession in the line of business.

2. There is not in the New Testament a hint which warrants the belief that there is any transfer from Minister to Minister, of the authority of Christ. Our Lord sent out the first Presbyters with peculiar, that is apostolical powers, and inspired them with his Spirit that they might organize his Church, and commit his doctrine to writings; but that they transferred any Apostolical powers to their successors, has never yet been proved. We are bold to say, it cannot be proved. The argument of Mr Law assumes that unbroken succession is necessary for the communication of spiritual authority, and concludes that therefore this succession has, amidst all changes for 1800 years, actually taken place. We think it a sufficient reply to say, the succession cannot be proved, and therefore it is not necessary to verify the Church, or give validity to the sacraments.

The *authority to bind the conscience*, and to give assurance of Salvation, is *not in the ministry of the gospel*, but in the *word of God*. And here we feel authorized to adopt the style of Mr Law, and say, "My Lord, I should think it might be granted to me," that we are under obligation to believe a preacher of the gospel, *solely* because he teaches the truth *which God has revealed*; and that the sacraments are signs and seals of the covenant of grace, because *Christ hath instituted them*. "My Lord, it is a plain and obvious truth that no man or number of men" can confer authority on a person to bind the conscience by any thing save the truth as God has made it known. "Then I desire to know how in this present age; or any other," since the Clergy began to set up undue pretensions, the

* It is a curious fact, that Hooker, the great champion of Episcopacy, was unable to get over this testimony of Jerome. After exerting his whole strength on this subject, he says (vol. iii. 101.) "This answer to St Jerome seemeth dangerous; I have qualified it as I may by addition of some words of restraint: yet I satisfy not myself; in my judgment it would be altered." Dr McCrie, in his *Life of Melville*, suspects that this was a marginal remark made by the author, on reviewing his argument. His answer to the Presbyterians on this point did not satisfy himself. It seemed dangerous—and he purposed to reconstruct this part of the work. But this memorandum, jotted down in the margin, was by the publisher of Hooker's manuscript, ignorantly introduced into the text."

imposition of the hands of a bishop can add any thing to the authority of Christ's word, or to the efficacy of his sacraments. "I should think, my Lord," that *that* which is God's truth when preached by an Episcopalian, is also God's truth when preached by a dissenter. And I do humbly presume to think, my Lord, that there is not such a magic influence in dissenterism, as to change the saving verities of God's word into uncertain tradition or soul destroying error.

The authority to invest men with the office of teachers is in the Church. And we are happy to agree with the great and good Cranmer, so far as to believe that in *extraordinary* cases, the election of a company of faithful men is sufficient to constitute a presbyter or bishop. And we have no doubt that a man thus appointed, and preaching the truth of God's word, is a true minister of Christ, possessing all the authority which a minister of the gospel can possess.

But where no case of necessity exists, to justify a departure from the ordinary course, we are perfectly clear that it is the rule of Christ's house for men to be invested with the office of religious teacher, by *religious teachers*, with the concurrence of the people. Not because the religious teacher confers any authority residing solely in himself, or in his order; but because, as we have before shown, this is the surest way to obtain competent religious instructors. We are, then, strong advocates for regular ordination. We cannot admit irregular ordinations, in any cases but those of clear necessity. Our reasons, however, are entirely different from those of bishop R. and Mr. Law. Let all take the Bible and judge between us.

In these quotations from Mr Law's Letters, there is a good deal said, respecting the *Priesthood*. And much of the force of his argument depends on the assumption that there is a Priesthood in the Church; that is, a body of men appointed by God to bear messages from him directly to the people; and to offer the requests of the people to God. It is also taken for granted, that this is the only way in which men can transact business with heaven, so as to be assured of salvation. If all this were true, we should agree at once with these high churchmen, and make our peace as soon as possible. But it is not necessary for us again to show that there is no Priesthood in the Church; no such power, as is supposed, given to man; and of course no force at all in the arguments founded on this assumption.

The remarks of the same writer farther on, respecting the succession of bishops as distinct from Presbyters, have been sufficiently answered in another part of this Review, and we shall not go over the same ground again.

Our Reviewer had said that the founders of the Church of England did not hold the sentiments respecting the exclusive rights of Episcopacy, which are held by modern high churchmen. On this subject bishop R. uses the following strong language.

"Presuming, that by the word founders, you mean the reformers of the Church of England—(its foundation being in the first century and apostolical,) you must be able then to show that the men who gave their bodies to

the flames in behalf of the truth, were double minded men. That the men who declared in the preface to the ordinal "that it is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles' times there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons"—"And therefore to the intent that these orders may be continued and reverently used and esteemed in the church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest or Deacon in this church, or be suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto, according to the form hereafter following, or hath had Episcopal consecration or ordination," did nevertheless consider uninterrupted succession from Christ's Apostles, in the line of Bishops—as incapable of proof and unimportant to the validity of the ministerial commissions; and did confess and allow, that persons otherwise than Episcopally ordained, had equally with themselves a divine right to administer the affairs of Christ's kingdom in the world. For this you must do to redeem your pledge and escape the censure justly due to so unfounded an assertion."—pp. 55, 56.

By founders of the Church of England, we meant not the King and Parliament, but those excellent men, few in number, but of great worth, who, in the reign of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary, and in part of the reign of Elizabeth, promoted the reformation in England. As for the assertion that the Church of England was founded in the first century, and is Apostolical, we shall believe it, when it is proved that queen Elizabeth was successor to the Apostles.

It is not on personal considerations that we advert to this subject. We wish the Episcopal Church in the present day, to imbibe the spirit of its reformers, of Cranmer, and Redley, Hooper and Jewel, and Grindal, and other men of that stamp, who stood forth to stem the torrent of corruption, and who were willing to labor with their brethren of other names, in the promotion of Christ's kingdom—men, who carried the Reformation as far as they could, and who sat down and wept, when the civil authorities checked them in their high career. It would require a volume to state all the evidence which might be adduced on this subject. The following summary is all that we can find room for. But first we beg leave to remark, that the "Preface to the Ordinal," on which bishop R. relies with so much confidence, does not prove what he supposes. Because, while Episcopalians hold that three orders, bishops, priests, and deacons, have obtained in the Church since the days of the Apostles, many of them have held that this was not of divine appointment, but a *matter of expediency*, and therefore not essential to the being of the Church. This part of the Preface proves that for a man to be acknowledged a Minister in the *Church of England*, he must be ordained as the *ordinal* prescribes. But one, we humbly think, may be a *Minister* in the *Church of Christ*, and not belong to the *Church of England*. So also thought many of the best men, who have ever graced the *Church of England*. And that there have been many, who would have been regarded as ornaments of any particular Church, we rejoice to acknowledge. Our prayer to God is, that there may be many more of the same character.

And we would here ask, whether the Church of Scotland is not acknowledged by the English Parliament, by king, lords, (bishops of course) and commons, as a branch of the Church of Christ; and has not this been the case at any time for 120 years? But in the

beginning of the Reformation, and until near the close of the reign of Elizabeth, there was no doubt about the ordination of the foreign Reformed Churches.

Indeed it is amazing to us, that any can read the history of the Reformation, without every where seeing convincing evidence of the truth of every thing advanced by our Reviewer on this subject. The evidence is of this sort.

1. A familiar, intimate and affectionate correspondence was carried on, between the English and Foreign Reformers, in which there is a free and cordial acknowledgment on both sides, of brotherhood in the Ministry, and of the Churches respectively, as Churches of Christ. *Burnet's History of the Reformation*, his *Travels*, *Strype's Memorials*, and *Calvin's Letters*, afford decisive evidence of this fact.

2. There occur repeated instances of the authoritative acknowledgment of the ordination of foreign ministers, settling in England; on some of whom preferments were conferred in the English Church, without re-ordination.

John Knox who was for some time one of King Edward's chaplains, was employed as a preacher in England, and had the offer of a bishopric made to him by the privy Council of England, of which Cranmer was a member. *Strype* and *Burnet* are referred to by the biographer of Knox for evidence. As is also *Brand* in his history of Newcastle. "In the year 1582, Archbishop Grindal, by a formal deed, declared the validity of the orders of Mr John Morrison, who had been ordained by the Synod of Lothian, according to the laudable form and rite of the reformed Church of Scotland." This deed is preserved by *Strype* in his *Life of Grindal*, and is quoted by *McCrie* in the *Life of Knox*, and by *Neal* in his *History of the Puritans*.

Whittingham, Dean of Durham, was ordained in the English Church at Geneva, of which Knox was Pastor.

The case of John A'Lasco, a Polish nobleman, who embraced the Reformed religion, became a Minister of the Gospel, and settled in London in the reign of Edward VI, affords a very striking proof. A patent was granted to him by the King, which may be found in *Burnet*, but is too long to be inserted here. In this instrument it is acknowledged, that the Church under A'Lasco's care, though disconformed to the practice of the Church of England, was "instituted in truly *Christian and Apostolical doctrines and rites*. But this is not all. This Church, set up in London after the pattern of the Reformed Churches on the Continent, was acknowledged and protected by the King and the Archbishop of Canterbury, that by this means the *English Churches also might be excited to embrace Apostolical purity*." This leads to the remark,

3. That the leading English Reformers, in their private sentiments, agreed with the Reformers of Switzerland and Geneva.

"Hooper, in a letter dated Feb. 8, 1550, informs Bullinger, that 'the Archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of Rochester, Ely, St David's, Lincoln, and Bath, were sincerely bent on advancing the purity of doctrine, agreeing in ALL THINGS with the *Helvetic Churches*.'" *Burnet. Hist. Ref.* "Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich,

in a letter to Gualter, Feb. 4, 1573, fervently exclaims, 'O, would to God, would to God, once at last, all the English people would in good earnest propound to themselves to follow the Church of Zurich, as the most absolute pattern.'" *Strype*.

Cranmer expressed his opinion formally in writing, that "the bishops and priests were at one time, and were no two things, but both *one office* in the beginning of Christ's religion"—"The bishop of St David's, my lord elect of Westminster, Dr Cox, Dr Redman, say that at the beginning they were *all one*." *Burnet*. "Thirteen bishops, with a great number of other ecclesiastics, subscribed this proposition, 'that in the New Testament there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only deacons or ministers, and of priests or bishops.'" *Burnet*, as above. "Latimer and Hooper maintained the identity of bishops and presbyters, by divine institution. This was also the opinion of Pilkington, bishop of Durham. Bishop Jewel assents to it in his answer to Harding."

We have room for no more testimonies. Nothing but ignorance, or inveterate prejudice, can induce any man to deny that the Reformers of the Church in England acknowledged the validity of the Presbyterian ordination. And had it not been for Elizabeth's love of pomp and show, and her jealousy for the royal prerogative, the Church of England would have borne a very different aspect from that which now it bears.*

Bishop Ravenscroft seems to think that these are matters concerning the faith or order of the Church, or concerning both, which are to be believed, though not found in the Bible. But on this point we think it unnecessary to employ our time. These things, he says, are proved by the very same evidence, which establishes the genuineness of the Scriptures. We may have to remark on this subject hereafter. We now only ask, what is this, but in effect to put tradition on the same level with the word of God?

While the bishop is on this point, he, however, continues to drag in another which has no sort of connexion with it;—for what reason, let others judge. Thus he expresses himself,

* It might have been mentioned that the book called the *Erudition of a Christian Man*, otherwise called the *King's Book*, and the *Bishop's Book*, published in 1543, distinctly states, that in the New Testament, there are only two orders of Christian Ministers, priests and deacons. We beg leave to add another testimony, of later days. The great and good Archbishop Usher says, "I think that churches that have no bishops are defective in their government, yet, for the justifying my communion with them, (which I do love and honor as true members of the Universal Church) I do profess if I were in Holland, I should receive the blessed sacrament at the hands of the Dutch, with the like affection as I should from the hands of the French Ministers at Charenton. And in his answer to Baxter, he says, "that the King having asked him at the Isle of Wight, whether he found in antiquity, that *Presbyters alone ordained any?* he replied yes; and that he could show his Majesty more, EVEN WHERE PRESBYTERS ALONE SUCCESSIVELY ORDAINED BISHOPS; and instanced in Jerome's words, of the Presbyters of Alexandria choosing and making their own bishops from the days of Mark, till Heraclas and Dionysius." Had bishop R. known all that learned Episcopalians have written, would he have pledged himself to surrender his cause, if we could point out a single instance of acknowledged Presbyterian ordination in 1500 years?—We cannot help remarking that if all bishops were like *Usher*, there would be no controversy between them and Presbyterians.

"Hence (as you well know) the hasty conclusion of most of your readers, if it is not in the Bible, it need not be believed, and thus the whole subject is dismissed from the attention, and the mind pre-occupied against just information. Yet I would humbly suggest, that the wonder-working system of Hermeneutics, which can draw from the Bible, the doctrines of particular redemption, of predestination to eternal life of a part, and to eternal death to the rest of mankind, by the most merciful God, without respect or foresight of any good or evil by them done; might find in that same Bible, at least equal support for an uninterrupted succession from Christ, through his Apostles—to give validity and effect too, to sacraments, as seals of the grace of the gospel."—p. 56.

On this difficult subject, we have no intention of entering here. The pages of our work have already contained a vindication of the doctrine as held by Presbyterians. And we would humbly recommend to bishop R. a careful perusal of the "Letters on the Divine Purpose," with which a valued correspondent not long ago favored the readers of the Magazine. Our publisher has printed them in a separate form, and they may easily be procured.

But we cannot help remarking that language of this sort comes with a very bad grace from an Episcopalian. It brings to mind the saying of the great Chatham, of which, perhaps, bishop R. never heard: "The Church of England," said he, "has a Popish Liturgy, Calvinistic Articles, and an Arminian Clergy." That the second part of this pithy sentence is true, has been often proved. An English Clergyman has filled a large octavo volume with proofs of the doctrinal Calvinism of his Church. But these articles speak for themselves. On the distinguishing points of this great controversy, they are so clear and decisive, that we have never known a Presbyterian who would hesitate subscribing to them. Indeed the very doctrine of the seventeenth article is found in the writings of Calvin. And the "latter part of the final clause of this article, so frequently appealed to as deciding the Anticalvinistic sense of that article, is a literal translation from Calvin's Institutes." Vide Inst. i. 17. 5. See Christian Observer, for April 1826. pa. 225. We shall give the words of Calvin and of the article referred to.

And in our doings, that will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the word of God.

Article xvii.

Proinde in rebus agendis ea est nobis perspicienda Dei voluntas, quam verbo suo declarat.

Calvin. i. 17. 5.

Calvin's book, it ought to be known, was published some time before the xxxix articles were drawn up. The first edition of this great work was printed in 1535, the last under Calvin's superintendence in 1561. It deserves especial notice, that in the Bull of pope Pius the 5th, by which Queen Elizabeth was deposed and excommunicated, one of the charges alleged against her was, "that the impious mysteries and *Institutes* according to Calvin are received and observed by herself, and even enjoined on all her subjects to be obeyed." *Impia mysteria et Instituta ad Calvinum præscriptum a se suscepta et observata, etiam a subditis servari mandavit.*" (See the whole paper in Burnett.) Indeed they who are versed in the English ecclesiastical history of the age, and are familiar with the standard writers of that time, know that the Institutes of Calvin formed the *text book* of students in Divinity; that the bishops re-

quired young men, ut pene ad verbum ediscant, to learn them almost to a word; that, being accurately translated into English, they should be kept in all the Churches for public use; that the preachers habitually referred to them in their popular sermons, and, in a word, as Hooker says, that they who were best acquainted with the writings of Calvin, were esteemed the most learned divines. Since writing the above, we have fallen in with,

The following passage in the *Christian Observer*, vol. ii. 142, 143. It gives a summary of the facts above stated. "Few names stand higher, or in a more deserved pre-eminence, amongst the wise and pious members of the English Church, than that of bishop Andrews. His testimony to the memory of Calvin is, that 'he was an illustrious person, and never to be mentioned without a preface of the highest honor.' Whoever examines the sermons, writings, &c. of our divines, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., will continually meet with epithets of honor with which his name is mentioned; the *learned*, the *wise*, the *judicious*, the *pious* Calvin, are expressions every where to be found in the remains of those times. It is well known that his Institutes were read and studied in the Universities, by every student in Divinity, for a considerable portion of a century; nay, that, by a convocation held at Oxford, that book was recommended to the general study of the nation. So far was the Church of England, and her chief divines, from countenancing that unbecoming and absurd treatment, with which the name of this eminent Protestant is now so frequently dishonored, that it would be no difficult matter to prove, that there is not a parallel instance upon record, of any single individual being equally and so unequivocally venerated, for the union of wisdom and piety, both in England, and by a large body of the foreign Churches, as JOHN CALVIN. Nothing but ignorance of the ecclesiastical records of those times, or resolute prejudice, could cast a cloak of concealment over this fact; it has been evidenced by the combined testimony both of enemies and friends to his system of doctrines." This is Episcopal testimony, and therefore we have given it at length. The change which took place was produced more by the republican sentiments of the Genevan school, than by any conviction that the doctrine of Calvin was false.

In closing this part of our Review, we are borne on by our feelings to make a few additional remarks. We are Presbyterians on conviction. We are persuaded that the order of that church is truly Apostolical; that its doctrines are scriptural; that its discipline is wholesome; that its polity is favorable to political and religious liberty; and that its influence on the whole frame of society is beneficial. But we are as sure as we can be of any such thing, that true religion is not connected with any particular form of ecclesiastical polity; that the church does not depend on any particular order of the Ministry; and that preachers of the gospel derive no authority *directly* from Christ, which gives validity to their ministrations. We are convinced that the contrary opinions are hurtful; that they are adverse to true piety; destroy genuine Christian benevolence; and injure the general interests of religion. These are our motives for the course we have pursued. We have

never had, if we know our own hearts, the least degree of unfraternal feeling towards a human being for being an Episcopalian. But we cannot bear intolerance. Arrogance, and exclusive pretensions are objects of our "implacable disgust."—And we do mean, while life lasts, to bear our humble part in putting them down. The interests of "pure and undefiled religion" in our country demand this service of us, and of all who love the cause of truth and righteousness. We wish our episcopal brethren to be as fully convinced of this as we are. Let them labor to promote religion, and they have our love and our prayers. But as far as they manifest a sectarian spirit, endeavor to make proselytes to narrow and bigoted opinions, and set themselves up as exclusively members of the true church, and their ministers as vicars of Christ, so far we must oppose them—not in anger, but for the sake of truth and charity.

THE BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Bible Society question next claims our attention, in the order of subjects treated by bishop Ravenscroft. And we are truly sorry to observe that he waxes warmer and warmer as he advances. We shall, however, pursue our course, noticing just such things as the cause of truth requires that we should animadvert on, and passing by the rest in silence.

In this discussion, it is very important that the true character of the Bible Society should be understood; and the real state of the question between the contending parties fairly exhibited.

1. As to the real character of the Bible Society,—This seems to have been sadly misunderstood by many of its opponents. We beg our readers, then, distinctly to bear in mind, that the *Bible Society is not a Church*. It assumes no ecclesiastical authority; it imposes no decisions on its members; it assumes no one attribute of a Church of the Lord Jesus. It is nothing more nor less than a *Company*, formed for the purpose of collecting and distributing money, in the way of charity. And as this association assumes no ecclesiastical character, so it interferes in none of its transactions with the operations of any of the Churches in Christendom. The object of the Society, is indeed, the same with that of every true Church of Christ, namely, the promotion of the Christian religion. But the church and the society move in entirely different spheres; so that there can be no collision, unless the church should go out of her proper course, to oppose the Bible Society. Every Protestant church in the world professes to derive its religion from the Bible; and in promoting what is believed to be the true religion of Christ, every church acknowledges its obligation to distribute the Bible as an important part of the means appointed by God for the salvation of sinners. But the Bible Society undertakes just this—It says to Episcopalians, Presbyterians, &c. &c. we mean to do our endeavor, whithersoever you may send missionaries, with Prayer Books, Confessions of Faith, Catechisms, &c. to place there a sufficient number of Bibles: so that whatever means you might have expended in this part of your work, you may reserve for other purposes.—We will give the Bible; you may do the rest. But our work is

one of assistance, and not of interference: We therefore give *nothing but the Bible*.

There are, however, other reasons for this last determination. The Bible contains an expression of the whole will of God respecting man's salvation. All *necessary* truth is clearly revealed. The members of this association do then regard it as a work of benevolence to distribute the Bible. But there are hundreds of millions of human beings, who have no Bible, and know nothing of its life-giving truths. Now, allowing one Bible for six souls, and making due allowances for the increase of population, and the destruction of books, the annual distribution of one hundred and twenty thousand Bibles, would not supply the world with the word of God in fewer than a thousand years. And within that period the entire population of the world will have changed about thirty times, or nearly twenty thousand millions of souls will have gone to eternity. This work of charity, then, calls for the union of all hearts and the co-operation of all hands. But the christian world is divided into a number of denominations, who differ as to their explanations of *some parts* of scripture; and of course they would choose different commentators for the exposition of scripture. The enterprise of supplying the world with the Bible demands greater resources than any christian denomination can command. A plan suited to the emergency of the case must be devised. A *company* is formed for this particular work of charity, on a principle to which it was supposed that no Protestant could possibly object. The Bible is given—the Bible *alone*, “without note or comment,” just as God gave it to man. This, then, is the real character of the Bible Society. It is a charitable association for giving away the Bible, or furnishing it at a cheap rate; formed precisely on the principle of *a society for furnishing bread to the poor* in a time of scarcity; or a *soup society*, or *any other charitable association*.

2. *As to the state of the question between the friends and enemies of this society.*—It is difficult to exhibit this fairly and fully in few words. The friends of the society maintain that their intentions are benevolent, and the effects of their labors salutary. Enemies deny this of course. But this enmity takes so many different shapes, and attempts to justify itself by so many various and opposite reasons, that we are here obliged to enter a little into detail. Our plan will be to give a list of characters, and a very brief statement of their respective grounds of enmity.

1. *INFIDELS of all classes among Christians.*—Our readers will readily understand that the true reason of their hostility is hatred of the Bible. Their ostensible reasons are the same with those of some other enemies.

2. *POLITICAL ENEMIES.* These are of two classes, directly opposed to each other.

A. *Monarchists or Friends of Arbitrary Government.* These oppose the Bible Society, because, say they, the Bible puts wrong notions into the heads of people respecting *liberty*, and the *natural equality* of man. It unfits them for due *subordination*, and brings them together to *plot* and *cabal* against the government. They maintain that the Bible Society is a branch

of the famous *Illuminati-system*, which once made such noise in the world!

B. *Radicals, or Enemies of all government.* These are noisy, roaring fellows, who say, and swear, that the Bible Society is a tool of the Holy Alliance; intended expressly to promote superstition, and train men for slavery. It is a little unfortunate for these men that the head of the Holy Alliance has suppressed the Bible Society in his dominions.

3. *MAHOMETANS.* These poor fellows are enemies because they have been excited by Roman Catholics to such hostility as they have expressed.

4. *PAPISTS.* The enemies of this class assign in part the same reasons with those who follow next in order.

5. *HIGH CHURCHMEN among Protestants.* The opposition to the Bible Society began with this class in England.

A. It was first objected that the Society was dangerous to the church.

B. That it was injurious to the *Society for promoting Christian knowledge.*

C. That it would destroy the English power in Hindostan.

D. That it would overthrow the establishment, because the Bible was given without the Prayer Book.

E. That it tended to the overthrow of all revealed religion.

This last is *one* of the objections which has found its way into this country.

6. *MISCELLANEOUS ENEMIES.* We adopt this odd title, because we do not know what other to use. These enemies consist of *Unitarian Quakers; Reformed Baptists;* a set of people who call themselves *Goats*, and other *nondescripts*, whom we know not how to designate.

An advocate of the Bible Society, then, is surrounded by hosts of enemies; and seems to need the eyes of an *Argus*, and the hands of a *Briareus* to maintain his cause. But the comfort is, that most of these adversaries are directly opposed to each other; and may be left to fight it out among themselves. And of the rest, it may safely be assumed, that they take the same positions, adopt the same manœuvres, and use the same weapons—so that if one set of them is defeated, the whole are completely put to the rout.

In regard to bishop Ravenscroft; if all his personalities, his assertions without proof, his repetitions, were omitted, this part of his pamphlet would be well nigh reduced to nothing. It would be easy to take all his general principles, and despatch them in a few pages. But in urging and repeating these principles, he brings forward so many opinions, which we think both erroneous and dangerous, that we feel compelled to follow him step by step through his unpleasant course. We promise, however, to condense our remarks as much as circumstances will permit.

Every thing at all relevant to this subject, as it is handled by bishop R. may, if we have not mistaken him, be comprised in the following particulars.

1. That according to the Bible Society principle, the scriptures are in such sort sufficient, that notes and comments are unneces-

sary; that there is no danger of men being mistaken or misled without them, &c. &c.

2. That this principle, contrary to the express will of God, separates the scriptures, from the church, ministry, and sacraments, which are "integral parts" of the plan of salvation.

3. That it encourages schism and heresy, by declaring that all systems of religious belief derived from the Bible are "equally safe for salvation;" and maintaining that all are equally entitled to the witness of the Spirit.

4. As a conclusion from all this,—That the principle is subversive of revealed religion.

5. Hence it is inferred, that the friends of the Bible Society are actuated by mistaken and intemperate zeal, and not by genuine charity: and that they who are sufficiently cool and perspicacious to see through all these delusions, are bound to set themselves in open opposition to this novel scheme of a spurious and deceptive liberality.

We shall consider these particulars in order, and as we go on, notice some other matters which the bishop's *peculiar manner* forces on our attention.

This part of his *Vindication* fills nearly thirty octavo pages. Yet after his statement, pp. 77--79, we find scarcely a *new*, we mean an *additional* idea, in all that he says. It is a ringing of changes productive to the Reviewer of extreme weariness; and an intermixture of invectives and coarse personalities, which every one concerned for the honor of the christian religion, and the credit of the christian ministry must deeply lament. That our readers may have at once, nearly the whole of the bishop's scheme, and some sample of his spirit, we give the following very long extract.

"Notes and comments on any book, are always intended to explain and render more intelligible, and of course more practically useful, the subject matter contained in the book. This is the declared object of those who compile them; and the benefit is acknowledged by all who read them. The exclusion of notes and comments then, is in effect to say, that the book requires no explanation—that it is sufficiently intelligible in itself. This being true of books in general, it must also be true of the Bible as a particular book, unless it be shewn that it is an exception to the rule. But the common sense and common usage of the christian world proves, that it is not an exception, there being no book in the world, upon the explanation and illustration of which, so much labor and research have been bestowed. The adoption of a principle, therefore, which excludes notes and comments from the Bible, does in fact assert, that the Bible requires no extraneous help to understand it aright, and, (as it is assumed in the Sermon,) that it is *exclusively* sufficient for its own interpretation. I have therefore done no violence or injustice to the Bible Society principle, in holding it responsible for this most just and direct conclusion from it. But further, as I have done no violence or injustice to the principle adopted and acted upon by these Bible Societies, so neither have I drawn from it a single consequence, that is not equally direct and unavoidable. For, if the Bible is in itself so clear and plain as to require neither notes or comments to render it more intelligible, it follows inseparably, in the judgment of the Bible Society, as a body, that there is no danger to any man of mistaking its meaning, or misapplying its truths. But the Bible Society, as a body, are aware of the fact (and the very materials of which it is composed confirm the fact to their senses,) that the christian world is split up and divided into hundreds of opposite systems of doctrine and practice, all professedly drawn from the Bible, as its exclu-

sive truth. Hence, it is the opinion of that body, witnessed by the adoption of the principle as their fundamental rule, that all these various and opposing systems of religious profession, are equally consistent with the truth of God's word, and equally safe for salvation. Nor is there an escape from this consequence, that will not show, that the favorite principle is wrong, and ought to be abandoned. For, of necessity, the Society must either believe that all varieties of religious profession drawn from the Bible, are equally right, in the sense of being equally safe, or they must believe that some of them are unscriptural and unsafe. If the former of the alternatives is adopted, the principle is demonstrated to be productive of divisions in religion without limit. If the latter shall be resorted to, it shows the principle to be justly liable to the charge of withholding from the Bible what is essential to a right understanding of its contents, and to a just application of its life-giving truths.

That such conclusions and consequences are not seen by the individual members, I am well aware; that they are hid and concealed from them, by the intrinsic merit of the work, and the enthusiasm it so powerfully kindles, I can readily conceive; yet that they are unavoidable from the principle, is beyond all reasonable denial, and it is for this reason, and this alone, that I have raised my voice against it, and not without taking into consideration how much more probable it was, that I was mistaken—than that thousands of great and learned and pious men should be guilty of such an oversight, as to adopt for the foundation of the most extended religious co-operation, a principle, demonstrably subversive of all revealed Religion.

But the Bible Society principle operates yet more extensively, and more certainly, against the interests of revealed Religion, than in the exclusion of all helps to understand and apply the scriptures according to their true meaning, and to their saving purpose; for it authorises the conclusion, that the sacraments are not necessary to give effect to the word of God. All comments are excluded. Preaching and the sacraments are, in the truest sense of the word, comments on the scriptures—comments which God has commanded to accompany them; yet, by this principle, these are separated from the Bible, not only by fair and necessary inference from the principle as adopted, but practically and in fact. This consequence from the Bible Society principle, was stated in the Sermon, and pressed as an argument against it. But of this you have taken no notice, beyond giving the paragraph in which it is found, and resorting to your ready scape-goat, the book of Common Prayer, as what I mean by the church, the ministry and the sacraments. But, sir, you knew better. You knew well what my real meaning was in this objection, and you felt that it was fatal; and yet the principle which goes this length must be supported.

Against this objection, I have heard many, and read some answers; but not one that to my mind was even plausible. It is admitted on all hands, that a proposition to send the sacraments with the word, would be the signal to dissolve the society. It is confessed, that no such thing is contemplated by the society. By some it is replied, that the sacraments are already furnished. But even admitting this, as it respects christian lands—(though the society are not entitled to it) yet it is *not true*, as respects the heathen, who are embraced in the operations of the society. The principle, as to them, is an actual separation of the sacraments from the word of God; and its operation in christian lands, is to weaken the impression of their indispensable necessity to give the word its saving effect. It is in vain to contend, that the society is associated for a specific purpose, which does not embrace the sending the sacraments with the word—because no necessity can be conceived for their separation—because no christian can comprehend any saving benefit from the mere letter of scripture, without the sacraments—because no necessity existed for the adoption of a principle thus pregnant with mischief. If it was felt to be a christian duty to disseminate as widely as possible the word of life, the duty was equally christian, and equally imperious—not to deprive the word of those accompaniments which the wisdom of God had joined inseparably with it, as essential to its saving effect. I cannot perceive any just ground for the exercise of discretion even in this case, particularly as respects the heathen—and far less of justification for the adoption of this principle as their bond of union, and the best method

which their collective wisdom and piety could devise, for presenting to all nations, *the whole counsel of God for their salvation.*"—pp. 77—79.

We now proceed to consider the several particulars above stated, in their order. And

I. *As to Notes and Comments—and the sufficiency of the Scriptures.*

On this point, bishop R. maintains, with a confidence perfectly *sui generis*, that according to the Bible Society principle, notes and comments are unnecessary. There is an ambiguity in the words *necessary* and *unnecessary*, which, as the bishop has not noticed it, we must explain. A thing is said to be *necessary* in common speech, when we cannot do well without it. Thus a particular kind of food is said to be a *necessary of life*, when every one knows that it is possible to prolong life in the use of something else. One thing is *absolutely necessary* to another, when that other cannot be accomplished or attained without it. In this sense, notes and comments may be *affirmed* or *denied* to be necessary for a *right understanding of the scriptures*, according to the limitations given to the phrase, [*a right understanding of the scriptures.*] If it means an understanding of the *difficult parts of scripture*, neither the Bible Society, nor any man of common sense on the face of the earth ever denied the necessity of notes and comments. But if it means an understanding of the *plain, obvious, fundamental truths of scripture*, which show men the way of salvation, the Bible Society principle does assume that notes and comments are unnecessary.—Once more; if the word *necessary* is used in the loose, familiar sense of *useful, expedient, &c.* the Bible Society does by no means deny the necessity of notes and comments. It says not a single word in relation to them in this meaning.

The intelligent reader of the quotation made above, will readily perceive, that the writer had in view none of these distinctions; otherwise, he could not so entirely have mistaken the Bible Society principle, as to have expressed himself thus: "But further, as I have done no violence or injustice to the principle adopted and acted upon by these Bible Societies, so neither have I drawn from it a single consequence that is not equally direct and unavoidable. For if the Bible is in itself so clear and plain as to require neither notes or comments to render it more intelligible, it follows inseparably, in the judgment of the Bible Society, as a body, that there is no danger to any man of mistaking its meaning, or misapplying its truths." Here is a remarkable instance of that *unsatisfactory* method of reasoning, which puts into one's premises, positions which his antagonist denies, and deriving from them conclusions which he never can admit. Bishop R. might reason until doomsday, and never convince a friend of the Bible Society by logic like this. When measures of this kind are resorted to for the purpose of gaining an advantage, it is treating them very mildly to call them *unfair*. We will not say, that when bishop R. ascribed principles to the Bible Society, which they do not hold, that *he knew better*. We can account for his *bad* reasoning very satisfactorily to ourselves, on the supposition that *he did not know any better*; and we had rather believe that he was in ignorance and error, than that he *knowingly* misstated the

principle which he opposed. The bishop is not infallible: he does not pretend to it—he will therefore bear with us, if we impute to bad reasoning, what more violent men are accustomed to impute to bad faith. Sir, *you knew no better*. But indeed, sir, it never entered into the mind of the Bible Society, that the scripture requires neither notes nor comments to make it *more* intelligible: not one of its members ever dreamed, we dare say, that there is no danger to any man of mistaking its meaning. The Bible Society is a *company* formed for the distribution of the scriptures alone. This supposes neither more nor less than this, that it is an advantage to a man to possess the Bible, if he has no other means of religious instruction. And this is the proposition which the enemy of the Bible Society ought to set himself to prove, viz. You do an injury by giving the Bible, without giving also other means of obtaining salvation. But we have seen no one calling himself a christian, who is prepared to meet the position in this plain and direct form.

The utter weakness and injustice of this allegation against the Bible Society may be shewn by a case which involves no prejudice or party spirit. Suppose that there should occur within the diocese of North Carolina a time of extreme scarcity. The wealthy people of that respectable state, of all denominations—for charity is not exclusive—would probably unite in an association to relieve the distress, and prevent the poor from starvation. Suppose farther, that the projectors of this benevolent enterprise, considering the extent of the misery to be relieved, and their limited resources, should resolve that the society would undertake to furnish the suffering poor with *nothing but bread*, what would be thought of him who should rail at this association, and endeavor to bring odium on it, by charging it as a body, with holding the opinion that the poor ought to have neither meat nor salt with their bread? Suppose still farther, that it were known as far as the respectable state of North Carolina is known, that the members of this great benevolent society were united in other smaller societies, of different names, but yet for the express purpose of affording other aliment besides bread, and that they were equally zealous in this work of benevolence as in the other, giving salt, and meat, and vegetables, &c. as they could, what would every body think of the *sanity* of that man, who, in the face of plain facts, and repeated denials, and in the very teeth of common sense, would persist in the declaration, “You associate only for the purpose of giving bread to the poor; and as a body you maintain that they ought to have nothing else”—But, my dear sir, we do give them meat as we can—“I don’t care—what your private sentiments are, or what your practice is; as a society, you declare that the poor can thrive and labor just as well with *bread* alone, as with bread, salt, meat and vegetables.”—Precisely such, as it appears to us, is the wonderful mistake, and the equally wonderful pertinacity and confidence of bishop R. in relation to the principle of the Bible Society. Yet so is he blinded by party feelings, as to *know no better*—and so are many others blinded as to think this argument “unanswerable.”—How often must it be repeated, that the Bible Society principle assumes nothing but that it is a good work to furnish the whole human family with the Bible?

This assumption does, indeed, imply the SUFFICIENCY of the scriptures. Let us, therefore, hear bishop Ravenscroft on this subject.

But here again he writes with marvellous obscurity; which renders it extremely difficult to understand precisely what his settled opinions are. In the extract made above, the Bible Society is charged with holding "that the Bible requires no extraneous helps to understand it aright, and that it is exclusively sufficient for its own interpretation." At page 85, the charge is, that "the Bible Society principle asserts the sufficiency of the scriptures for salvation, without the church, the ministry, and the sacraments."

And in another place, he *right curiously* explains to us what he means by the sufficiency of the Scriptures. As this is a very striking and peculiarly characteristic passage, we are afraid to abridge it, lest we should unintentionally mistake its meaning. Our readers must have the opportunity of judging for themselves.

'But, "we maintain the sufficiency of the scriptures," unquestionably, and even their exclusive sufficiency—which is the error charged to the "no comment" principle, and you are drawn out to defend. But their sufficiency to what? To the "efficient communication of spiritual instruction "without the ordinances of the church?" If this is your meaning, as it certainly is of the "no comment" principle, I consider it subversive of all revealed religion, being plainly contrary to the word of God.—If it is not your meaning, as I believe it is not, you ought to have been more explicit.—Neither yourself, nor any other, maintains more absolutely than I do, the sufficiency of Scripture; but it is their sufficiency to make them "wise unto salvation," not to save them. It is their sufficiency to direct men what they must do to be saved. It is their sufficiency, as an infallible rule of faith and manners, when truly interpreted and followed. It is their sufficiency, to direct and bring sinners to Christ for life and salvation, in the external appointments of the church, the ministry and the sacraments—and not their sufficiency, as a substitute for these integral parts in the plan of salvation.

'But while I maintain their full sufficiency for all these purposes, I also maintain that they are not in such wise sufficient, that men cannot be mistaken or misled, in drawing from them their true meaning.—I therefore assert, against the "no comment" principle, the *utility* and the *necessity*, of explanations, illustrations, expositions, enforcements of their sense, by notes and comments, not only in the literary meaning of these words, but in the higher, equally just and more profitable application of them to the ordinances of the Gospel, as alone giving life and power, and assurance to the word. This is the sense, and the only sense, in which the Scriptures are considered insufficient to their own interpretation, by either the Bishop of Limerick, or the Bishop of North Carolina.'—pp. 88, 89.

As to the first sentences in this extract, we can only say, *Davus non Œdipus*—we have no skill in solving enigmas, or interpreting mysterious, oracular sentences; and we much doubt whether we could make out the meaning here, even if we had old *Vincentius Lirinensis* to help us. But that we may come to the truth in regard to this important subject, let us try to get at the precise meaning of the word *sufficiency*. It implies the idea of suitableness or adaptation to a purpose; and when appropriated, as it generally is to means, or causes, it signifies their adequateness to accomplish the end in view. The force of the term, in correct language, is never carried farther. A sufficient cause, in physics, is a cause which accounts for the phenomena: a sufficient argument, in logic, is one

which proves the truth. When the Bible Society principle, then, assumes, as we admit that it does, the sufficiency of the Scriptures; it of course assumes their sufficiency, their adequateness to accomplish the purpose for which they are distributed. What is this purpose? The constitution of no Bible Society that we have ever seen, gives an answer to this question. That noble institution, the British and Foreign Bible Society, simply states, that "the sole object shall be, to encourage a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures, without note or comment"—and says not a single word as to the design. As far as our recollection serves us, this example has been followed by all other Societies of any importance throughout the world. But it would be monstrous to suppose that so many associations have been formed without some purpose to be accomplished by the distribution of the Bible. Well, what was it? Let us suppose that the members, or if the bishop prefers the phrase, that the Society as a body, believed that the Scriptures are sufficient "to make men wise unto salvation;" sufficient "to direct men what they must do to be saved;" and for this purpose engaged in the distribution of the Bible; why should bishop R. condemn and oppose them? Is it not a work of christian love; of true benevolence, to "direct men what they must do to be saved?" Our furious antibiblist, as "absolutely as any one can do, maintains the sufficiency of the Scriptures" for this purpose. How then, according to his own opinions, can he be justified in his unexpected, and violent opposition to the Bible Society? We venture to say that not a friend of the Bible Society in Europe or America expects more from the Bible than to "make men wise unto salvation." We never heard of one who carried his views of the sufficiency of the Scriptures farther than this.

But it is evident that the bishop uses words in an uncommon sense; and that he has some very queer notions for a Protestant, or he never would have talked in the strange way he has done. Let the reader look at the passage quoted above, once more. Let him consider the positive and negative statements there made, and wonder. The Scriptures are sufficient,—To make men wise unto salvation—not to save them—to direct men what they must do to be saved—infallibly to regulate faith and manners when truly interpreted and followed—to direct and bring sinners to Christ in the external appointments of the church, the ministry, and the sacraments. And they are *not* sufficient as substitutes for those integral parts of the plan of salvation, the church, ministry and sacraments—not in such wise sufficient, that men cannot be mistaken, or misled, in drawing from them their true meaning. And therefore the bishop asserts against the no comment principle, the utility and necessity of *explanations, illustrations, expositions, enforcements, &c. &c.*—Who will deny that here is *copia verborum*, if not *lucidus ordo*? But did any one ever so waste his strength in beating the air? Who ever said that the scriptures could save men—or that they were substitutes for the sacraments—or that they could not be mistaken? No friend of the Bible Society ever uttered such a sentiment, we venture to say, or ever thought of such folly. While the bishop then is laying about him so vehemently, he does not touch us. We

only protest against the deception here unintentionally practised, in making believe that while he is knocking to pieces his own met of straw, he is cudgelling, or (we believe the term is,) "fisting" our reviewer, or any other friend of the Bible cause.

But it is evident that the bishop means something more than is at the first glance apparent; because, he says, in opposition to the Bible Society, that the Scriptures are not *sufficient to save men*;—and he lays great stress on the opinion, that they are not substitutes for these "integral parts of the plan of salvation, the church, ministry, and sacraments; nay he says that the sacraments alone give "life and power, and assurance to the word." He had previously maintained that "notes and comments were essential to the right understanding of the Scriptures, and to a just application of its life-giving truths." He may be considered, then, in relation to the sufficiency of the Scriptures, as maintaining two negative propositions.

1. That the Scriptures are in such wise insufficient, that no man, without notes and comments can rightly understand them, and apply their truths, so as to cherish a warranted hope of salvation.

2. That the plan of salvation consists of four "integral parts."

1. The Holy Scriptures.

2. The church. [Quere—How will bishop R. define *the church*, in this connexion.]

3. The ministry [consisting of bishops, priests and deacons.]

4. The Sacraments, namely, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

And either of these being wanting, the whole plan is marred, so as to be inefficient for salvation.

We must be pardoned for refusing to subscribe to these dogmas. They are unsupported by evidence—they derogate from the honor of God's word—take away the right of private judgment—subvert the liberties of men—give to the church (i. e. the clergy) a power which God has never given, and, in a word, are highly injurious to the best interests of society.

1. We deny that notes and comments are *essential* to the right understanding of the Bible. That, in any case, is essential, without which a thing cannot be. He rightly understands the gospel, who, under the influence of its truths, repents, believes, and lives a holy life in love to God and man. If notes and comments are *essential* to a right understanding of the Bible, then no one ever did so understand it, as to repent, believe, and live a holy life, without notes and comments. But this is directly contrary to facts, as well known and as clearly established, as any facts of this kind possibly can be. Some of the most pious persons ever known, have become so, by reading the Bible without notes and comments. In a case of this kind one fact is worth a cart-load of reasons. It strengthens the argument to observe that many thousands of persons have read notes and comments, yea many have written them, and have preached the gospel, and administered the sacraments, without having ever rightly understood the Bible.

But in the next place, the Bible was clearly intended by its author for common use. Accordingly it is written in a style of remarkable plainness and simplicity. Its fundamental truths are

facts as perfectly intelligible as any other facts. So that a plain man, desirous to know the truth, may learn from that blessed book every thing necessary to make him wise to salvation. If it be alleged that there are many things, which he cannot understand; we admit it freely. So, also, there are many things which the writers of notes and comments cannot understand. But all may learn enough to let them understand what they must do to be saved.—Bishop R. admits this in his statement respecting the efficacy of the Bible. What more can notes and comments do? Can they save him? Surely bishop R. will not say that any thing in the universe can do this, but God alone. Surely then it is better, incomparably better, that men should have the Bible, than be without it. For the Bible possesses the attribute of *sufficiency*, as far as this attribute can be predicated of the means of salvation at all. For if men make the right use of the information communicated by the Bible, they will assuredly be saved. And bishop R. can say no more respecting the church, ministry and sacraments. The case is about as plain as this: Bishop R. says that *bread and meat* are *essential* to the support of human life. We deny this, and allege the fact that many have lived on bread alone. Bishop R. persists in his assertion, and says it is manifest that God intended that man should live on bread and meat; and because he cannot give both, he will give none. Well, what sort of meat will you give? Here arises a great dispute—some are for the “roast beef of Old England, &c. &c.”—Agreement is impossible—But all agree that bread is good, and are willing to distribute freely and abundantly. Bishop R., however, vehemently exclaims, “your charity is spurious—break up your Society—you pretend to give bread; and you give only flour—every man will cook it in his own way—the people will be poisoned—not a soul will be left alive!”—With humble submission, we do not think so—while *gentlemen* eat hot buttered rolls, many an honest citizen has lived, and *raised* fine hearty children on *hoeecake*. These plain, familiar illustrations, may offend the fastidious—But we employ them, because the subject has been wonderfully bewildered by the perverse ingenuity of party spirit. We close our remarks on this part of the subject with a quotation from an excellent work by *Gastrell*, formerly bishop of Chester, entitled *Christian Institutes, or the Sincere Word of God; being a plain impartial account of the whole Faith and duty of a christian, collected out of the writings of the Old and New Testament*. “For, all that is needful for us to know of the common salvation, is so plainly set forth to us, that he may run that readeth: But if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them only that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. The Scriptures then being plain and easy, so far as is necessary to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ, we ought to read them with the same sincerity with which they were written, &c.”—pa. 6.

2. We deny that the “plan of salvation” is made up of “integral parts,” so that if any one of them is wanting, the whole plan is so marred as to be inefficient. Bishop R. seems to have some

such notion as this: namely, that the church has received certain means, which are to be employed each in accomplishing a certain part of the work of salvation—thus, the Scriptures inform one what he must do to be saved—the sacraments afford the way of going to Christ—and the ministry gives assurance of salvation, or binds the source of all mercy to fulfil his promises. So that if one has only the Scriptures he can only be made wise unto salvation—but not be saved? And so of a deficiency in regard to the other “integral parts” of the plan of salvation! If he does not mean this, what does he mean? And if he does mean this, to what school of theology does he belong?

In religion, there are no *physical* influences. The whole power of the plan of salvation, in all its parts, is moral power. It is the TRUTH, made efficient by the influences of the Holy Spirit, which prepares men for heaven, by making them holy. And it is the great business of the church, to declare the truth.

Now the whole truth respecting man's salvation is revealed in Scripture. To this, none may add; from it none may take even a jot or tittle. If any human being receives the truth as it is taught in the Bible, so as to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and live a life of holiness, he shall be saved. The church, ministry and sacraments are nothing more than various means, employed for the purpose of carrying the truth to the understanding and the heart; and they have not the least degree of efficiency, except so far as they effect this purpose. It is utterly a superstitious notion to suppose that any of these means derive efficacy or virtue from the officiating priest, by the consecrating prayer. Bishop R's. reasoning is a revival of the antiquated and mischievous notion, that there is a virtue in some of the “integral parts of the plan of salvation,” without which the Bible cannot be efficient. The “church, ministry and sacraments, when used according to the intention of Christ, hold forth precisely the truths taught in the Bible, *and no others*. Now as the Bible reveals the *whole* truth, according to which sinners are saved; the Holy Spirit may make, and as far as we can judge in any such case, has made the Bible efficient to the salvation of sinners. In this sense, the friends of the Bible Society do maintain the sufficiency of the Word of God—and its exclusive sufficiency:—not indeed to save men; but under the Holy Spirit to lead them to Christ, who alone can save them. This *may be done, without any other means*. It is therefore, an unspeakable blessing to the nations of the earth to have the Bible. Bishop R. says that this opinion and the practice growing out of it is plainly contrary to the Word of God. But he has quoted no text to prove it—And he ought to remember that the time has gone by, when the word of a bishop was taken for proof.

We maintain, on the very same principles, that other means of conveying the truth to the mind of a sinner may, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, be sufficient for salvation. There are, for instance, thousands of persons in christian lands, who cannot read the Bible. But they may, by catechetical instruction, be taught the truths of revelation; they may learn to understand the signs of God's covenant, and in the use of the sacraments be prepared for

heaven. These are persons born blind and deaf, and so are cut off from the use of a large part of the means appointed; yet truth sufficient for their salvation may be communicated to their understandings. The only *essential* point is, to carry the truth to the understanding and conscience, so that men will exercise "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." When they do this, scripture gives the most positive assurance that they will be saved.

All the means appointed by the gracious Head of the Church, however, are adapted to the end proposed. He who enjoys them *all*, has the greatest advantages in regard to salvation which can be possessed. If we can send them all to others, and fail to do so, we are greatly to be blamed. But if it is impossible to send them all; it is doing a very great favor to send a *part*. And if that part contains, in "words which the Holy Spirit teacheth," the whole truth which God has revealed; then that is done, which is *sufficient* for the salvation of those who receive this gift.

How is it, then, that the Bible Society, which has engaged to perform this enterprise of love for the world, should, while it is assaulted by Infidels on one side, have to turn and defend itself against the professed advocates of christianity on the other?—We conclude the Bible Society *does not* maintain that notes and comments are unnecessary; and that there is no danger of men being misled and mistaken, without them: and it *does* maintain that the scriptures are in such wise sufficient, that from them men may learn all necessary truth, and under the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, attain unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. May God forever protect and bless the Bible Society!

II. *Whether the Bible Society holds that the church, ministry, and sacraments are unnecessary: and thus sins against the plain will of God.*

Bishop R. repeatedly brings this charge against the friends of the Bible cause. We must examine his proofs, and with this, consider his notions respecting the church, ministry and sacraments.

On page 78, (the third paragraph of the long quotation before made by us) the bishop affirms that the Bible Society principle "authorizes the conclusion that the sacraments are not necessary to give effect to the word of God." In the next paragraph, (page 79,) he affirms that "no christian can comprehend any saving benefit from the mere letter of scripture, without the sacraments:" and again, that they are "accompaniments essential to the saving effect" of the word of God. On page 88, we have the following words.

"For the *efficient* communication of spiritual instruction to mankind, God sees fit, say you, among several ways in which it might be done, to select human instrumentality, in the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments. Now, sir, does the Bible Society principle, or the Bible Society as a *body*, pay the least regard to this example? On the contrary, by expressly excluding them, "no notes or comments" the Bible alone—does it not practically reject them as necessary, and so far "nullify" them? And am I not justified for the opinion expressed in the Sermon, p. 8, that "the Bible itself was overlooked, in the clear directions which may be drawn from it, as to the only safe and effectual manner of disseminating its saving knowledge."

We are called on here to consider two questions,

1. Whether the Bible Society can be justly charged with the error of separating the Scriptures from the church, ministry and sacraments?

2. Whether the sacraments are "essential to the saving effect of the Word of God."

We request our readers to keep their eyes on the extracts which we have given from the bishop's book; and now let them turn to the third paragraph pa. 88, just noticed. We are so much afraid of not knowing exactly what bishop R. means, that we are quite shy of undertaking to abridge his language. We have found out that he *never, in any case, means* what an antagonist has proved to be a mistake as to fact, or an error as to reasoning—But what he *does mean* it is often very difficult for us to tell.

In the paragraph just preceding the one referred to, the bishop had said that the exclusion of notes and comments, was the sole reason why he raised his voice against the Bible Society. And if his demonstration is good, the reason was quite sufficient; for the principle, he says, is "demonstrably subversive of all revealed religion." Then follows the paragraph which now claims attention. In it we have an additional reason to the sole reason: and it is one of tremendous import. The Bible Society operates more extensively and more certainly against the interests of revealed religion, than by the exclusion of helps to understand the true meaning of scripture. *That* operated to the subversion of all revealed religion; but this is more extensive still: that was demonstrably true; this is more certain than demonstration. Well, what is it? "Why the Bible Society authorizes the conclusion that the sacraments are not necessary to give effect to the Word of God." But the Bible Society has never said a single syllable about the sacraments.—Nay, but not so fast—"All comments are excluded. Preaching and the *sacraments* are, in the truest sense of the word, comments on the scriptures, therefore, the Bible Society principle excludes the sacraments."—And therefore, again, the Bible Society principle reaches further than the subversion of all revealed religion, and this is more certain than demonstration! But perhaps the words *more certainly*, refer not to the demonstration of the evil, but to the effect of the principle: if so, then we have this writer affirming that the exclusion of the sacraments, "which are in the truest sense of the word *comments* on the scripture" must be much more extensively and certainly injurious, than the exclusion of notes and *comments*! The preacher tells us that this consequence from the Bible Society principle was stated and urged in his sermon; but that not even a plausible answer has yet been given to this part of his argument. Perhaps the reason is that nobody has ever yet fully comprehended the meaning of the right reverend prelate. We however, will try our hand, under peril of an additional failure.

But first we must thank the bishop for the discovery, new indeed to us, that the sacraments are comments on the scripture. A comment is, according to common usage, an explanation, or exposition of that which is not perfectly understood, or duly appreciated. But a sacrament is a *sign*, Now when an *action* or *thing* is employed

to express ideas, there must be an agreement, or a mutual understanding between the parties communicating, as to the ideas intended to be conveyed by the *sign*. Otherwise it may be repeated thousands of times, without being understood at all. Now it is from scripture alone that we learn what meaning to attach to that sign of the righteousness of faith, denominated a sacrament. There we look for the purpose of ascertaining what truths God intended should be represented by the sacraments. It is a fearful thing to attach any other meaning to them, than that fixed on by the Head of the Church, when he instituted them. It is then much more proper to say that the scripture is a comment on the sacraments, than that the sacraments are a comment on scripture. Precisely the reverse of the bishop's saying is true, "no christian can comprehend any saving benefit from the mere letter of scripture without the sacraments."—He ought to have said "no christian can comprehend any saving benefit from the sacraments, without that explanation of them which is given by scripture.

But as the sacraments are not comments on scripture, the Bible Society principle, which only excludes *notes* and *comments*, does not exclude the sacraments.

Farther: in all that bishop R. has said on this subject, he appears to us entirely to have mistaken the true character of the Bible Society. We must therefore repeat that it is not a *church*. It therefore, as a *body*, has nothing whatsoever to do with the sacraments. It is a company, somewhat of a commercial character, formed not for profit, but for benevolence. It claims as an association no right or power, which is not possessed by every individual member. We have a right to purchase and distribute gratuitously, or at prime cost, as many Bibles as we can. Our neighbors have a right to do so too. Or we may unite our charities and do the same thing. On the very same principle, all in a county, a state, or kingdom, may adopt the same measure. What have we, in this capacity, to do with the administration of the sacraments? For all that we can see, bishop R.'s argument would be just as strongly against the publication and sale of the Bible without note or comment, by a company of Booksellers. The only difference is, that booksellers work for money; but the Bible Society works gratuitously:—the booksellers aim at profit; the Bible Society at "making men wise unto salvation." Why does not bishop R. preach sermons, and write big pamphlets to show that booksellers ought to be discountenanced in selling the Bible *alone* to any but those who have the church, ministry, and sacraments? This *Achilleian* argument against the Bible Society, as the bishop seems to think it, is utterly without force or skill. It is founded on a total misapprehension of the true character of the institution. The bishop's reasoning often reminds us of an anecdote of Diogenes, and a young man. The philosopher, on seeing a youth shooting very unskilfully with a bow, went and placed himself close by the target. To those who asked why he did this, he replied, "I am afraid that if I sit any where else, that man will shoot *me*."—While we keep close to the Bible Society, we do not think that the bishop will ever hit us.

But although this charitable company said nothing, as it was their business to say nothing about the church, ministry, and sacraments; yet in considering the good which was likely to result from their benevolent exertions, they might very well expect, that the distribution and general perusal of the Bible, would excite an earnest desire to understand its difficult parts, and lead the reader to seek for notes and comments—that, observing what is said in the sacred volume respecting the christian ministry and the privileges of the church, he would endeavor to procure for himself this blessing; and that learning from the Bible the nature of the sacraments, and the benefits derived through them, he would wish to partake of those holy ordinances.—Now what is the fact? Since the organization of the Bible Society, commentaries on the scriptures have been multiplied and extended beyond all former example. Old works have gone through new editions, and new works of this kind have been circulated to an extent really surprising. Among many of the former, we mention, Henry, Lowth, Patrick, and Whitby; and of the latter, Mant and D'Oyley, Clarke, Hewlett, and Scott. The circulation of the last work is really prodigious. We are inclined to think that since the first publication of that commentary, more copies of it have been sold, than had been of all others during the preceding fifty years. The bishop ought to rejoice in this; for Scott was a member of the true, Apostolic, episcopal church.—Would that there were thousands like him!

Moreover; ministers of the gospel have been much more sought for, and much greater efforts to increase their numbers, have been made since the organization of the Bible Society, than before.

And again; the reports of all the churches show a large increase of regular, zealous, and pious communicants.

These are facts not to be questioned. This is the way in which the Bible Society subverts revealed religion! There are no arguments like facts. They demolish bishop R.'s reasonings as Perkins' new steam-gun is said to do a fabric of pine boards.

But we are to inquire in the next place, whether the sacraments are "essential to the saving effect of the word of God."

We are obliged to consider this question, because bishop R. *assumes* the affirmative; and argues that the Bible Society is useless, and worse than useless, because it does not send the sacraments with the word. If it is true, that the Bible can produce no saving effect without the sacraments; then indeed the Society is *comparatively* of little value. We say that bishop R. *assumes* the affirmative, because he does not offer either argument or authority in its support. But let us examine this subject.

The word of God has a saving effect, when men so believe it as to be affected by its truths according to their nature; that is, when they fear the threatenings of God; obey his commands; rely on his promises; embrace his offered mercy, &c. Cannot the word of God produce this effect, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, without the Sacraments? In answering this question, we must again advert to the nature of the Sacraments. They are commonly called by Theologians, in conformity to language used by the Apostle Paul, (Rom. iv, 11.) "signs and seals of the righteousness of

faith." Now, they either have efficacy in themselves; or because, they strikingly exhibit the truth, which God blesses to the salvation of his people. If they have efficacy in themselves, or if the elements used are the *media*, through which the Holy Spirit directly conveys his blessings to the soul, without respect to the truth; then we admit the old popish doctrine of efficacy *ex opere operato*. An infant baptized by a duly authorized minister is, *ipso facto*, regenerated! A man who has received the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper, is *ipso facto*, for the time being at least, in a state of salvation! We do not charge these popish absurdities on bishop R. Doubtless he rejects them. He must then agree with us, that the efficacy of the sacraments under God, arises from this, that they give a striking representation of that truth, which God has revealed for the salvation of sinners. But in order that they may do this, we must search the scriptures, and learn the meaning of the signs appointed for this purpose. The Apostle Paul appears to us to teach this doctrine, when he speaks of those who eat and drink unworthily, because they do not discern the Lord's body. (1 Cor. xi, 29.) Without this knowledge, the sacraments will be a mere senseless show, incapable of profiting us in the least conceivable degree. A man uninstructed as to the nature and design of the Lord's Supper, might partake of it every day during his whole life, without benefit. Hence it appears that here, as in the former case, bishop R. has laid down his position wrong end foremost. It is undeniably true, that the knowledge derived from the word of God, is indispensably necessary to give to the sacraments their saving effect. We know, indeed, and do most freely admit, that when the people are well instructed, and do sincerely believe in the Lord Jesus, the signs appointed by God, carry the truth with great power to the heart. But can they do this, when men are unconverted and unbelieving?

Farther: let us suppose, what has often happened, and may happen again, unless a miracle should prevent it, that one, who has no opportunity of receiving the sacraments but yet possesses the scriptures, from diligent study of the word of God, receives the same truths which are represented by the sacraments, and relies for instance on the Saviour just as *he* does, who sees the atonement exhibited by the Lord's Supper, does not that man feel the saving effect of divine truth? Why may he not? The very same truth is set forth in the word of God, which is exhibited by the sacraments. Indeed the only difference is, that he who has both the word and the sacraments, has greater advantages than he who has only the word. But the advantage does not lie in this, that the former has more truth than the latter; he only has more means of giving efficacy to the truth.

There is another idea on this subject entertained by the bishop, which we are called on to notice. He maintains that the reception of the sacraments, from a *duly authorized minister*, (and we know his meaning here) is necessary to give to man, the assurance of salvation. And in his own peculiar style he says (pa. 39) "nor is the modern doctrine of *internal* consciousness*, and *assumed assurance*

* We must be permitted to hope that bishop R's authority will be extended by none to the English language. What distinction does he

(that sectarian opiate of deluded souls) any substitute for those *external ordinances*, which designate the covenant of mercy to redeemed man."—We think this a grievous error—we fear that it is widely prevalent; we are sure that it is deeply injurious. *Presbyterians* never think of substituting internal feelings for external observances; but, if they deserve the name, they are by far too well instructed to say or believe, that the sacraments give to *him* who receives them, the assurance that *he* will be saved. They do no such thing. They exhibit, by objects of sense, the very same truth (neither more nor less) which is taught in the word of God namely, that the *truly penitent and believing sinner* shall be saved. But how can one know that he repents and believes, but by consciousness? This is the only way by which we can possibly learn what are our mental exercises. We determine whether they are genuine or not, by comparing them and the conduct to which they lead with the word of God. The sacraments, as seals of the righteousness of faith, afford assurance of salvation, only so far as we have evidence from the sources just indicated that we are christians. And they give this assurance simply because we know from scripture that God has appointed them as his seals. To say then that a priest gives assurance of salvation by administering the sacraments; or that the sacraments assure a man that he is in covenant with God, and so in a state of salvation, is incorrect, is dangerous—It is one of those popish tendencies in bishop R's doctrine, of which he seems not to be aware.

The whole case brought into this division of the subject may be briefly stated thus—There are millions and millions in the world, who have neither the word nor the sacraments. Christians have their missionaries to preach the gospel in heathen and destitute lands. But this work goes on slowly. Of necessity, millions and millions must die, before the church can send the living preacher into all the world. But the Bible contains all the religious truth, which the missionary ever can carry to the ignorant—that truth may be read, and understood, and have saving efficacy, and give assurance of salvation, even without a preacher. Protestants believing this, and believing too, that the Bible is an admirable preparative for the way of the missionary, have, without interfering with any church matters, formed a company for sending the word of God in its purity to all the world.—And this is the plan, which a Protestant bishop has persuaded himself is contrary to the will of God, and subversive of all revealed religion. Had not bishop R. and others like him uttered this with their own mouths; and given it under their own hands, in writing, and in print, the world would have cried out, on hearing it, with an incredulous stare, "is it possible?"

On pages, 79, 80, bishop R. gives an extract from an address to the American churches, by two of our missionaries in Bombay, as testimony corroborative of his reasoning. Making a little abatement for the strong language employed by these excellent men, as

mean to make by the word *internal*, as applied to consciousness? Is there an *external* consciousness? and what is the doctrine of *assumed assurance*?

friends of the Bible cause, we have not the shadow of an objection to the sentiments contained in this address. We all admit the necessity of missionaries. No people in the world do so much for the cause of missions, as the friends of the Bible Society. Bishop R. may consult the records of the *Church Missionary Society*, of the *London Missionary Society*, of the *Scotch Missionary Society*, in *Europe*. He may then turn to all the important Societies of this kind in America; and he will find as supporters of these Institutions, the names of the very men, who have been the life and soul of the Bible cause. And it is their ardent desire that christians would *not do less for the distribution of the Bible*, but a *hundred fold more* for the sending out of missionaries. Would bishop R. assist in supporting the *American Missionaries at Bombay*? We are particularly desirous to be informed on this subject.

As bishop R. has referred to the condition of the eastern world, we should be glad to know whether he has read the life of Henry Martyn; and made himself acquainted with the history of his translation of the New Testament into the Persian language. There is much reason to believe that this work is exerting a great influence in Persia; and that the way is being prepared by it for the successful operations of Missionaries in that nation of Mahomedans.

And here, having mentioned the name of Henry Martyn, we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of expressing our admiration of his character. He was indeed a lovely christian. With talents of high order, and great attainments for his age, he had all the simplicity of a child, with the zeal and courage of an Apostle. With sufficient attachment to the forms and order of the Episcopal church, he acknowledged brotherhood with all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ. Short but brilliant was his career. Too soon, according to the feelings of his friends and of the church, did he become ripe for Heaven. They acknowledged, indeed, God's right to take him; but they universally mourned his loss. His funeral obsequies were celebrated by the whole Protestant world. We have no wish for the Episcopal church, than that all her presbyters may be like Henry Martyn. And we will add, all her bishops like bishop Porteus, the first great friend of the Bible cause. Could this wish be gratified, we should in the next place pray, that they might be multiplied an hundred fold.

III. Bishop R. maintains, that *the Bible Society encourages Heresy and Schism by declaring, in effect, that all forms of religious faith are equally safe; and maintaining that all are equally entitled to the witness of the spirit.*

This objection appears to be the favorite of our author; for he recurs to it again and again, and after his reasoning has spent its bolt, he kindles about it the fire of passion. But we believe that nobody burns but himself.

Our readers will have to turn again to the long extract, made when we began this discussion, and read as follows, "But the Bible Society, as a body, are aware of the fact." &c. Again, pp. 80, 81, in accounting for the great popularity of the Bible Society, he ascribes it to the "sanction and support which this 'no comment' principle gives to the two very prevalent delusions of the latter

day; the one, that every man may safely form his own system of faith and order in religion; the other, that all who profess and call themselves christians, no matter how separated and divided in faith, origin and order, are nevertheless members of the one spouse* and body of Christ, and ought to be acknowledged as such."

"Only acknowledge us as branches of Christ's Church, upon every thing else let us "agree to differ." But sir, the religion of the 'gospel is a *positive institution*, which Bible Societies, and sectarian professions of faith, cannot control, and mould, and model to suit their particular views, but by which they ought to and must be regulated. And a principle in religion, or connected with religion as revealed, which cannot bear being carried out to its "legitimate" consequences and results, is not of God. The wisdom of God sends us nothing in his word, or connected with his religion, of this abstract unmanageable character; beautiful in theory, impossible or injurious in practice. And the very fact, that in favor of this very principle, every shade of sectarian belief, every grade of speculative and actual unbelief, can, and does unite, is conclusive proof, that the principle is unsound, vicious, and ultimately subversive of all revealed religion. Each sees in it something favorable to its particular views, none perceive in it any thing inimical to its distinctive tenets, all find in it something which may be turned to account, in the rivalry for accession to particular denominations in a divided christian world; while in their aggregated capacity of a "no comment" Bible Society, they flatter and greet each other with the name of Christians. Deistical christians, Unitarian christians, Universalist christians, Quaker christians, Independent christians, Congregational christians, Presbyterian christians, Methodist christians, Baptist christians, Lutheran christians, names without number christians, Nothingarian christians, and alas, alas! some Episcopalian christians, all meet here upon the same level, all unite to send the naked scriptures into the world; all being aware, that in the confusion of mind, as to its real and single truth, consequent on existing divisions as to what is truth, each may give that gloss to the discoveries and doctrines of the Bible, which shall suit its own views."—pp. 80, 81.

We shall certainly have to protest against the "no comment principle," as applied to bishop Ravenscroft's writings. We have never, in all our little reading, met with a book which has greater need of "explanations, illustrations, expositions, and enforcements" of its "sense," than this same work, which we are now reviewing. The last sentence of this extract calls loudly for the assistance of some modern *Vincentius Lirinensis*. But we must let it pass.

On page 83, the bishop admits, that "all profess to derive their religion from the scripture; and (he proceeds) I verily believe they think they do so." He considers it "a debt due to real charity, to consider all denominations as acting with integrity in this matter, that they do verily believe, not only that they have the warrant of scripture, but that they have it in such wise as to be safer, as concerns their souls, under this construction of scripture, than they could be under any other construction of it." "And (he adds emphatically) your charity may go farther if it can."—Alas! we can make no comparison between *our* charity and that of the bishop. But we hold it to be a debt due to *truth* to admit that bishop R. does verily believe that the ministrations of men can give "assurance to the word" of God. If then, we might also be indulged in the folly

* Should there be found any to maintain this monstrous opinion, we are pretty certain that they would not allow bishop R. to express it for them—*members of the one spouse!* We do not believe that *any* friend of the Bible Society would use such language as this.

of boasting, we would say, that our love of truth seems to be about even with the bishop's charity. But he proceeds, and says, very justly, that this sincerity does not prove that these denominations are right. Nor does his sincerity prove that he is right. He, however, follows up these remarks, in such terms as these, and we give them as a precious specimen of the style and spirit of our diocesan.

"The darkest and most preposterous fanatic that ever lived, equally with the more dangerous heresiarch, and orthodox christian—John Bockholdt, and George Fox—John Calvin, and John Wesley—Anna Lee, and Joanna Southcote—Archbishop Cranmer, and Bishop Ridley, all professed to derive their religion from the Bible, all claimed the scriptures as with them. Yet forever and forever, must it not hold good—that whether right or wrong, true or false, religion or no religion, must depend on scripture, well or ill interpreted, understood and applied? These all could not be right, some must be radically wrong. Yet, according to your argument, upon the principle of a "no comment" Bible Society—the very delusion which abandons the scriptures to any and every sort of interpretation, "is ground where all can meet," yes and be acknowledged too, as faithful christians. For, if this was not a consequence, practically, of the principle, your numbers would be woefully thinned—But so it is. In these Societies, the Deist and the Trinitarian, the Calvinist and the Arminian, the deniers of the divinity of Christ and its defenders, the asserters of universal salvation and the teachers of eternal punishment, the Quaker and the Churchman, the Presbyterian and the Episcopalian, the Baptist and the Pedo-Baptist, the true believer and the Infidel of every shade, can find "one calm and peaceful place" wherein "to indulge the delightful emotions of *unbounded benevolence, and unmingled confidence*." And is such wild and visionary declamation, tricked out in the tinsel of a spurious charity—ventured upon the public intelligence, by a Divine and a Theologian of the nineteenth century? Are we from this to understand, that there is unmingled confidence betwixt the Presbyterians and the Unitarians? Or is there some talismanic charm in this Bible Society principle, which fosters "unbounded benevolence," while it interdicts the orderly prelude of joint prayer to God, for his blessing on their joint work of enlightened charity? Or, is the jesuitical maxim, that the end justifies the means, once more in operation?"—pp. 83, 84.

Should the bishop publish another book on this subject, we shall expect to hear of its having been made "demonstrably certain" that the Bible Society is a new revelation of the *man of sin*; or possibly that it is the *great beast* of the Apocalypse, with *seven heads and ten horns*.

But what is more amusing than this even, is the delightful specimen of his *charity*, (of which the bishop spoke in *rather* boastful terms,) given in the sentence, "Are we from this to understand, that there is unmingled confidence between the Presbyterians and Unitarians?"* It may gratify the kindness of our prelate to learn that this stroke diverted us excessively.

* A poor papist once applied to his Priest, with an offer of money and a request that he would *curse* his enemy for him. The priest replied that he ought not to curse, but pray for his enemies. "What shall I gain by that?" Why, the scripture says that in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. "Shall I do so? Then I *will* pray for him *enough*."—On coming to this resolution, he immediately kneeled down in the church, and began to pray very earnestly; and continued his posture and his supplications, until the Priest had got through his service, and wished to retire. Finding that the man continued at prayer, the Priest became impatient, and interrupted him, with—Come, you have prayed enough for this time—"O!" rejoined the other, "I wish to burn him to a cinder, before I am done with him."

After a good deal more on this general subject, which we have no room to notice, on page 86, the bishop clenches his arguments and his rhetoric with, what it is due to truth or charity to admit that he verily believed was a regular syllogism.

“Many *opposite systems* of religious profession are derived from the Bible, in which “the pious of every name have felt the *power* of divine truth, and know the preciousness of the Bible,” and are saved:

But no saving knowledge can be drawn from the scriptures, but by the Holy Ghost:

Therefore, the witness of the Spirit of God, is equally given to opposite interpretations of scripture.

And this, I hope, will satisfy your desire for a regular syllogism, p. 253—will teach you to look to the consistency and agreement of the principles you advocate, with the reasonings you resort to—will lead you to be sorry for your so frequent and needless attacks on that which, if you have either piety or taste, you must love, the Book of Common Prayer.”— p. 86.

There are many other passages in this part of the bishop's book of similar import; we have no room to quote them; nor can it be necessary that we should do so. It is clear enough that the defender of the Bible Society against bishop R.'s attack, is called to consider these questions. Does that body hold,

1. That all systems of religious faith which men have pretended to derive from the Bible, are equally “safe for salvation?”

2. That all are equally entitled to the witness of the Holy Spirit?

3. And as a result of all this, does it encourage schism, heresy, division and separation without end?

1. It is surprising, when a man is determined on it, how high a building he can erect on a single point. The misery of the case is, that the materials being all very light, the first wind overturns the whole superstructure, *et ibi omnis labor effusus*. The Bible Society distributes the Bible “without note or comment”—therefore,—what? We should be perfectly willing to rest this whole matter, on the answer that any person of plain common sense would give to this question. Nay, we would venture to risk our cause on the answer of an intelligent child of twelve years.—We would say, “here my dear boy, here is a book that we believe will do you good, if you will take and read it—It is for this purpose we give it—Take this Bible then—it is just the Bible and nothing else, the pure word of God”—And on his bowing and giving in turn his “*thank ye,*” we would say, “Now, my little fellow, what do you think is the reason we give you this book, without any explanation to help you to understand it?”—Our life upon it, his answer would imply this—“Because you think the Book plain enough for me to read and understand.” What, the whole? “No, not the whole of this large book; but a great deal of it: enough to make me a good man.” And should we ask him, “Do you think that we give you just this book, because we suppose that it makes no odds what opinions you derive from it?”—He would surely answer, “Certainly not—if you intend to do me good by your gift.” The question would excite surprise in any unsophisticated mind.

But bishop R. seems to think, that the union of many individuals belonging to different denominations, in the Bible Society, impresses on it that character which he reprobrates. But his demonstrations

have not yet convinced us; we wonder that they have convinced himself. Let us admit that the members of the Bible Society have that party-feeling, the absence of which in a christian seems to go so far beyond the bishop's conception; that they unite for the purpose of engaging in a "disgraceful scramble for proselytes." These indeed are strange suppositions; but let us make them—and what then? Why, the Episcopalian believes that the Bible is on his side—so of the Presbyterian—so of the Methodist—so of the Baptist—and so of all the rest. Each one unites then, on the belief, that the distribution of the Bible will promote his own cause. How, then can his union with the others be construed into a declaration, that it is no matter what opinions a man derives from the Bible? We should think it sounder logic to conclude, that the different denominations are so sure that the Bible favors their opinions, that others also would derive the same opinions from that source of religious instruction.

All intelligent christians believe that *learning and science* are excellent handmaids to religion. We, as Presbyterians, believe still farther, that they favor our denomination. Episcopalians and others entertain the same opinion, in relation to their influence in favor of their persuasion. Unbelievers maintain, that learning and science are enemies to what they misname, superstition. These different descriptions of persons all wish to promote the same object, but with different views. Now there is in the state of N. Carolina, a flourishing literary institution, the common property of the citizens of that state, and supported by them on different principles; all, however, admitting the value of learning. Will bishop R. and his followers in North Carolina, adopt the spirit of his objection against the Bible Society, and denounce and endeavor to pull down the University? Will they say, "This institution is supported by Infidels, and Baptists, and Methodists, and Presbyterians, and Nothingarians, and alas! alas, by some Episcopalians, who by this union in support of the University, declare that it is a matter of no consequence what direction may be given to learning and science; for according to their principle, all the uses which possibly can be made of it are equally beneficial?" Will they maintain that this union in support of the University goes, directly, to the subversion of learning and science in North Carolina? Will they maintain that it implies, in all who are thus united, the opinion that Infidels, Baptists, Methodists, &c. are all equally right? We presume that not a man in the Diocese would think and act thus preposterously.—Well, what is the difference between this case, and that of the Bible Society? It certainly would be more pleasant to co-operate with men who are all of one mind with us—But as this is not to be expected, we may all co-operate on this principle, that learning is a good thing; and although it may be abused, yet it is better for the people to be with it than without it. And on this principle, every friend to North Carolina rejoices to see gentlemen of different persuasions co-operating in the building up and support of a valuable and flourishing seat of learning in that state. And so all who duly honor the word of God, and take enlarged views of the condition of the world, rejoice in the formation and success of the Bible Society.

But the bishop maintains (p. 77,) with a pertinacity truly amazing, that the no comment principle recognises the equal truth and safety of all the opposite opinions derived from the Bible; and he endeavors to throw us on one horn or another of a dilemma, by which he seems to think we must certainly be gored. "For of necessity, says he, the Society must either believe that all varieties of religious profession drawn from the Bible, are equally right, in the sense of being equally safe; or they must believe that some of them are unscriptural and unsafe. If the former of the alternatives [we suppose he means the former part of the alternative,] is adopted, the principle is demonstrated to be productive of divisions in religion without limit. If the latter shall be resorted to, it shows the principle to be justly liable to the charge of withholding from the Bible what is essential to a right understanding of its contents."

We have never seen any thing more harmless in all our lives—it is as gentle as "any sucking dove." The Bible Society as a body, being, as we have shown, a company formed exclusively for the wider distribution of the Bible, is obliged to believe nothing but that the fair, natural, obvious construction of the Bible will bring before the minds of men truth, which may make them wise unto salvation. As a body, they maintain no other opinion whatsoever. Just as a company of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, &c. formed for the promotion of learning, are obliged to believe as a company, nothing but this, that learning is beneficial. And even should the Society make the extravagant declaration supposed in the dilemma, it would be only the declaration of a company without authority—it would prove nothing but the extravagance of the men who made it. As for the Bible, it would remain just the same, a full expression of the counsel of God; in all fundamental matters so plain, that every humble inquirer after truth, may learn the way to heaven. Bishop R. has shown that, in his deliberate opinion, the Bible fully supports Episcopacy. He acts under this conviction in all his ministrations. The members of his vestry and his church, give sufficient evidence publicly, that this is their conviction also.—Should they join the Bible Society of North Carolina, do they for a moment imagine that any body in the state would suspect them of believing that people might as well be Presbyterians as Episcopalians? Would it not rather be said, "These people begin to think that the Bible is on their side—and that its circulation will promote their cause? May not similar remarks in some degree be applied to Presbyterians and others; even to all the members of the Bible Society? Can that then be true of the whole body, which is not true of any of its parts, or of all of them? We wonder much that the bishop is not afraid lest his opposition to the Bible cause, will excite the suspicion that the Bible, in its plain obvious sense, will not lead men to *the church*?" The Bible Society is not obliged then to believe what bishop R. thinks it must. So one horn of the dilemma is broken. And should that Institution deny the extravagant opinion before adverted to, it would not forsake its own principles. There is not a shadow of inconsistency between saying, "You may not wrest the scriptures to favor your own passions and prejudices;" and saying "Take the Bible as it is, in its

plain meaning, and it will make you wise unto salvation." And so we have here a dilemma, with *no horns*.

In ringing changes on this subject the bishop (as may be seen from the extract made from pp. 80, 81,) undertakes to account for the popularity of the Bible Society. It gives countenance he says to two prevalent delusions.

1. That every man may form his own system of faith and order in religion.

2. That all who call themselves christians ought to be acknowledged as such, no matter how widely they differ.

On these points we must offer some remarks, to which we entreat the attention of our readers.

1. As to the first; we have a very fair opportunity of retorting on bishop R. his own words in another place. The terms used by him, taken in their unrestricted sense, imply that it is a prevalent opinion among the friends of the Bible Society, that every man may safely form his own system of faith, whether he refers to the word of God or not. And we might say to him, "Sir you knew better." But we take no advantages of this sort. Bishop R. meant to say that it is a prevalent error, that men may safely form for themselves a system of faith from the word of God. In relation to this subject, the Bible Society is bound by its principle to maintain the following position; that the word of God is so plain, that he who honestly inquires for truth, may learn it from the Scriptures. That this is no delusion, we have already shown, when treating on the sufficiency of the sacred writings. If a man has no helps in understanding them, diligent reading, and humble prayer for the influences of the Holy Spirit, will enable him to find the way to Heaven. But he who has access to notes and comments, to the church and the ministry, yet proudly relies on his own understanding, slights his privileges, and runs great risk of falling into fatal errors. He who enjoys most means of understanding the word of God, is, *ceteris paribus*, in the most advantageous situation. But in every case, one must, with such helps as he has, form his own system of faith for himself, under his convictions of truth, and his responsibility to his Maker. Otherwise, what is his religion, but the religion of his priest? If the man, *who transacts business between us and God*, could in the day of judgment answer for us, and bear the consequences of our errors, then the opposite plan would be safe. But as long as religion is a *personal* concern, every man must judge for himself as well as he can. Every man, indeed, is in danger of being mistaken, no matter what his advantages are. But this danger does not arise from the obscurity of the word of God in matters essential to salvation, but from the blindness of the human mind, and the passions of the human heart. Every man then ought to remember his responsibility. Yet we *must judge* for ourselves. And this right of private judgment is one of the fundamental principles of Protestantism; it is indispensable to the enjoyment of religious liberty; it is implied in the very nature of religion. Every man, then, must, with the best help he can obtain, form his own system of faith from the word of God; and if he may not do it *safely* in this way; he cannot do it safely at all. And this, so far from being a delusion, is an all-important truth.

2. The delusion that all who profess to be christians, are christians indeed, however opposite their religious sentiments, is not one that belongs to the Bible Society. The principle of the association is, that the Bible plainly teaches the truth; and that, if it is put into the hands of men, they *may* from it learn the truth. And it does appear to us unaccountable, that any should force from this simple principle the conclusion, that all, believe what they may, are equally right. We would ask, does not the most plain and natural construction of the Bible, give its true meaning? Is it not much more probable that a man in search of saving knowledge, will derive the true system from the Bible, than a false one? If bishop R. denies this, then he must suppose that the word of God is so framed, although its design is to give instruction, that it is as likely to lead men wrong as to direct them in the right way. And if he rejects, as surely he does with horror, an opinion of this sort; how can he charge the Bible Society with holding the enormous absurdity, that all religious opinions, however opposite, are equally sound and safe? The Society circulates a Book, the fair and natural construction of which discovers the truth; yet they are charged, in effect, with indifference to truth. It may as well be said that a benevolent association formed for the purpose of supplying the poor with flour in a time of scarcity, is indifferent whether they mix poison with it, when they make it into bread. It would not alter the case, if in this association, there were a few individuals, who had got into the strange habit of mixing poison with their own bread; provided they mixed none with the flour given to the poor.

In pursuing this subject, if bishop R. goes to the bottom of it, he so "muddles the waters," that we cannot see him. "But sir, says he, the religion of the gospel is a positive institution, which Bible Societies, and sectarian professions of faith cannot control, and mould, and model to suit their particular views, but by which they ought to, and must be regulated." If we understand this, it means that the gospel contains a system of *truth*; and men, to partake of its benefits, must embrace the truth as revealed, and not warp it to suit their prejudices. Very good! But how does this prove that the Bible, which reveals this system, may not safely be put into the hands of men? He goes on; "And a principle in religion or connected with religion as revealed, which cannot bear being carried out to its "legitimate consequences and results, is not of God. The wisdom of God sends us nothing in his word, or connected with his religion, of this abstract unmanageable character; beautiful in theory, impossible or injurious in practice." What consequences, or results, or abstractions, does the right reverend preacher mean. And how does this prove that the Gospel in its purity ought not to be distributed? We do wish that the writer had given us a *regular syllogism* here.

But the author proceeds and waxes more vehement as he advances, until we come to the wonderful declamation respecting Deistical Christians, Unitarian Christians, Universalist Christians, &c. &c.; and (on page 83) respecting John Bockholt and George Fox;—John Calvin and John Wesley—Anna Lee and Joanna Southcote—Archbishop Cranmer, and Bishop Ridley.—[The Bible Society

beast will "beat that of Revelation all to nothing." "These, says the bishop, all professed to derive their religion from the Bible."—Indeed! We had always understood that several of them were pretenders to inspiration; and set their "inward light" above the Bible. "Yet forever and forever, must it not hold good—that whether right or wrong, &c. must depend on Scripture well or ill interpreted, &c.?" Beyond a doubt it must. "These all could not be right, some must be radically wrong."—Admitted, again. But pray, now, tell us, right reverend sir, which of all these were *radically* wrong. Were Calvin, and Wesley, and Cranmer, and Ridley *radically* wrong? Or is this to be said of Bockholt and Fox, Lee and Southcote? We admit that some were radically wrong; and that none were in every thing infallibly right. But the *radically* wrong, were precisely those very persons, who rejected the Bible, and pretended to a new illumination. We doubt very much indeed, whether the bishop can find, in all the records of ecclesiastical history, and amidst all the varieties of Christian belief, any denomination bearing the name Christ, which has adhered to the plain meaning of Scripture, and yet has been *radically* wrong. But of the rest; some have been misled by substituting their own reason for the wisdom of God; others by implicit belief in the Fathers; and others by fanatical impulses and wild notions about inspiration. The very instances adduced by bishop R. give strong support to the Bible Society. And let him know, that the very best preservative against *radical* error, is the general circulation of the Holy Scriptures. Had the Bible Society been originated at the Reformation, and pursued its operations successfully, we venture to say that there would have been no place for these wild and dark fanatics in the protestant world. And we beg leave to take this opportunity of saying that history and experience present to the church and the world this alternative—*Either the religious liberty of the people must be taken from them and conscience must be put into the keeping of priests; or the Bible must be generally circulated, and the people accustomed to judge for themselves.* In other words, the people, with the Bible in their hands must be a check on the ministers of religion, must bring their doctrine to the standard of God's word; or as the Apostle says, must try the spirits; otherwise that spiritual tyranny will be revived, which degrades the understanding, which debases the whole man, and brings him to believe that his priest can make his God for him, can pardon his sins, and give him a passport to heaven.

There is not the shadow of a foundation for the charge of delusion on the Bible Society. But the bishop himself labors under a sad mistake as to the reason why we wish that all denominations of Christians should co-operate in this work of benevolence. We refer to the whole work under review, but especially to pages 80, and 93, to justify us in the following statement. Bishop R. thinks that the order of bishops (in his sense of the word) is essential to the very being of the Church; and that *that* part of the christian world which is connected with bishops constitutes *the church*; while all the rest are without a ministry, without sacraments, without warranted hopes, and *with* nothing to depend on, but the unwarranted mercies of God. He knows that they whom it gratifies him

to call *Dissenters*, acknowledge protestant Episcopalians to be a branch of the true church; while he and his high church brethren refuse to acknowledge them. He does not know, perhaps, what the celebrated archbishop Tillotson said respecting a similar case between the Roman Catholics and the Church of England. "It only proves, said he, that the Church of England is more liberal than the Church of Rome." Bishop R. manifestly, takes it for granted that the *Dissenters* are not perfectly satisfied, or that they would be better satisfied; with their forms and order, if Episcopalians would acknowledge them to be a part of the true Church; and he seems to suppose that this zeal for "promiscuous, no comment" Bible Societies, arises from what appears to be a sort of acknowledgment of other denominations made by Episcopalians, when they become members of such Societies. And this too, we verily believe, constitutes one main reason of the opposition of high-churchmen to Bible Societies. Their conduct speaks this language; "If we unite with others in disseminating the Bible, we shall abandon our high ground, and acknowledge them to be members of the church, as well as ourselves. And this is what they wish."—But in good sooth, it is not so. We do indeed acknowledge Episcopalians as members of the Church of Christ; and when they will allow us, we delight to meet them as brethren. But we acknowledge that bishops have authority to ordain, &c. not because they are bishops, but because they are priests—that is presbyters. They have authority then, precisely for the same reason, that we have authority. These our convictions are founded on the plain meaning of the word of God; and the acknowledgment of our church membership by all the men in the world, could not add "an atom's force" to our assurance. But we should rejoice in the event, as evidence of the increase of truly christian feelings; as an omen for good to the church; as a token of the hastening on of the day of glory, promised by God, and prayed for by his people.—It is in vain, we know, to hope that men, whose views of religion are imperfect, and whose souls are narrowed by bigotry, will enter into the feelings of those who look more to the effect produced by truth, than to the form in which it is exhibited; and who value external observances precisely as they are suited to make men humble, benevolent and holy. But we believe that the time is coming, when the disciples of Christ throughout the world, will love truth and holiness so much, that wherever they shall see the one so embraced as to produce the other, they will rejoice in it, no matter by what forms this truth may have been exhibited and commended. Then will the church appear in all her glory. It is for the hastening on of a consummation so devoutly to be wished, that we long to see Christians acknowledging each other, and co-operating, wherever they can do so, without a sacrifice of principle. And if they *cannot* do so, because forms and modes are, in their judgment, principles of religion; why, we do not wish them to *violate*, but we wish them to *inform* their consciences.

Farther; we do ourselves fully believe that all those christian societies, which, in the spirit of party, or on account of an undue stress on modes of ordination, baptism, &c. &c. refuse to co-operate

in building up the kingdom of the Redeemer, will be destroyed "by the breath of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming."—To high churchmen, then, we wish a better mind, for their own sakes, not for our own; for the honor of our common religion, not for the benefit of a sect or a party.

2. As the Bible Society does not hold that all systems pretended to be derived from the Bible are equally safe; so, *it does not hold that all are equally entitled to the witness of the Holy Spirit.*

There is an intimate connexion between these two points, so that much that may be said on one, equally applies to the other. We cannot, however, speak with any certainty respecting the extent of the bishop's meaning here. It may be this,—God, in the gracious constitution of his covenant, has promised the Holy Spirit to make the truth effectual to the sanctification of his people. Now the "no comment principle" maintains that opposite systems of religious belief are equally "safe for salvation." But no system of religious belief is effectual without the influences of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the "no comment principle" maintains that opposite systems are according to the promise of God equally entitled to the influences of the Spirit. Bishop R. may carry his meaning farther than we should in using the words above; and make a *system of religious belief* include the external form of the church, as well as the doctrine embraced by it, and taught in it.

Now we might easily despatch this topic in very few words; thus—The Bible Society, as we have shown, does not hold that opposite systems of religious faith are equally safe; and therefore it does not hold that they, who embrace opposite systems, are equally warranted to expect the "witness of the spirit."—But in treating this part of the subject bishop R. touches many things, which we also must handle. And as he sums up all that he has to say, in the way of argument, on this topic in a syllogism, we may as well as not, turn to that at once.

"Many opposite systems of religious profession are derived from the Bible, in which 'the pious of every name have felt the *power* of divine truth, and know the preciousness of the Bible,' and are saved.

But no saving knowledge can be drawn from the scriptures, but by the Holy Ghost.

Therefore, the witness of the Spirit of God, is equally given to opposite interpretations of Scripture."

"And this I hope will satisfy your desire for a regular syllogism—will teach you to look to the consistency and agreement of the principles you advocate, with the reasonings you resort to—will lead you to be sorry for your so frequent and needless attacks on that which, if you have either piety or taste, you must love the book of Common Prayer."—p. 86.

It is always painful to us to disappoint the high hopes of any fellow creature. But there is no help for it.—*This syllogism* has not done one of the things which the bishop so confidently expected to be achieved by it. It does not *satisfy* us; because it is not a regular syllogism.—It does not *teach* us; because we have *not* been guilty of the inconsistency charged.—It does not *make us sorry*; because

we have not yet made the alleged attack. Yet we are sorry too—sorry to see a bishop put forth a form of words like that, and call them a regular syllogism; and appear to consider it as triumphant reasoning. A regular syllogism! We should as soon mistake a brown loaf for a shoulder of mutton.

We reject the syllogism for two reasons.

1. The affirmative proposition contained in the *major*, is denied. Our logician intends to defeat our reasoning in favor of the Bible Society, by reducing us to an absurdity. He therefore affirms that we maintain this proposition; that opposite systems of faith produce the same pious feelings; or that opposite doctrines contain that divine truth which the pious of every name feel. *Negatur major*—this we utterly deny.

In our former Review, we had said that Protestants are divided into a number of different denominations, chiefly by matters of external observance. But that all derived their religion from the scriptures; and that the pious among them of *every name*, have felt the power of divine truth, and know the preciousness of the Bible. Here is ground on which all can meet—one calm and peaceful place, &c.

The bishop admits that *Sectarians* are thus divided among themselves; but in that *courteous* language for which he is so remarkable, he says, "*It is not true*, as respects the separation of *Sectarians* from *Episcopalians*—*it is totally false*—[we italicize his words] as respects myself, I am divided from no Protestant denomination, nor yet is the church to which I belong, so divided on a matter of mere external observance, on a point that is not of *positive institution, and fundamental importance to religion as revealed*. Yet this is also, one of the *deceits* practised on the ignorant."

Now let the people judge. The different denominations of christians, usually included in the term *Protestant*, have drawn out into a series of distinct propositions, the opinions which they have derived from scripture. These propositions, as far as they are thought to be very important, are framed into articles. We have taken some pains in comparing the articles of different churches; and, using a certain number for a large number, we would say that there are *fifty* particulars in which the confessions of the Protestant churches harmonize, for one in which they differ. Nay; we could select two *Episcopalians*, to whom we would assign, separately, the work of drawing out into distinct form all the propositions contained in the 39 articles of the Church of England; and then take a *Presbyterian*, and require that he should do the same thing in relation to the corresponding articles of his confession; and we would venture our life upon it, that the two *Episcopalians* would differ in *many* more points, than one of them would differ in from the *Presbyterian*. Or we would be willing to take the system of Divinity drawn up by Archbishop Usher and the pamphlets and sermons published by bishop Ravenscroft; and point out more and greater differences between the archbishop and the bishop, than we can find between our own creed, and the 39 articles. Making these articles the standard, the principal points of difference respect the form of the church. We believe in the Holy Trinity, in the Word or Son of God made

man, in the death and resurrection of Christ, in the sufficiency of the scriptures, in the doctrine of the Old Testament, in as much of the three creeds as may be proved by most certain warrant of Holy Scripture, in original or birth sin, in the disability of will after the fall of Adam, in justification by faith, in good works, &c. &c. &c. throughout the articles with very few exceptions. Then according to the Episcopal standard of doctrine, the differences between Episcopalians and Presbyterians are very slight. The variations are principally these. 1. Episcopalians use a liturgy, and Presbyterians do not. But they both pray for the *same blessings*. The difference here is in form surely. 2. Episcopalians have three orders of ministers, bishops, presbyters, and deacons; but Presbyterians have only one, that of bishops or presbyters: but they preach substantially the *same truths*. 3. They differ in the administration of the sacraments: but these sacraments are *signs and seals of the same righteousness of faith*. Let every man of common understanding say, whether these differences are not differences in relation to matters of mere external observance. How could the bishop then say such a "naughty word" as, "it is false?"

These remarks have prepared the reader to judge, whether the protestant confessions contain opposite systems of religious belief. We maintain that protestants hold much truth in common. We took bishop R's statement of truths held by him as fundamental, and are prepared to show that the different communions included in the term *protestants*, as generally used, hold substantially the same truths. They do not maintain opposite systems then. There are in the United States, 24 independent *Republics*, the constitutions of which are all founded on the same great principles of civil liberty: yet in a number of subordinate particulars, all these forms of state polity differ among themselves. Bishop R. may as well say that they hold opposite systems of politics, as that the Protestant churches hold opposite systems of religious belief. Two men wear coats; one a plain coat; the other, *lapelled*. Both have bodies, and skirts, and sleeves, and buttons, and pockets; and both answer the very same purposes—But they have a slight difference of form. Have these men opposite reasons for wearing a coat? Or will the bishop say that the man who wears a plain coat, wears no coat at all?

It is impossible for him to maintain an opinion contrary to this of ours, unless he is also prepared to hold this, that the nature of revealed religion is such, that its saving effect does not depend solely on the truth revealed by the Lord Jesus as believed, and embraced with all the heart; but also on the mode, or instrumentality by which it is conveyed to the mind. It is not true then that the Protestant denominations derive opposite systems from the Bible.

2. The other objection which we have to the syllogism is that the conclusion has in it a term not contained in the premises. We mean the word *EQUALLY*. What has the bishop forgotten his logic? Did he not know that in order to render the syllogism a good one, he ought to have had in the *major*, the terms, *an EQUAL number of the pious, have EQUALLY felt the power of divine truth?* Otherwise how could he dare to say in his conclusion, "therefore the witness

of the spirit of God, is EQUALLY given to opposite interpretations of scripture?" *Fie! fie! fie!*

Nothing that we ever said or thought can justify the declaration that we hold the opinion implied in the bishop's syllogism. Where men differ in matters of doctrine, both cannot be right. They who receive the most truth are, other things being equal, most likely to become holy. The Holy Spirit never uses any thing but truth for the sanctification of sinners. We now will try our hand at a syllogism, and in it will express what we really do maintain as christians and friends of the Bible Society.

The Protestant churches derive from scripture, and hold in common the fundamental truths of the gospel.

But it is such truths, which the Holy Spirit makes effectual to salvation.

Therefore there are in the Protestant churches truly pious persons, who have felt the power of divine truth, and have been made wise unto salvation.

Corollary. Hence the members of Protestant churches ought to acknowledge each other as fellow Christians, and co-operate in promoting the kingdom of Christ. Not that we think church-membership has any thing to do with the Bible Society: but when men belong to the body of Christ, it is a great shamè for them to refuse to unite in making known his salvation throughout the world.

We had marked a number of other passages under this head; but they are all so much alike both in their *logic*, and in their *temper*, that we think it unnecessary to notice them.

3. The third particular in this part of the subject is, that the Bible Society encourages heresy, schism, and divisions without end. The following extracts will present bishop R's notions on this subject; and show his manner of supporting them.

"For admitting even, that the principle (i.e. the no comment principle) is not abused in Christian lands, to the formation of new systems, and sects of religion, by the readers of the naked Scriptures, and that men are stirred up by the Bible *alone*, to seek the salvation of their souls; they must of necessity, unite themselves with some one of the various religious denominations around them, or adopt the notion of an invisible church, and rely on inward assurance, &c. becoming *liberal* Christians, that is, Christians indifferent alike to the faith and order of the Gospel, on the plea that all are right in so far as salvation is concerned. Now what is this, but plainly and palpably sanctioning the prevailing notion, that contradictory creeds and confessions of faith, and oppositions of external order, are equally safe for the attainment of the salvation offered by the gospel? In what does it come short of giving the whole weight of these Bible Societies to the infidel notion, that the scripture denounced sins of heresy and schism, are no longer within the range of our commissions? For one of these two things is infallibly certain. Either, all the various denominations of christian profession within the range of Bible Society circulation of the Scriptures are equally true and orthodox branches of the church of Christ, and equally safe for the attainment of salvation; or some of them are in heresy or schism—or both heretical and schismatical, and not thus safe. But the Bible Society principle, that the scriptures alone are sufficient to determine the truth or error—the heresy or schism, of opposite denominations, all alike claiming the scriptures to be with them, does give the sanction of that body to the monstrous proposition, that it is a matter of entire indifference and equal safety, whichever denomination a man unites himself with as a church member; and by a similar consequence, that the sins of heresy and schism, are either abrogated, or yet future."—pp. 90, 91.

Again,

"In their composition, and in their principle of action, Bible Societies of this stamp, are representatives, and in fact encouragers, of the foulest blot upon Christianity, its divisions. And the more I reflect upon it, and the more I see of the growing consequences of this fatal principle, the more confirmed I am, that the secret of its popularity is that mentioned in the preface to the Sermon. "It leaves the field free for their respective emissaries, to give their separate and opposite constructions of "the one faith of the Gospel." And when we add to this, that the Society itself as a body, is a virtual acknowledgment of every separate denomination, as a lawful and Scriptural branch of the Catholic Church, we need not resort to supernatural influence of a Heavenly character, at least to account for the torrent like nature of its success, in a divided Christian world."—p. 94.

We here see additional instances of the unsound logic of our author. The Bible Society is a virtual acknowledgment of every separate denomination, as a lawful and scriptural branch of the church of Christ. We have shown that the Protestant churches, who hold, in common, the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, ought indeed to acknowledge each other as brethren; yet their union in the Bible Society is not to be construed as an admission that the respective denominations of the several members of the association, are members of the true church. If two men agree to co-operate in accomplishing one thing, it is no proof that they agree in another which is different; especially when they take pains to let it be known that they do differ: nor is it a declaration that the points in which they differ are of a neutral or indifferent character. The whole amount of the conclusion ought to be this, that the thing to be done by their joint exertions is in their judgment a good thing. Now the universal protestant principle is that the scriptures are "sufficient to make men wise unto salvation." On this ground, should Turks, Hindoos, Unitarians, agree to assist us in distributing the Bible, we would gladly accept their aid; under the persuasion that the plain meaning and natural construction of the Scriptures will show the truth. And we are sure that a Bible given by a Turk or a Hindoo, is still a Bible, and is just as likely to lead one right, as though it were given by an Archbishop.

But let our readers mark the reasoning of bishop R. in the first of these extracts. Should the principle of the Bible Society not be abused, in christian lands, to the formation of new sects and systems, but should "men be stirred up to seek the salvation of their souls, they must of necessity unite themselves to some of the various denominations around them, &c." Is not here a discovery of the secret of opposition to the Bible Society? Is not bishop R. afraid that the distribution of the Bible *alone* will carry men to *dissenting* denominations? *Hinc illa lachryma!* But we ask, again, does the fair construction of the Bible lead men to error? And if men have the opportunity of knowing the truth, are they not free to choose their religious connexions? There is then no such *necessity* as the bishop speaks of. But we should like to know whether the bishop will withhold the Bible, if he can, from men perishing in ignorance and sin, until he can be assured that they shall receive it with such notes and comments, as will make them sound Episcopalians. Is it bishop R's. opinion that unless men are in the Episcopal church, whether they have the Bible or not; whether they belong to other

denominations or not, they are in the condition of heathen, with only the uncovenanted mercies of God; and that therefore he will, for himself, hold back the Bible, until he can send with it the (Episcopal) church, ministry and sacraments? This we verily believe to be his real opinion; and it is the most extraordinary instance of the extent to which party feeling can carry a protestant, that we have ever witnessed. In truth we believe that the bishop thinks the condition of the heathen better than that of *Protestant Dissenters*. And our readers will judge for themselves.

In recommendation of the Bible Society, we had said, that there were six hundred millions of human beings without the Bible,—Heathens, Mahomedans and nominal christians, perishing in ignorance and sin. On this subject, our author expresses himself thus,

“As respects nominal Christians, that is, persons under the light of the gospel, the assertion is true, and would to God, that this overflowing benevolence, of which so much is said, could be directed, in this country at least, to their really destitute and dangerous condition, instead of evaporating in this great emulation of misguided zeal, which literally, takes the children's portion, and squanders it unprofitably upon strangers. As respects the Heathen, properly so called, the assertion is not true, either in its terms, or in the sense it is taken by the general class of readers—*the Heathen are not perishing because they have not the Bible*. The want of it will not be charged to their account, nor its conditions required of them, neither will they be judged by its law—it is not of their procuring, that they have not the Bible, but of the providence of Almighty God. He has not seen fit in his wisdom, to call them as yet into covenant with him; but the time is coming, and assuredly, when the work is of God, his word and his sacraments, the seals of his covenanted mercies will not be separated. In the mean time, his uncovenanted mercies are towards and over them, and I doubt not that many a Heathen will rejoice before God forever, when Christians with the Bible, will be howling in everlasting darkness. Yet this is one of the stalking horses, behind which to take aim at contributions for ‘no comment’ Bible Societies. Nevertheless, it is most heartily to be wished, and most devoutly to be prayed, and earnestly labored for, that the Heathen may be furnished with the Bible—not naked and shorn of its strength, but as God was pleased to send it at the first, with his church, his ministers, and his sacraments, as his seals of its precious promises to all who receive them, and as means of his Heavenly Grace to a fallen world.”—p. 82.

The first remark in this extract, appears to us to assume, that the Bible Society overlooks the wants of nominal christians. But this is not so. The first object of the Bible Society of America is to supply our own population. It also seems to take for granted, that all, in what is called christendom, ought to be converted before attempts are made to bring the heathen to the knowledge of salvation. But the Apostles did not pursue this course. Our blessed Saviour did not teach the doctrine that appears to be here inculcated, when he healed the daughter of the woman of Canaan; or when he uttered the beautiful parable of the good Samaritan, of which the true interpretation is, that every human being is *our brother*, to whom it is in our power to show kindness.

Let us, however, hear what the bishop says about the heathen.—“It is not true, either in its terms, or in the sense it is taken by the general class of readers—*the heathen are not perishing because they have not the Bible*.” We had said, they were perishing in *ignorance and sin*; manifestly assigning ignorance and sin as the cause of their

perdition. The bishop says, "The want of the Bible is not the cause of their perdition. We say *one thing*, and the bishop affirms that *another thing*, which we did not say, is not true. It is a case like this—suppose the inhabitants of a city, infected with a grievous pestilence, to be without suitable medicine, and we should say, "Thousands are perishing without suitable medicine—bishop R. on the ground of his reasoning might contradict us, and say, "It is not true: they are not perishing in this way. The want of medicine never was the cause of death. Now the Bible is to the heathen perishing *in ignorance and sin*, what suitable medicine is to the sick. Our reviewer wished all to unite in sending to these ruined souls, the remedy provided by the great physician. The bishop refuses. He will not send the appropriate remedy unless he can also send a doctor to prescribe and administer. And as he has no doctor to send; he thinks it better, to keep the remedy, and the *written prescription* at home, and let the sick struggle with disease as they can.

But while the reviewer assigned ignorance and sin, as the cause of the perdition of the heathen, he went no farther than the word of God warrants. He did not say that the heathen would be lost because they have not the Bible. He has always been cautious in speaking on this subject. But he knows, because God has revealed it, that "*without HOLINESS no man shall see the Lord.*" And while he searches in vain, in the language of heathens, for a word expressive of the scriptural notion of holiness; and while he sees, in all the forms of heathenism, pollution and sin and shame, he cannot venture to use the language of the bishop, and say, "I doubt not that many a heathen will rejoice before God forever, when christians with the Bible, will be howling in everlasting darkness." We know that men do sadly abuse their privileges; and that they do thus incur an aggravated condemnation. "They shall be beaten with many stripes." But this does not prove that it is better to be ignorant of the will of God, than to know it. Otherwise, the men who have the greatest advantages, the Bible, church, ministry and sacraments, are worse off than all others. But surely, he is in a better situation to attain holiness, who has the Bible, than he who has it not.—The xviiith article of the Episcopal church is in these words, "They also are to be had accursed, that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the Law or sect which he professeth; so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law, and the light of nature. For holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved." If the word *accursed* were left out of this article, and one of less bitterness introduced, we should not hesitate a moment to subscribe to it. The doctrine of the article is certainly true. Bishop R. will take care not to subject himself to the anathema here denounced. How then can he hesitate to admit that the heathen will much more probably become holy, and be saved through Christ, when they have Bibles to tell them of Christ, and the way of salvation, than when they have none? Why not send them the Bible then? But bishop R. seems disposed to wait for God's time!—Who would have expected this, from so zealous an anti-calvinist?

Well, wonders never will cease. We ask, are christians at liberty, with the command of God, "preach the gospel to every creature," sounding in their ears, to sit down and say "God's time has not yet come?" Does not bishop R. know of what doctrine this is the abuse?

But let us compare the bishop's opinions concerning the *heathen*, with those which he has expressed concerning *dissenters*.

THE HEATHEN.

"His (God's) uncovenanted mercies are towards and over them, and I DOUBT NOT, that many a heathen will rejoice before God forever; *while christians with the Bible, will be howling in everlasting darkness.*"—[These christians with the Bible, are we presume dissenters. But he may also include impenitent and wicked Episcopalians.]

DISSENTERS.

"To be entitled to that mercy on the only safe ground, his revealed word, we must be found within the rule which includes it as a covenant stipulation. Of any other state or condition different from this, *we can say nothing, because we know nothing. There may be mercy, but it is not revealed.*" (*Mecklenburg Sermon.*) In applying the conduct of the Apostle to the case of *dissenters*, and the conduct of *clergymen* towards them, he says,

"Does he acknowledge the teachers, who had thus disturbed the harmony of the church, and sown the seeds of contention and strife among them, as fellow laborers with him in the gospel, or does he severely condemn them, and charge them as *ministers of Satan?*"—*Ib.*

"For such there *may* be mercy; but it is no where revealed." *Vindic.*, pa. 31.

Here then we have a fair view of this christian bishop's opinions respecting non-episcopalians and the heathen. For the former, there *may* be mercy, but it is not revealed; and concerning their state he can *say* nothing, because he *knows* nothing; but respecting the latter he *doubts not* of the salvation of many! Whence this caution on the one side; and this confidence on the other? Surely bishop R. does not pretend that mercy has been revealed and promised to the heathen, while there is nothing promised to poor dissenters! This, gentle reader, is the man who on pa. 32, of his *Vindication*, sneers at christians, who, he says, "profess to be acquainted with the secret decrees of Almighty God." By the way, they profess no such thing. But how far is bishop R. from making this profession, when he *doubts not* about the heathen?

But there have been, and there are, in the world, hundreds of thousands of professing christians, who with all their heart subscribe to the *doctrinal* articles of the Church of England—and who differ from Episcopalians, only as to the matter of diocesan bishops, and some points of external administration:—They have their ministers, who teach the very doctrines embodied in the 39 Articles:—They have their sacraments, as signs and seals of the same righteousness of faith, by which Episcopalians hope to be justified:—They exercise the same repentance towards God; the same faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; the same love to God and man;—They

have the same hope; rely on the same promises; prize the same Bible; pray for the same blessings—Yet because they are separated from Episcopalians by mere matters of order, they have no warranted hope in any promised mercy, they *may* be saved. But it is uncertain. But as for the heathen, bishop R. knows so much of what has never been revealed, as to have *no doubt* of the salvation of many! If men's words indicate their opinions, then, we may fairly conclude that he reckons dissenters to be in a worse condition than the heathen! The heathen in their idolatry, more likely to become holy men, than dissenters with the Bible!—Monstrous!

We would ask, however, how are the heathen saved? The xviiith article above quoted, pronounces an anathema on all who hold that men can be saved by the law or sect which they profess; or in any way but by the name of Jesus Christ. This is scriptural truth, for “There is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby they must be saved.” In the economy of redemption, then, is not Christ the Head and representative of those who are saved by him—is he not the *second Adam*? Are not all made alive in Christ, as all died in Adam? Do any but covenanted mercies, then, flow to the children of men? As for ourselves, we believe that there is a relation existing between Christ and the whole human family; and that in consequence of this relationship, every blessing, whether spiritual or temporal, which man has ever enjoyed since the fall of Adam, has been granted to him. We have no idea of uncovenanted mercies extended to any of our *sinful race*. As to the salvation of the heathen we say nothing. Except that they can only be saved through Christ—None can go to heaven unless they are made holy. Truth is the instrument of sanctification; and faith the way of applying the merit of Christ. And there we leave this matter. But it is with the conviction that the Bible may be a great blessing to the heathen—and that Christians, as they can, ought to send it.

But it is time to return to our subject. The reasons advanced by the bishop to show, that the Bible Society encourages schism and heresy and division without end, so entirely rest on assumptions which we have shown to have no foundation, that even a child might detect the fallacy of his logic.

We are almost ashamed of having spent so much time in coming to the conclusion to which all our preceding remarks conduct us—Therefore the Bible Society does not tend to the subversion of revealed religion. It would have been much easier for us to have adverted to a number of incontestible facts to refute the grand objection of the bishop against the Bible Society. Facts are the best reasons in the world. We are truly sorry that our bishop did not resort to them, rather than try his hand at syllogisms. They might have brought him to conclusions very different from those which he has formed. We beg leave to state a few as arguments against the position that the Bible Society tends to the subversion of all revealed religion.

1. All the discordant opinions and divisions, schisms and heresies, which now exist; were in existence before the organization of the Bible Society. We do not know any exception, but that of a schism

effected within the bishop's diocese, by a strange set of people calling themselves *Reformed Baptists*. These people are in deadly hostility to the Bible Society. Shall we congratulate the bishop on this new ally?—Perhaps here is the fruit of his labor in writing his *Vindication!* This schism then, as well as all the rest, cannot be attributed to the Bible Society.

2. It is well known that the darkest period in the church, from the era of the Reformation to the present day, was that which occurred between 1780, and 1804. In popish countries, infidelity was triumphant. In protestant lands, it was bold and daring; while piety was very low, zeal was cold, and what was then misnamed *rational religion*, was rapidly gaining ground both in established churches, and among dissenters. The Bible Society has no blame to bear on account of these wide spread and desolating evils.

In the midst of their prevalence, it appeared to the best and wisest men, who bore the christian name, that something *must be done* to honor the Bible and sustain the cause of Christ, to stem the torrent of infidelity and save a sinking church. Among other enterprises of christian benevolence;

3. The Bible Society was organized. This was done in the year 1804. Some years previously to this, a Society was established on *precisely the same principle*, for the benefit of the soldiers and seamen of Great Britain, of which the *Archbishop of Canterbury* was the head. The very men in the church of England whose piety, zeal, talents, and virtues have done most to redeem her from the character of a mere secular establishment, were the most active and decided friends of the New Society. We mention first, the late Right Reverend Bielby Porteus, bishop of London—a man whose name is never to be mentioned without a note of honor;—then the two *Milners*, a noble pair of brothers—Simeon, Cecil, Scott, Cooper, Dealtry, and many more.—This Society has been in operation in England now twenty-two years and upwards. It has extended into almost every country, in Europe, except Spain and Portugal; and ought before this time to have produced, in part, its appropriate effects.

4. There has been a revival of the Episcopal church in the United States. There has been a great increase of piety and zeal in England. The same is reported of Scotland. In France, where the protestant churches had lost even the appearance of vital piety, there are hopeful signs of revival. In Germany and Prussia where the lowest forms of Socinianism, and even undisguised Deism had corrupted the very ministers of religion, there are some prospects of a return to the doctrines of the Reformation. A new light has been kindled at Geneva. There is a wakening up of a spirit of piety.—In a word, infidelity has been checked, greater honor has been put on the word of God, greater efforts have been made to raise up ministers of religion, more missionaries have been sent abroad, means of promoting christian knowledge have been accumulated, Episcopalians have loved their church as much, and Dissenters their Bible more.—Truly it is marvellous enough, that a principle “demonstrably subversive of all revealed religion” should have been in active operation more than twenty years, and

that opposite effects should have been produced all the time! Indeed the Bible Society is surprisingly slow in exerting its destructive energies, especially as the *organ of destructiveness* was fully developed at the very birth of the institution. "This no comment principle, this crusade against revealed religion," (as the bishop with beautiful metaphorical confusion terms it) after all turns out to be very harmless.—Harmless! This Society is carrying on a holy warfare against the powers of darkness; is doing its part in that enterprise of love, which, as far as facts go to warrant a conclusion, will result in making the saving health of the Almighty known to all nations. Facts ought to make this most confident of reasoners, suspect the soundness of his logic.

But our *Anti-biblist* has not told us distinctly what he would have, in place of the Bible Society. We know, indeed, that he would have all Episcopalians to unite, as with one heart, in sending the Bible, Church, Ministry and Sacraments, to the destitute. Very well! But what shall non-episcopalians do? Love the Bible so much as to labor to promote episcopacy, *which they cannot find in the Bible?* This is a compliment, which they would be as unwilling to receive, as the bishop would be to give. It would be the height of cruelty to sit still and wait, until Episcopalians could send the Bible, with the Church, Ministry and Sacraments, to all the world; and the height of extravagance to expect, that the great body of Protestants will give up those principles, which they have conscientiously derived from the word of God, and go over to comparatively a small party, who have separated themselves from the communion of their Protestant brethren. Well what is to be done? Why, as Episcopalians have united, (we suppose on bishop R.'s plan) so Presbyterians would unite, and Methodists, and Baptists, and Congregationalists, &c. &c.: And the world would see as many different societies formed to send Bible, Church, Ministry and Sacraments to the destitute, as there are denominations in the christian world. And as these different associations would be formed on the express principle of proselytism, what a great "scramble" there would be! Whether it would be *honorable*, let our bishop judge. The effect of a plan, such as we suppose that of our *Anti-biblist* must be, would be wonderfully striking, and doubtless overwhelming to Deists, Turks, and Hindoos. Every distinct society, adopting the bishop's principle, must send out comments. We should then have Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Universalists, Unitarians, Swedenbergians, Shakers, &c. &c. all rushing out loaded with comments. The Episcopalian would say, here take my Bible—*Mant* and *D'Oyley* will make all as plain as the Catechism; the Presbyterian would cry out, no! *Henry* is the man to teach you the whole truth; the Methodist would bring *Adam Clarke*; the Baptist *Gill's* Commentary, in nine quartos; the Quaker would thrust in *Barclay's Apology*; the Shaker would push it aside by a copy of "the *Millennial Church*;" and the Unitarian would wag along with his wheel-barrow load of the *Fratres Poloni*—And surely unbelievers of every form must be convinced and converted! The missionaries, too, of each sect, sent forth to defend and propagate "opposite systems of religious belief."

would have a sort of gladiator's combat wherever they might meet, for the confutation of the enemies of the christian faith. Such must be the results of bishop R.'s plan, carried out fully—unless he with the aid of Vincentius Lirinensis could succeed, and produce, what never has yet been accomplished, uniformity in religion.—We think it might be granted to us, as Mr Law says, that this is not the best way to promote the kingdom of the Redeemer.

Before we leave this important subject, there are several particulars demanding our notice, which we could not bring under any of the heads of argument previously considered; and therefore must take them up separately.

The first occurs pa. 89. We advert to it, because it is connected with a considerable number of those *personalities*, which so much disfigure the bishop's book. Our Reviewer had said,

“Now while the hearts of millions, are rejoicing in this “era of good feelings,” and thanking God that sectarian coldness is warmed and melted by this new display of fraternal love; we hear this Bishop and the other, interposing and saying, no, we cannot unite with you, unless you will join the Book of Common Prayer with the Bible! unless you all become Episcopalians and join with us, we cannot have any connexion with such Societies.”

On this BISHOP *Ravenscroft* allows himself to speak thus,

“And pray sir, is this the objection taken in my Sermon to the Bible Society principle? Is the separation of the Book of Common Prayer from the Bible, in its distribution, given as the reason why I cannot warm myself at this genial source of sectarian fervor? Or is this one of Dr Rice's charitable fabrications, to catch his readers? Certainly sir, I am free to acknowledge, for myself, that Christ's Religion forbids me to have fellowship with, or to countenance in any way, either men or measures, which I conscientiously believe to be injurious to the interests of revealed religion, even if that injury shall proceed from well meant, but mistaken intention to serve it. But I cannot allow you, or any other person, to attribute motives to my conduct, without contradiction, which are notoriously false, as is the case in the present instance.”

In relation to the same subject, the writer uses the words “barefaced perversion,” “false and unfounded statement,” “wilful perversion,” and similar expressions. See pp. 9, 10.

Let our readers consider what we say, in the following remarks.—It is undeniable that, when bishop R. says *the Church*, he means the Episcopal Church; and that when he refuses to acknowledge us, it is because we are non-episcopalians. He says indeed, that it is because we have not derived authority from Christ, through the Apostles, by a *verifiable succession*: but he believes this because we are non-episcopalians; for he is sure that episcopalians have this authority, while no others have. We do not claim to be ministers, and administer sacraments, without believing and proving too, that we have derived just as much authority from Christ as bishop R. has. But we support our claim to a true ministry, and *verify the Church*, in a manner different from that by which bishop R. does. He affirms that episcopal succession is indispensable to the constitution of the gospel ministry, and that this succession is essential to the being of the church. We hold the necessity of a ministry, but deny that it is necessarily constituted in the way the bishop supposes. We always admitted his sincerity; and never charged him

with denouncing all non-episcopalians, and separating from them, on what he acknowledges to be mere matters of form and outward observance. But while we admit his sincerity, we think that we have shewn his error. He holds that to be *essential*, which is *not essential*. And our charge against him amounted just to this, that he allowed himself to be so blinded by sectarian feelings, that his mind, naturally acute and vigorous, could not see, in a case so plain, the difference between *essential truths*, and matters which we, in common with millions of others, hold to be *non-essential*. And in this case, this is the head and front of our offending.

In the next place, in regard to the book of Common Prayer, the separation of which from the Bible we assigned as a reason why bishop R. opposed the Bible Society, we have several things to say. But be it observed, that heretofore, whenever we have spoken severely or lightly of bishop R. it was in his character as an *author*. Personally, we meant to treat him with respect. Now, we address him as a man, and call on him before his God, and the christian community, to say, whether, if the Bible Society of America and that of Great Britain, with all their auxiliaries, had been formed for the sole, unalterable purpose of distributing *the BIBLE and the BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER*, this would not have prevented all his objections to the Institution? We verily believe that it would. We have paid some attention to the controversy; and we cannot doubt that every Episcopalian, who has taken a part in it, both in this country and in Europe, would have hailed this Union of individuals of so many denominations, in the distribution of the *Prayer Book* with the Bible, as the greatest triumph which the Episcopal church ever enjoyed. And this, on the expectation that the various denominations were in a fair way to become united with *the Church*. If we are right here, how "naughty" was bishop R. in using towards us the *bitter* words, which we have quoted!

But farther: it is not easy to analyze the bishop's words, and tell exactly what he means by sending "the church, ministry, and sacraments with the Bible." The church "is a company of faithful men"—How was that to be sent? The *ministry* means either the office of a gospel minister, or the body of ministers in general. The sacraments are, Baptism and the Lord's supper. These must all be sent. Well, we wishing to put the best meaning we could on the bishop's language, inquired whether he did not intend, that with the Bible, men should be sent duly authorized to organize churches, and administer sacraments? To this we found only one objection, but a formidable one. It may be thus stated as it passed through our minds. There are in Great Britain and Ireland about twenty-two millions of souls, and ten thousand Episcopal clergymen. In the United States the population is twelve millions, and about three hundred preachers of this denomination. There are very few in all the world besides, except Roman Catholics. Let the population of the world be stated at nine hundred millions. Then *duly* authorized Protestant clergymen are to be provided for about eight hundred and fifty millions of souls. It would require more than a thousand years to afford this supply, at the rate of a thousand additional clergymen a year, But let us take our own coun-

try. The population is doubling every twenty-five years. There are scarcely among us, then, *duly authorized clergymen* enough to travel through this wide region and baptize the children as fast as they are born; even should they do nothing else. The population is so far ahead of the number of Episcopal clergymen, that ages and ages must elapse, before the ministry can be sent with the word. Multitudes must die heathens, and multitudes more in a state, which it now appears, bishop R. thinks more dangerous than heathenism. But when, formerly, we had to determine as well as we could, what he meant, we could not possibly bring ourselves to believe, or admit for a moment, that he had such thoughts respecting the Bible, and its value to a lost world, as to wish that the millions and millions, who have no access to the word of life, should remain so, until Episcopal ministers could be raised up, and sent to them.— This thought occurred again and again to our minds, but we rejected it. We did suppose it to be an act both of kindness and of justice, then, to conclude, that by sending the church, ministry and sacraments, the bishop meant sending such “notes and comments” (he himself uses the terms interchangeably) with the Bible, as would enable the people to understand the nature and form of the church, the true character of the ministry, the value and efficacy of the sacraments, so that when stirred up to seek the salvation of their souls, they would unite themselves with the Episcopal church. That Episcopalians sincerely and honestly think the Book of Common Prayer excellently adapted to this end, we have no manner of doubt. Indeed it is set forth for the very purpose (in part) of giving instruction as to the true doctrines of the Bible, in relation to the church, ministry, and sacraments. But thousands and thousands of copies of the Common Prayer can be printed and distributed, while one man is being trained for the ministry of the gospel. The case then was this: we must either say that bishop R. means to destroy the Bible Society, and let the world wait for the slow growth of the Episcopal Church; that is, he must be willing that millions after millions should die without any of the means of grace, and with no prospect of a supply but in the tardy increase of the Episcopal Church; or he means to send with the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, which embodies in his judgment, the true doctrine of scripture respecting the church, ministry and sacraments; and this as the best thing that can be done, in the present state of the church and the world. We did not then know how favorably the bishop thought of the heathen; nor how low was his opinion respecting the Bible *alone*. We therefore gave that interpretation to loose, indeterminate language, which we supposed did most justice to bishop R.’s character for zeal, and earnestness in doing good. We thought the case, as we tried to understand it, bad enough in all conscience. But the other is incomparably worse. Now it is this most favorable construction which we could put on the bishop’s language, which has called forth from him expressions, which one *gentleman* never uses towards another, without intending to give the *highest possible insult!* Let bishop R. be ——— but we leave it to his own conscience to tell him what. We have already said how we feel on finding that we had greatly “mistaken our

man." But we have no right to object to bishop R.'s interpreting his own language in his own way, and making his cause a thousand fold worse than we ever thought of making it. Be it known, then, that his principles lead him to this—that it is better for the heathen to *continue as they are*, than for them to receive the Bible alone, or christianity in the form in which *Dissenters* hold it. When principles lead one to such conclusions, is it not high time for him who holds them to suspect that he has fallen into grievous error?

As to the various other *personalities*, which occur in this work, we cannot notice them. It would be easy for us to go one by one through them, and show that bishop R. charges us wrongfully, but this would require the reader to travel through many a wearisome page, and after all it would not settle the points of controversy between us.

In defence of the Bible Society, we had said, that it was of unspeakable importance, that the whole influence of the Protestant world should be felt by Roman Catholics, Mahomedans, and Pagans; and that it was better that the people should have the Bible with any interpreter, or none at all, than be without the word of truth. On this, the bishop expresses himself in such terms, that if he were not a bishop, we should say he raves. He calls this *monstrous*; and represents us as holding, "that it is of no consequence whether the Bible be truly or falsely interpreted." We only mention this however for the sake of giving another specimen of our author's bad logic. Our meaning plainly is, that the fundamental truths of the Bible are so clearly revealed; the way of salvation made so plain, that whether with or without an interpreter, the *sincere* inquirer after truth will not mistake them. It is therefore, in any event, better that a man should have a bible, than that he should not have it. And this is changed into a declaration, that it is of no consequence whether a man derives truth or error from the Bible!

Take another specimen of bad logic. We had said, it was understood, that each separate denomination might, without let or hindrance, promote christianity according to their own creeds and confessions—meaning thereby, *every body knows* that all denominations may go on to promote their peculiar opinions, just as though the Bible Society had never been formed, and therefore there could be no reasonable objection to their uniting to distribute the Bible, the common source of religious truth. On this bishop R. allows himself to say (pa. 87.) "It is understood, that is, it is tacitly agreed upon, that each separate denomination is to find no let or hindrance in promoting christianity according to his own views." *Tacitly agreed on* is bishop R's gloss on our words. We do not pretend that in this case, he *wilfully* changed our meaning. Far be that from us. But we do much wonder, that he *knew no better*. If there were no Bible Society, all denominations would promote christianity in their own way; and no one could hinder it. The Bible Society does not change this state of things; and if the Bible *alone* is really a good thing why should not all the people in the world have it? Will the destruction of the Bible Society cause divisions and distractions to cease? Will it make *churchmen* and *dissenters* love each other more? Will Infidels and Pagans then have no cause to jeer christians, and

say, "First agree among yourselves what your religion is; and then persuade others to embrace it?" Will Papists no longer reproach Protestants with their "Variations?" We repeat; all these divisions existed before the Bible Society. But amidst them, one point of union was discovered. Was it nothing to show to the world, that they who profess to derive their religion *entirely* from the Bible, have confidence in the Bible? Was it nothing to show the heathen that there is christian benevolence enough to send them that book, which is able to make men wise unto salvation?

We maintained in our former Review, that our principles do by no means nullify the ministry of the gospel, and the sacraments of the church. "Bishop R. endeavors to show (pp. 87, 88.) that we are inconsistent with ourselves: and on p. 91, he brings under this charge, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, and an excellent brother of ours, the Reverend Dr Miller, of the Theological Seminary in Princeton.

"Yet Dr Rice cannot but know, that in resorting to this trick, indeed, in his entire defence of the Bible Society principle, he is liable to be confronted with the highest authority of his own denomination (the General Assembly) in favor of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as indispensable to a right understanding of the Bible; and also with the recorded opinion of a brother Divine and Theological Professor, in favor of creeds and confessions—in other words, expositions and comments as *essential* to the unity and purity of faith in the church. How these solemnly considered and authoritative sentiments of his own church, are reconcilable with the support of the 'no comment' principle, is for Dr Rice to make out; and to assist him in this difficult job, Bishop R. refers him to the recantation by the General Assembly of 1825, of the sentiments published in 1824, and to Dr Miller's Letter on Bible Societies, subsequent to his published Lecture on the utility of Creeds and Confessions."—p. 91.

As for ourselves, we only say a sick man will be more likely to recover, if a physician perfectly acquainted with his case, should send him medicine, and a plainly written prescription. But this is not at all inconsistent with the opinion, that the sick man might do much better, if the physician could visit him, examine the symptoms, and then prescribe.

As for the General Assembly—that venerable body did, in the year 1824 give a *testimony* in favor of Creeds and Confessions. The Assembly of the following year, referred to that testimony as sufficiently decisive, without the repetition of similar sentiments. To call this a recantation, is saying that an *affirmative* is a *negative*. But in the *Annual Report* of the state of religion, drawn up by a committee, and adopted by the Assembly, we find the following declaration respecting the American Bible Society. "The American Bible Society we regard, under God, as the glory and defence of our land. We share in its blessings, and, in our measure, in its support. As will be seen from the Report of its operations for the last year, its sphere of influence has been constantly enlarging."

"The nature of the service in which it is employed, and the multiplied testimonies which are from day to day afforded of its vast benefit to our country and our continent, bespeak a presence in it, which no created power can safely resist."

"To oppose this institution is to fight against God, and yet we have seen infidels, and half reformed protestants, uniting with the papal

Hierarchy, in opposing the circulation of the word of life, as though the volume which Jehovah has adapted to the constitution of man, and sent down from above for his use, and made efficient in his redemption, and commanded to be given unto him, could not with safety be committed to his hands." Perhaps this is what the bishop calls a recantation. The reverend Dr Miller maintains the utility of Creeds and Confessions; and is a warm friend of the Bible Society. Bishop R. thinks this a great inconsistency. We will tell him an anecdote. There is now living, we hope, a clergyman of the Church of England, named *Simeon*. The bishop of North Carolina has no doubt heard of him. Perhaps he owns a work of his commonly called *Simeon's Skeletons*. It is intended to assist preachers in the Composition of Sermons. This Mr Simeon delivered at Cambridge, some years ago, and afterwards published a short course of sermons on "The Excellency of the Liturgy:" This is thought quite an able work. But when he came to publish, the *Preface* of this very volume contained a defence of the Bible Society—that is, according to Bishop R. Mr Simeon wrote a book; and then a preface in the way of recantation! But how is it, that the bishop cannot see that there is here nothing like inconsistency. Will he who thinks that he knows so well how to distinguish things that differ, be so good as to point out the contradiction between the following positions.—A good bed, a careful nurse, suitable medicine, and a skilful physician, are useful and necessary for a sick man.—Suitable medicine, with the prescription of a skilful physician, are useful and necessary for a sick man? The positions are *different*, because one contains more than the other. Bishop R's whole reasoning on this subject is like this—Bed, nurse, medicine and physician are useful and necessary; but medicine is not useful or necessary. He says a thing, and then contradicts a part of it. And his saying amounts just to this. If a physician cannot go and see a sick man, he must not send him medicine and a prescription, lest he fall into mistake, and destroy himself;—people are so stupid and ignorant, they will be as apt as not to swallow the Spanish flies, and make a plaster of the calomel; and therefore they must be left to themselves, to use their own quack nostrums. I *doubt* not many of them will recover; but if you send them medicine they will probably die.

Bishop R. thinks it "a pitiful quibble—miserable sophistry," to say that the Bible Society was not formed to interpret Scripture. We, however, have such confidence in the intelligence of our readers, as to be perfectly willing to leave this matter to their judgment.

In pages 91, 92, 93, we have a deatribe on christian benevolence, which we do not think it worth while to notice; as our readers must before this time have been convinced, that they could learn nothing on *that subject* from the *work* before us.

In concluding this part of the pamphlet, bishop R. notices three particulars in our Review, in such a way that we must notice them also.

"The first is, the repeated insinuation, and occasionally the direct assertion, that the doctrines laid down in my Sermons on the subjects of the Church and Ministry, and in the two last particularly, are of a character too nearly akin to Popery, to suit the meridian of Protestant America."

“ What purpose this insinuation is intended to answer, beyond that of profiting by the prejudice it may serve to excite and continue against the Episcopal church, you best know.”—The bishop here again reminds us of the anecdote of Diogenes, before related. He is just as wide of the mark as he well can be. Our motives are such as we shall never be ashamed to avow before the world. We do most assuredly believe that the Episcopal church is not *necessarily* high church. On the contrary, we have no doubt that high church notions have, from the days of *Laud* until the present time, been injurious to its best interests. And although there are several things in its forms and order, which we think at variance with the Scriptures, yet we believe that the great doctrines of the Reformation are embodied in its Liturgy and Articles. We have therefore loved and honored it as a branch of the true church, and have often prayed for its purity and prosperity. We however did believe, and do yet believe, that the opinions which prompted bishop R. and others to oppose the Bible Society, are akin to Popery : that they make a part of that system by which, in former times, the church was corrupted, until it ceased to be a true church, and became what is so strikingly described in the *Homily for Whitsunday* before quoted. But really, we did not believe that bishop R. understood his own principles, or saw their tendency. We therefore frankly stated our views ; not for the purpose of exciting prejudices against the Episcopal church—we indignantly repel the insinuation—but for the purpose of exciting opposition among ALL, *Episcopalians as well as others*, to high church principles—and, (*detur venia verbo*) not without some hope that our exhibition might startle bishop R. himself, and lead him to reconsider his opinions. So much had we mistaken our man ! But have we also mistaken the real character of the Episcopal church ? Does bishop R. represent it truly ? *If so* ; then the Episcopal church is akin to Popery. We place the matter on this issue. Do Episcopalians generally adopt the principles laid down by the bishop ; and, however they may condemn the spirit in which his book is written, do they think its reasoning “ unanswerable ? ” Then they do generally approximate to Popery. But we no more believe, that our Episcopal brethren do generally adopt these high church notions, than we doubt about their affinities, and tendencies. Our convictions are about the same on each side. We are sure that high church has a near kindred to Popery : and we are about equally sure that the great body of Episcopalians in the United States are low churchmen ; and as for the truly pious among them, we verily believe, that while their hearts are with us, they abstain from communion with other denominations, solely through respect for their bishops and other clergy. If this is not so now ; then, by some secret agencies, a very great change of opinion has taken place, within the last twelve or fifteen years.

Our Reviewer had said, in substance that bishop R. was not alone in his oppugnation to the Bible Society, that bishops in England and Scotland, the Pope and almost all the Romish bishops in the world had preceded him in “ this crusade ”* to rescue the Bible

* We thank the bishop for teaching us that word.

from the abuses of Dissenters and Infidels ; and, alluding to the fact just then made public, that the Roman Catholics had stimulated the Grand Seignor to issue a *firman* against the distribution of the Bible in his dominions, the Reviewer added that the head of the Mahometan faith was *almost as much* opposed to the distribution of the Bible, as any Catholic or Protestant bishop can be. On this the bishop remarks,

“ Now, sir, will you be pleased to come forward, and point out any Protestant Bishop, either in Europe or America, who is opposed to the distribution of the Bible. For this you must do, or stand convicted of fostering prejudice, at the expense of truth. And I speak thus plain, because the case is of that sort which precludes mistake, as to the fact. You have said, ‘ that the Grand Seignor is almost as much opposed to the distribution of the Bible in his dominions, as any Catholic or Protestant Bishop can be.’ Unless, therefore, you can shew some Protestant Bishop, who is opposed to the distribution of the Bible, as Roman Catholic Bishops are opposed to it, you are justly chargeable as a false accuser of the brethren.”—pa. 97.

We have a right to insist that our words should be construed according to the established rules of interpretation. We had all along spoken of the distribution of the Bible, on the principle of the Bible Society, without note or comment. We never dreamed that Protestants, Papists or Mahometans would oppose the distribution of the Bible with such notes and comments as they might choose to send with it. We said over and over, in a way to give bishop R. mortal offence, but really without intending it, that he was willing to distribute the Bible with the Book of Common Prayer. Every principle of fair construction, then, required that our words should be taken in the meaning which our whole usage had given to them. Every unprejudiced reader will see at once, that when we said Protestants were opposed to the distribution of the Bible, we meant “ without note or comment.” That is, we intended to state a fact, in which bishop R. glories through the whole of his work. But he thinks fit to represent us as making the charge absolutely. Why he should do this, except for the pleasure of resorting to “ the counterpart quarrelsome,” we are at a loss to conjecture. However this may be, we are willing to take him on his own ground—And we now affirm that he is opposed to the distribution of the Bible, “ as Roman Catholic bishops are opposed to it.” In offering our proof, we must be understood as speaking of the *avowed* reasons of bishop R. and Roman Catholic bishops.

Bishop R. opposes the distribution of the Bible without note or comment. But Roman Catholic bishops oppose it on the same ground. Therefore bishop R. is opposed to the distribution of the Bible “ as Roman Catholics are opposed to it.”

Has the bishop any objection to this syllogism? *Negatur Minor.* He denies the position respecting the Catholics. To the proof then. The bishop of Rome is a Roman Catholic bishop, of some note and authority in the church. A Rescript of Pope Pius vii, dated April 8th, 1820, addressed to the Vicars Apostolic of Great Britain ; contains the following exhortation to the *faithful* : “ That they abstain from the reading of the wicked books, in which, in these calamitous times, our holy religion is on all sides attacked; and that they should be strengthened in faith and good works, by the reading of pious

books, and particularly the HOLY SCRIPTURES, in editions, APPROVED BY THE CHURCH; you preceding them by word and example."—The following are the original words—*Ut a perversorum librorum lectione, quibus calamitosis hisce temporibus, sancta nostra religio undique impetitur, abstineant; ut piorum librorum, præsertim sacrarum scripturarum lectione, in EDITIONIBUS AB ECCLESIA APPROBATA, in fide et in bonis operibus, vobis verbo et exemplo præeuntibus, confortentur.* But what sort of editions are approved by the church. In answer to this question, we give the substance of the Title of a New Testament now lying on our table. "Annotations on the New Testament of Jesus Christ, in which,

1. The literal sense is explained according to the expositions of the ancient Fathers.

2. The false interpretations, both of the ancient and modern writers which are contrary to the received doctrine of the Catholic Church, are briefly examined and disproved, &c. By R. W. D.D. With permission and approbations. This work was once, we know, the property of a poor Irish Catholic. It was intended for general use; as it is published in conformity with the decision of the council of Trent. Sess. iv.

The scriptures have been published in the vernacular tongue again and again, by Roman Catholics.

"It is a common mistake among Protestants, to suppose that the Catholic laity are debarred the use of the scriptures, and that the Catholic church never authorizes any translation of them into the modern languages." *Religious World Displayed.* By the Rev. Robert Adam, B.A. Oxford, ii, 82. [The article from which this extract is made, was written by a Roman Catholic.]

It is undeniable that the Roman Catholics do not avow opposition to the circulation of the scriptures with such notes and comments as the church approves. They avow the contrary.

It is worth while to consider the reasons by which they attempt to justify their opposition to the distribution of the Bible alone. The following extracts copied *verbatim* from some of the most respectable English periodicals, afford some very curious coincidences. Hear how Roman Catholics speak in opposition to the Bible Society.

"The general perusal of the Bible without any interpretation was in accordance, perhaps, with the desultory and capricious genius of the protestant religion; but in Ireland there existed a creed utterly incompatible with the wild freedom of opinion; and which is so determinate and fixed, as to leave no field for the exercise of individual judgment in the construction of the word of God. The Roman Catholic faith is built on the scriptures, as explained by the church, and if the lower classes were to peruse them without that explanation upon which their religion rests, it is not unlikely that they would contract opinions inconsistent with the meaning invariably annexed by Roman Catholics—BY THE CHURCH—to the holy writings—The whole dispute narrows itself into a question of fact. Is it, (the circulation of the scriptures without note or comment) or is not inconsistent with the spirit of Catholicism? If it be, there is an end of the argument: at least it must be admitted that Roman

Catholics are justified in their strenuous opposition to an attempt to *subvert their religion?*

Another speaker against the Bible Society says, "He would now ask which of the Bible reading gentlemen agreed in their faith?—He did not believe that any two of those he saw, held the same religious opinion. And, alluding to the Rev. Mr Noel of the English Church, and Captain Gordon, who was a presbyterian, he asks, "Did the young English gentleman and the Scotch Captain, who came here as missionaries, hold the same faith?—They travelled, he supposed, in a post-chaise to overturn the Catholic religion—How did these post-chaise companions agree on religious matters? Did they toss up for religion? Or which of their religious tenets were their converts to embrace?"

Once more: The following resolutions were drawn up by a distinguished Roman Catholic priest, to be adopted by an Anti-Bible meeting.

"Resolved—That it appears to this meeting—that the free and indiscriminate circulation of the Bible, without note or comment amongst our poor, constitutes the basis of the education, sanctioned and supported by the London Hibernian Society."

Resolved, 2dly, That we consider such a system of education CONTRARY TO THE SACRED SCRIPTURES, PREJUDICIAL TO THE INTERESTS OF TRUE RELIGION, and subversive of all order in civil society."

Resolved, 3dly, That as good and sincere christians, and as loyal subjects, we will resist with all our might, the establishment of such a system among us, because we are convinced that it would substitute eventually SCEPTICISM and INFIDELITY in place of christianity, and anarchy and confusion in place of order and good government."

We could fill page after page with matters of the same kind. But this is enough. Let our readers compare these extracts, with bishop Ravenscroft's reasonings, and judge between him and us. Is it "a forced and false construction," when we affirm that his opinions are akin to popery? He sincerely believes that they were "the light of the reformation"—But in fact they are fundamental principles, on which popery built its usurpations. And his *old rule*, was a rule adopted when the man of sin had already begun his work.

But the most amusing part of the whole work under Review, is, that, in which an attempt is made to retort on the Bible Society the charge of maintaining errors akin to Popery. This the bishop is pleased to do in the words "of one of the vestry of the episcopal church, Raleigh." He is "exceeding happy to inform us—for he feels great comfort in it—that there are gentlemen and christians in that vestry, to whose competent judgment we might safely commit deeper things than our logic, and from whom even we might derive an accession of knowledge, both on religious and other subjects"—We doubt it not—and we are always glad to learn from such as are able to instruct us. Let us hear then,

"The Romanists contend, that the *Scriptures* are confided exclusively to the clergy; that the laity are to receive implicitly, without inquiry or examination, what is by them declared to be the truth of these *Scriptures*.

To the people they give the *Church* and the *Ministry*, but retain for themselves the *Scriptures*. They thereby *separate* the former from the latter, and deny the people at large one of the most efficient means of grace.

"The doctrine of the Bible Society, involved in the rejection of comments "that the scriptures are exclusively sufficient," produces a like separation with that of the Romanists; the difference being, that the former give to the people, the *scriptures without the church*, while the latter give to them, the *church and refuse the scriptures*. In opposition to the latter error, the reformers and standard writers of the Church, contended, because it was the prominent error of their day. In opposition to the former, bishop R. and those who think with him, contend, because it is the prominent error of our own time. The bishop, and those who think with him, are perfectly consistent in refusing to countenance these Bible Societies; because they maintain, that *all the institutions of God*, designed as means of conveying, and giving assurance of his favor to fallen man, should be communicated to the people. That those things which he has *united*, should never be *separated* by a vain confidence, which rushes into the counsels of the Most High, and acting as God, profanely elevates one of his institutions, by the depression of another. The bishop, and other opponents of the principle and practice of these Bible Societies, unite, in condemning all separation of the means of grace, one from the other; whether devised by the craft of Romanists, or suggested by the mistaken liberality of the Bible Societies; and in affirming that the Gospel, as *one* in its doctrines, order and ministrations, should be afforded entire to the people.

"They hold, that a true Church, in which the pure word of God is preached by those having authority thereto, valid administrations of the sacraments, and the scriptures to be examined and read by all who can read them, *are together the sure means*, prepared by divine wisdom for our salvation. That in their *union* there is *safety*; in their *separation* there is *danger*. That *separation* of the one from the other is *erroneous*, whether it be made by Protestants or Romanists, whether it be the result of designing policy or uninformed benevolence—whether it be a corruption of the dark ages, which benighted christianity and learning, or a meteoric error, kindled into a blaze in our own day, by the collision of different elements in religious belief, chafing themselves in an attempt at unnatural union."—pp. 99, 100.

Now to us, this appears, for all the world, like the argument of an ingenious and acute lawyer, who knows that he has a bad cause. If so, certainly much *deeper* things than our logic may be committed to this reasoner; for the law we are told is a *bottomless pit*. But let us look at the argument.

1. The first paragraph contains a statement, which we have just shown to be inaccurate. The Romanists profess to give to the people "the church and the ministry," and the scriptures with their expositions, their notes and comments—and in this high churchmen are like them.

2. The Romanists profess to give to the people all that God ever designed for them.—The Bible Society professes to give only a part; because they can give no more.—But this part is such that it may well lead them to desire and seek the rest.

3. But let us admit that the Vestryman states his case accurately; and that the Romanists do avowedly debar the people from access to the scriptures, entirely—then the case is this: They say to the people, we give you the church and the ministry; but you are so ignorant and perverse, you shall not have the bible lest you abuse it to your destruction.

The Bible Society says, "As the word of God contains the whole truth which God has revealed for the salvation of man, in terms so

plain, that all fundamental truths may be understood by all men, we give you the bible. And as in the present divided state of the christian world, we cannot bring all who profess the christian name to unite in any other measure of charity, we send you the Bible alone, which is "sufficient to make you wise unto salvation."

4. The church is a society formed for the express purpose of enjoying the ministry and sacraments as well as the word; and withholding any part of these privileges is defeating the very purpose of the organization, and violating the express command of Christ. But the Bible Society is a company, voluntarily formed under the general influence of the law of love, and has nothing to do with the church, ministry, and sacraments. The Roman church then, which is bound to afford all the means of grace, says—here is a gift of God which the people *shall not have*. The Bible Society says, —here is the gift of God, which we associated for the purpose of giving—as for the rest it is not our business to do any thing with them. Yet the Bible Society is akin to popery!—There is a famous piece of reasoning recorded in a book, which perhaps *every* body has not seen, we therefore copy it here.

"If you look in the maps of the 'orld, you shall find, in the comparisons between Macedon and Monmouth, that the situations, look you, is both alike. There is a river in Macedon; and there is also, moreover, a river at Monmouth: it is called Wye at Monmouth, but it is out of my prains, what is the name of the other river; but 'tis all one; 'tis so like as my fingers is to fingers, and there is salmons in both." We beg pardon of Fluellen's ghost—his argument is the best of the two. *There is a river in each country, and there are salmons in both.* But the Romanists authoritatively *take away*: while the Bible Society only *does not give*. The Bible Society like the church of Rome! Indeed this is deeper than our Logic.

But in the next place, we have a word or two to say in defence of our Reviewer, and the American bishops.

Bishop R. had written and published these words. "I have no hesitation in asserting, that more than two, perhaps a majority of the American bishops, are not in favor of Bible Societies, on the principle adopted by the British and Foreign Bible Society, and copied by a majority of those in this country. While, of those who are known to have given them countenance, reasons and motives very different from those of sanctioning such principles, have operated in inducing them to have any connexion with such societies." Now we honestly considered this a very unadvised declaration. It did convey to our minds, an unintentional we readily admit, but severe and very undeserved censure. It said this—that American bishops acted publicly, before the world, in support of principles which they could not sanction. It was said by a bishop—we know in the heat of controversy. We wished that in cooler moments it might be reconsidered, and unsaid. Regard for the honor of the christian ministry made us earnestly wish it.

Pudet hæc opprobria potuisse dici sed non potuisse refelli. For this purpose, we designed to let bishop R. see what use might easily be made of his unguarded expressions—at the same time declaring sincerely our opinion that reproaches of this kind would be

unjust. We did not for a moment suspect that bishop R. meant any thing derogatory to his brethren. But we verily thought that in his haste, he had done to these venerable men what we would not have done for the world—impeached their sincerity. Bishop R. could not enter into our motives; he could not conceive of any thing but hostility in one who opposed his peculiar sentiments; and therefore in that tedious paroxysm of which we spoke in the beginning, he permits himself to write thus,

“Generous, candid, charitable man! But as I am altogether unwilling to bear the reproach transferred to me, as the writer of the Note, I will just say, that so far is it from being the *plain meaning* of the passage, that no one would have made this use of it, who was not himself capable of all the perfidy which it implies. And so far from refraining from an assault, it is actually made, and in that way too, which is well understood to be most effectual with the uninformed and the prejudiced, by insinuation of more than appears; while the cunning disclaimer is put in as the loop-hole of retreat. But, sir, it shall not answer your purpose—for I am happily able to free both the bishops and myself, from the injurious imputation of your implied charge.”—p. 101.

We quote this passage that our readers may join with us in pitying and praying for Bishop Ravenscroft.

The explanation and vindication of his remarks respecting the bishops who are connected with Bible Societies, so far from being satisfactory, makes the matter worse. “Reasons (says he, p. 102) and motives perfectly innocent and even praiseworthy”—and yet “very different from those of sanctioning such principles” present themselves readily to every ingenuous mind:—He then assigns “the desire to conciliate—to soften the asperities of religious dissent, by such concessions to prejudice, as can be made with a good conscience”—and “such reasons and motives as these.” Now, we are not satisfied that the American bishops, connected with the Bible Society, should rely on a defence as lame as this. Some of them are zealous in its support—are presidents of societies formed on the “no comment principle.” Now, they approve the principle, or they do not. If they approve it—as we must believe they do—they act with the openness and sincerity of christians. If they disapprove it;—surely it must be because the principle injuriously affects the interests of religion. Does bishop R. mean that they act against their real sentiments, on such a subject as this, to *conciliate*? Do evil that good may come? Again, we say, if we were enemies, what occasion for triumph would be here. But no! we disclaim, before the world, our belief that bishop R. has stated the true reasons for the conduct of the prelates in question. Otherwise, what should we have to say of such “scrambling for proselytes,” as this? We have a right to say farther, that all Episcopalians, who continue their connexion with the Bible Society, *do not* think the bishop’s book “unanswerable.” He has not, in their judgment, proved that the Bible Society is subversive of revealed religion.

We have not, even yet, given up all hope that bishop R. will be a friend of the Bible Society. Our readers may think that this “is hoping against hope.” Among our reasons, one is that he has *forgotten* how far he was friendly to the Institution, while Rector of St. James’s parish in Mecklenburg. He states the case thus.

"The Rev. Mr Treadway, recently ordained a Deacon in the Protestant Episcopal Church, was appointed an Agent of the Virginia Bible Society, at the instance of Bishop Moore, for the formation of Auxiliary Societies.— In this capacity, he visited my then parish, and was received by me with all the attention due to his clerical character, and was assisted in his particular object, so far as introducing him to the people, and making appointments for him to preach, and explain the views of the Society, from the respect due to my Diocesan. Mr Treadway having succeeded in obtaining a sufficient number to form a Society, and a day being appointed for them to meet at the court-house, and being himself obliged to visit some other places in the interval, he requested me to draw up a constitution and rules for the regulation of the Society. This I assented to, as an accommodation to him, and performed it by copying a printed form, which I found among some loose pamphlets in my study. I believe also, that I gave a dollar, or some small contribution to the Society—preached an extempore Sermon, to a small congregation convened on an appointment made for Mr Treadway, which he did not attend, and at a meeting of the Society to elect their officers, when only three or four attended, I advised, as the only probable means of becoming organized, that the few who were present should name the officers, and notify them of their election. The plan was agreed to, and at the request of those present, the nomination was made by myself, embracing all classes of religious profession in the county, except Episcopalians—not one of whom was nominated to any office in the Society; having previously refused to have any thing to do with its transactions myself. This is the whole extent of my intrusions with the formation of this Auxiliary, or any other Bible Society."—p. 103.

Now we have not the least doubt that bishop R. made this statement according to the *best of his recollection*. Let no one say that we make an insinuation to the contrary. But the record of the case will refresh his memory. It speaks thus,

1. The following paper, to be subscribed by any who might be willing to unite in a Bible Society, is attributed to the Rector of St. James. "Unwilling to view with indifference the providential openings for the reception of the gospel at home and abroad, and particularly among the aborigines of our country, and the united and mighty efforts making in the promulgation of the sacred scriptures throughout the continent, we whose names are hereunto affixed, do agree to form ourselves into an association to be denominated the *Mecklenburg Bible Society*, whose sole object shall be to co-operate with the Bible Society of Virginia in encouraging a wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures." Dated Sept. 16th, 1822. The first name on this paper is that of *J. S. Ravenscroft*.—Here is betokened a feeling worthy of a christian minister.

2. On the 18th of Nov. 1822, the Constitution of the Society was adopted, by a meeting, of which the Rector gave notice,* which he attended, and at which he preached. The second Article of the Constitution requires that the copies of the Bible shall be "in every case unaccompanied with either note or comment." And the 13th Article provides that the second article shall be "unalterable."

It is said that particular stress was laid on the words, *without note or comment*.

3. At this meeting, the Rector presided; and thirteen managers were chosen, of whom seven were Episcopalians, and the Rector was one of the number.

4. On the 31st of March 1823, a meeting of the Society was held at Boydton, and the Rev. John S. Ravenscroft attended. At this

* The particulars about the notice, &c. are of course not in the Record.

time, several resolutions of some importance were adopted. It was resolved that quarterly meetings should be held—that the constitution should be printed and distributed, &c. A gentleman of the Episcopal church was also elected Treasurer of the Society, who has, it is understood, performed his duty faithfully.

Bishop R. has never formally withdrawn from this Society. And really, the *Bishop* and *Rector* do appear to have held contrary sentiments on this subject. Did he always believe that the Bible Society principle was *subversive of revealed religion*. Did respect for his "Diocesan" prompt him, in the least degree, to encourage a principle of such ruinous tendency? Surely a Presbyter is not bound to yield his convictions in this way to his bishop. And is Dr Ravenscroft a man thus to submit his understanding and his conscience? Assuredly he is not.

But bishop R. thinks, that if an alteration in opinion had taken place, we "might have considered, that as the bishop's sphere of observation, is necessarily far more extensive than that of the Rector, and his means of ascertaining the effects produced by such bodies, much more ample, he had doubtless good reasons for an actual change both of opinion and conduct." We frankly confess, that the opinion did cross our mind, that *some how or other*, without the gentleman's being at all conscious of it, the change of opinion was connected with the change in office. But still we could not attribute it to the causes hinted at by the bishop. For

1. The change was rather sudden for this. In 1823, the Rector was acting manager of a Bible Society. In 1824, the bishop preached his famous Sermon. Now his new office; his removal; the multiplied and arduous duties of the station to which he was called, seem to us to have been quite enough to occupy his whole attention. But this is not all.

2. For the Bible Society, as before observed, is most surprisingly slow in accomplishing its work of division and destruction. Since its organization, there has certainly been a great increase of vital piety. Infidelity has been repressed. Christians have been brought into much greater harmony of feeling. All the facts, then, both in Europe and America were against the bishop. It required much more time for observation than one busy year, to discover that the Bible Society *tended to undo* that which it actually was doing with a mighty and uncontrollable energy. The bishop, even on his commanding eminence, could not possibly see "what was not to be seen." But it often happens, that a sudden elevation, by inducing giddiness, makes the world appear to be whirling round, and every thing to be turning *topsy turvy*, even when all is peaceful and still, except in *one's own sensorium*.

We do not write thus, because we take any pleasure in exposing the inconsistencies of our author. We entered this subject with great reluctance; and have found it very unpleasant at every step. But we were impelled by a sense of duty. We do believe that the Bible Society is connected with that glorious event prayed for by every pious Episcopalian, and by the whole church indeed every day—the *making known the saving health of the gospel to all nations*. But christians in the United States have not been roused to put

forth half their strength in this cause of benevolence. Many are ready enough to hold back for any excuse, however trivial. Bishop R.'s name and office gave him influence. He has injured the Bible cause. His opinions, if unchecked, will injure it still more, as the Episcopal church extends among our growing population. If any suppose that we have been influenced by so poor a motive as personal resentment for the bitter things which the bishop has said against us; or by party spirit, they do us crying injustice. Nothing but public considerations of most imperative character have impelled us through the drudgery of this Review. And we must pursue our work. Before heaven we utterly disclaim hostility to any christian church. But to do justice to our subject, we must follow the bishop through his system. It hangs all together. His notions about the church, the ministry, the sacraments, and the interpretation of scripture, are closely connected with his opposition to the Bible Society. And whoever thinks with him on these points, cannot consistently be a cordial friend to that Society, which is at this moment throwing beams of heavenly light athwart the gloom that has been deepening for a thousand years; which is shedding blessings on fifteen millions of Christians groaning under Mahometan bondage; and is preparing a high way for the servants of God, when they go to carry all the means of grace, and all the precious privileges of the gospel to the benighted and perishing nations—We feel that we are pleading the cause of Charity; and doubt not that our motives will *one day* be fully understood.

INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

IN this part of his book, bishop R. undertakes the vindication of his sermon on the interpretation of scripture. This is a subject of great importance—but it would require a volume to treat it fully. We can only consider general principles.

In the first place our readers ought to have a fair state of the question. Bishop R. holds that the one holy apostolical church is the Episcopal church:—That to this church were committed the Word, Ministry and Sacraments—and that it belongs to *our* church *authoritatively* to interpret the word of God. Hence he concludes, that it is unsafe—nay, ruinous to distribute the Bible, without such notes and comments, as may enable the reader of Scripture to determine the sense put on the sacred volume, by the *one Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ*. It is clear that the great object of the bishop, in his sermon on the interpretation of scripture, is to support his opinions respecting the Bible Society. And, as our Reviewer remarked, in his several successive discourses, he develops his system. The (Episcopal) church can alone so interpret scripture as to give to man the assurance of salvation. The rule of interpretation about which we differ, in this part of the discussion, is derived from *Vincentius Lirensis*, a writer of the sixth century. We have no access to his work; but the bishop lays down the rule in the following terms:

“That interpretation of scripture is to be followed and relied upon, as the true sense and meaning, which has invariably been held and acted upon, by the one Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ.”

Now it depends entirely on the meaning attached to these words by bishop R., whether there is here any difference of opinion between him and us, worth farther disputation. If he means to say that the Apostles of Christ taught the doctrine of their master so clearly, that their disciples understood and received it; and that the ascertaining of this doctrine, as received, settles at once all disputes concerning it; then he and our Reviewer entirely agree. For there is nothing which we more certainly hold, than that there are no new discoveries on the subject of religion. The whole plan of salvation, as far as God has seen fit to reveal it, was fully taught by the Apostles, and embodied in their writings. The disciples of the Apostles certainly understood their meaning, and embraced their doctrine. The point here is, to determine what this doctrine was. We hold that this is most easily and certainly done by resorting to the scriptures. For there we have the truth, expressed in the very words dictated by the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of general instruction.

It is true that we have brief symbols of Faith drawn up for the use of the ancient church, going under the name of *Creeds*, as the *Apostles' Creed*, the *Nicene Creed*, and the *Athanasian Creed*.—And these show with certainty, what was the belief of the Church, respecting the particular articles contained in those formularies, at the time when they were adopted. As to the first, we do not know when it was composed: the two latter were drawn up in the fourth century. But, when these Creeds are applied to the interpretation of scripture, their character is chiefly negative. True, it may be affirmed that scripture was, in general, interpreted in conformity to these Creeds: but when one goes to a particular passage of scripture, in most cases it can only be affirmed by a strict reasoner, that it *was not* interpreted in opposition to the Creed. Now one may know very well that a particular meaning was not attached to a text, without knowing what its meaning really was held to be. The Creeds, too, are very general summaries of doctrine, and of course there are hundreds of texts to which they cannot be made to apply. The same remarks may, in substance, be applied to the decrees of Councils. By a careful examination of the writings of the Fathers, it is also *possible*, in many cases, to determine what opinion they held concerning the doctrines brought into discussion by them.—This, indeed, is not always so easy a matter; because these writers are often very vague and undetermined in the use of language, and not always consistent with themselves. Hence we find opposing claims often put into the authority of the Fathers.

But it is wonderful that bishop R. did not perceive that his rule as thus understood, applies to old controversies respecting *Theological Doctrine*; and not to the *interpretation of Scripture*. It is one thing, to tell the meaning of scripture; and another to draw out that meaning in a series of propositions expressing theological truth. One is the business of the interpreter; the other of the systematic writer. In regard both to one and the other, the Bible is so plain, that for the most part, there is no danger that the sincere inquirer will be mistaken. If there is difficulty or dispute respecting doctrine, it is certainly an advantage to know what the

early church held to be the doctrine taught by the apostles. But this, except in a few cases, is a matter of extreme difficulty; and not to be accomplished without the most diligent research. Who can give an instance, where the scripture is not clear, of a dispute terminated by the authority of the Fathers? Romanists, Protestants, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Pædo-baptists, all claim them; and controversies are terminated, not by the conviction of one party, but by the weariness of the combatants on the public. Bishop R. knows this, as well as we do, and therefore in the calm exercise of his judgment, he cannot but acknowledge that the rule laid down by him, is merely an imperfect *help* in ascertaining the true doctrine of the Bible. But as we understood him, and as the whole tenor of his sermon seemed to require, the rule is *authoritative*. "That interpretation of scripture is to be followed and relied on, &c. And in the reasoning contained in pp. 106, 107, &c. the same thing seems to be assumed: the question as to the disputed doctrine or interpretation is to be *submitted* to the judgment of the primitive church; and from this, there lies no appeal. Authority cannot be more absolute. But in page 123, the bishop says, "As clearly then, as can well be expressed, the rule is given and is presented by me, as a *help to private judgment*, as a safe guide to disputed truth, on a subject of the highest interest." Now to us there appears an inconsistency between these uses of the rule. There is a wide difference between a rule to which my understanding *must submit*; and one which affords me *aid in making up my opinion*. We have not the slightest objection to use the rule in this latter sense; as our own practice shows. And we use it with a confidence proportioned to its adaptation to the particular subject of inquiry. For illustration,

If the question in dispute is one of *simple, naked fact*; and the witnesses referred to were so situated, that they could not but know the fact, we consider their *testimony* as of the greatest value. If for instance we wish to determine the dispute respecting the Baptism of the children of believers; we go first to scripture; and, endeavoring faithfully to apply to them the principles of interpretation, as we apply them to all other books, we ascertain as well as we can what the word of God teaches. Here is the only *authority* to which we ever submit. But that, which convinces us, does not convince others. Well, if Christ appointed that the children of believers should be baptized, no doubt the apostles did thus baptize. Here then is a *plain, palpable fact*, in relation to which mistake is not possible. We resort then to the early writers, as witnesses. We sit in judgment, and weigh testimony; but do by no means *submit to authority*. This testimony, when fairly ascertained, we regard as of very great importance.

The case is precisely the same in regard to the Episcopal controversy. We go to the word of God: there we find ministers with ordinary and extraordinary powers: those of ordinary powers, are clearly intended to be standing officers in the church: they are called by various titles which are used interchangeably; bishops, presbyters, stewards, &c. &c. We are convinced that, according to the first pattern of the church, there was no distinction of rank

or order in the family of Christ. Here again is a question of fact, concerning which, witnesses could hardly be deceived. But it is a matter of testimony; not of authority. We begin then at the beginning, and examine every *unsuspected* witness we can find for two hundred and fifty years. The body of *testimony* found in the course of this examination, greatly strengthens our conviction that we have given the right interpretation to the particular parts of scripture, which concern church government.

Of precisely similar character; but of higher import is the question respecting the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. We *read* the book; it is one of very extraordinary character. Who wrote it? Here is a question of *naked fact*. It is determined exactly in the same way with the authorship of any other book. The evidence is so full and decisive as to produce complete conviction. So that if faith is to be given to human testimony, there cannot be the least reasonable doubt as to the genuineness and authenticity of this book. We have no hesitation, then, in resorting to the testimony of christians in regard to these facts, respecting which there can be no deception. And we place on it the greatest reliance.

But every intelligent reader perceives at once, that there is a wide difference between this case, and the question, what is the meaning of this book, called the New Testament? It is not possible to doubt as to the men who framed the Constitution of the United States—But we know that there are deplorable disputes as to its construction. In settling disputes of this kind, we place a very high value on what may be called historical interpretation. But yet the nature of the case makes it very different from that of determining the authorship of a book. *Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans*. This is a simple affirmation of fact, which testimony decides at once. *Paul in writing the epistle to the Romans intended to teach such and such truths*. Here is a general affirmation containing in it, just as many distinct particulars as there are sentences in the epistle; or as there are propositions, that may be derived from it. Now we grant, that if testimony could be brought to bear on each distinct proposition contained in the epistle to the Romans, just as it may be on the fact, *Paul wrote that letter*, there would be no more room for doubt in one case than in the other. Bishop R. then has plainly mistaken the point, when he affirms that disputes in relation to interpretation are settled in the same way, in which we determine that the Scriptures are the word of God. It is true, as far as historical interpretation goes, it is evidence of the same kind; that is *testimony*. But it is testimony respecting very different matters; and given in very different circumstances.

We admit that the matters in dispute, do not concern one hundredth part; nor one thousandth part of the propositions that may be framed from the New Testament; for—thanks to God!--that blessed book is, in general, too plain to be disputed about. But when there is a controversy respecting the meaning of passages, which involve undetermined points of doctrine, then the difficulty is great. For,

1. It is often extremely difficult to find witnesses giving uniform testimony.

2. They are often too remote, to be safely relied on.

3. The witnesses on which we might most safely depend, are often altogether silent as to the points in dispute.

4. The witnesses sometimes disagreed among themselves.

It is then, in relation to many matters now brought into question utterly impossible to say what "sense and meaning" of Scripture "has been invariably held and acted upon, by the one Catholic and Apostolic church of Christ."

Bishop R. does indeed "confidently assert his ability to show, what the primitive church invariably held, as the true sense and meaning of Scripture, on any point of disputed doctrine or order, which the reviewer may please to select." (pa. 103.) Now we have no doubt that the bishop really thought that he could do this. But the Reviewer, does not believe that he can: nor will he believe it, until the thing is done. We shall select a few cases after a while, on which he may, if he pleases, try his hand. In the mean time, we must inform him that the adversaries of high-church principles have often referred to the rule, in substance, given by him, and have put the decision of their case on the testimony of the primitive church. They have not then refused to submit to the rule; but have maintained that the rule worked in their favor. The true state of this whole matter, then, is just this. If bishop R. means that the *testimony* of the primitive church, as far as it can be ascertained, is a *valuable* HELP in determining disputes respecting interpretation, or doctrine, we have the happiness of agreeing with him. If he means, however, that points of difference are to be *authoritatively* decided by a reference to the primitive church, then we do certainly differ from him; and maintain that the rule is inconsistent with that right of private judgment, which is the fundamental principle of the Reformation. In reading the bishop's pamphlet, we find him appearing to us sometimes to hold one of these opinions, and sometimes the other. All that we hereafter have to say is on the supposition that he maintains the authoritative character of his rule.—Or the case may be thus stated. If we are investigating a passage of Scripture, we first resort to the usage of the writer; then the usage of other writers in the same language, to the scope of the passage, the context, &c. according to the plain rules of common sense. And among the helps employed, we are always ready to use the Fathers; but often we acknowledge with very little satisfaction.

When the inquiry respects a point of doctrine, our first recourse is to the scriptures; and the first step there is to ascertain their *real* meaning. When this is done, there is generally no difficulty in determining the matter in question: but should there be a difficulty, we resort, among other aids, to the writings of the primitive church; and gladly accept any assistance we can find there, in making up our mind. Will bishop R. agree to this? If so, our controversy is at an end.

But does he not say thus?—Here is a point of doctrine or order in dispute. *We* cannot settle it. But the primitive church (i. e. the three Creeds and the four general Councils) has determined the point, if you do not submit to this decision. I hold you as schismatics or

heretics, or both; and refuse to acknowledge you as members of the church, or partakers in God's covenanted mercies. This we oppose.

1. Because the rule runs in a circle. The bishop tells us to search the scriptures; but he bids us go to the church, that we may learn the true meaning of scripture. Well, where shall we find the true church? Here are the Romish church, the Protestant Episcopal church, the Presbyterian church, the Lutheran church, the Congregational church—all claiming to be true, and some *exclusively true*. What shall we do? Go to the primitive church? But suppose that we *cannot* do that; and all claim to have the true pattern—whom shall we believe? Must we not of necessity either put implicit faith in one or the other of these opposing claimants, or go to the Bible, and judge as well as we can for ourselves? If we do the first, we shall be pretty certain to choose that denomination, where we find the most kind hearted, humble, benevolent and holy men. If this should happen to be a Presbyterian, or Lutheran denomination, then the *Catholic* sends us to the *RIT* at once, and the *high-churchman* leaves us to *uncovenanted* mercy. But if we do the last—then we search the scriptures to find the church; and go to the church to explain the scriptures.

But on the supposition that we can search the records of the *primitive church*; how far do these terms reach? They include the first four general Councils,—that is, they reach 450 years. But in going through the records of this period, we find something to favor Congregationalism; more to support Presbyterianism; and in about 400 years strong evidences for Episcopacy; with now and then a little in favor of the Papists. And in modern times, we do not see any thing *exactly, in all respects*, like the primitive church. What are we then to do? The primitive church itself presents us different aspects; and really, we are unable to decide. Taking the first three centuries for our standard; we should, on the whole, be Presbyterians. But taking the next century and a half, we should in all probability be Episcopalians. We *must* go to scripture, and find the *notes* of a true church there. And then, according to the rule, we must look to the church to expound the scripture. Drive this argument as we may, it *will* run round in a circle.

But the bishop has taken up a strange notion, that our argument has the fault, which we have attributed to his. Let the reader turn to pages 106, 107, 108, and he will see a very curious attempt to make this out. The substance is this:—There are opposite views of the faith or order of the gospel. Both preacher and Reviewer say, *search the scriptures*. The search has been made; and the disputants do not agree. The bishop proposes to refer the matter to the “judgment of the primitive church.” No, says the Reviewer, I appeal to the scriptures. And all the bishop can do; the Reviewer stands to his first principle—search the scriptures. That is, an argument, which stands *stock still*, runs round in a circle!

The meaning of the Reviewer on this subject is this: What cannot be decided by the Bible, in matters of religion can be decided by no *authority* whatsoever. And considering the intention with which the word of God was given, matters which cannot be settled

by recurring to the Scripture, interpreted according to the sound principles of Hermeneutics—once more let this word be pardoned!—cannot be authoritatively settled at all. And he that adopts, and persists in the wrong opinion, must bear the consequences, whatever they may be. But it is reasonable to suppose that questions of this sort are not “fundamental;”—not of the essence of religion. For illustration—we take the leading question between Episcopalians and Presbyterians. Both go to Scripture; and they cannot settle it. The Presbyterian thinks however, that the terms of Scripture clearly give him the advantage.—The Episcopalian resorts to the Fathers. The Presbyterian follows him. All the stores of ancient learning are laid open. Men of the highest name are ranged on each side. Jewel, and Hooker, and Beveridge, and Hammond and Potter on the one; Salmasius, Milton, Blondel, Claude, D’Aille, &c. on the other. The subject is perfectly exhausted. The Presbyterian is positive that all the *best* evidence is in his favor; because it is the earliest *unsuspected* testimony that can be brought to bear on the case. The Episcopalian is confident that the Fathers favor his cause. Both agree, that there must be a ministry of the Gospel, regularly ordained; and the great difference is, whether the ordaining power is lodged with Presbyters; or is committed to the superior order of bishops. Now we say, that a question of this sort cannot surely belong to the *essence* of religion; it cannot be essential to the being of a church. You may be a true christian, entitled to covenanted mercies, and be either a Presbyterian, or an Episcopalian. Does bishop R’s rule overthrow this position? If it does; it is more rigid than any rule laid down in the word of God; and therefore we reject it. He thinks it a fearful thing, that the question never can be settled. We think it not near so bad as to settle it by any *authority* short of the word of God. If we are not convinced that the decision of men accords with the true meaning of the word of God, and we submit; then the submission of our understanding is made not to God, but to man. Should this be done in every case of disputed doctrine, where would be liberty of conscience, or the right of private judgment. “But (says the bishop, pa. 107,) the mischief stops not here. If such reasoning be correct, the purpose of God in the revelation of his will is reversed, and private judgment, competent or incompetent, (for you cannot limit) made the standard of the word of God. Thus faith is upturn from the foundation, and religion scattered to the winds.” What purpose of God is reversed? It cannot be God’s purpose, in putting his word into our hands, to direct us in the way of salvation. And when we place our faith in the word of God, as interpreted according to our best reason, how is faith upturn? When we are at a loss to understand the word of God, if any one *proves* its meaning to us, and the understanding submits, still it is to the authority of God. But if any one, or any body of men decrees or testifies that the word of God means *so and so*, without *proof*, then the credit is given to men, and not to God. This we think is tearing up faith with a witness.

But in the next place, the rule is held not to be good, because its application is impossible. Here the bishop asserts his ability to

show what the primitive church invariably held as to any disputed point whatsoever—and the same thing as to the Protestant Episcopal church—or the particular denomination of christians *calling it-self* (he will not call it) the Presbyterian church. Bishop R. has read the fable of the traveller, who made a *long jump* at Rhodes. He must *do* the thing, and then we will believe him. Let him show then what the primitive church *invariably held* respecting the office of *Deacons*: or that of bishops or presbyters—or respecting the *filioque* controversy; or the *quinquarticular* controversy.—When he shall have done this, we will, should we live long enough, give him some other points to settle.

But we will be less rigid.—Let the bishop show us what in every age since its foundation, the Church of England has invariably believed. Here, however, it will not do, to tell us that the Church of England has had her articles from the beginning unto this day. Because—not to insist on the several revisions of them which have taken place—the *letter* of the articles does not express the belief of the Church of England; it is the *meaning* attached to them which performs this service. Now in regard to this matter there have been very considerable charges, while the articles themselves have remained pretty much the same. Let bishop R. make himself acquainted with theological literature from the reign of Edward VI. to Charles I. and say what were the sentiments of the Fathers and Reformers of the Church of England. Let him then pursue a course of reading through the works of the leading writers, from the days of Laud to the present time: and he will find that the articles of the Church of England do not enable one to tell what sense and meaning the Church of England has invariably given to Scripture. Because, in truth, she has given a different meaning to her own articles, in different periods of her history. And at this very time, there are or very lately there have been warm controversies in that church as to the true interpretation of these articles. Plainly then the bishop's rule will not answer. It never has answered where conscience has been free. Here, however, we must insist on not being misunderstood. We not only admit, but we hold that the articles of any particular church *taken in their plain, grammatical meaning*, clearly enough indicate how the church, *which adheres to that meaning*, understands the *particular passages* of scripture referred to in support of the articles; and, *as far as the articles go*, it is determined what doctrine is derived from Scripture. This we take it, suggests the true and proper use of Creeds and Confessions. The church says, we understand that the Scriptures teach such and such doctrines; if you, on diligent inquiry, find it to be so, we can walk together in the fellowship of the same society. And the purpose is served as long as the church adheres to the plain meaning of her own articles. But when we fly from this purpose, and undertake to determine the meaning of any disputed text of Scripture, by referring to that which the church has *invariably held*, we commit the logical absurdity of attempting to settle an *unknown* question by one more *unknown*, *ignotum per ignotius*. No difficulty in *Scripture* is so great as that of determining, in relation to every disputed point, what the primitive church invariably held.

The questions proposed by our reviewer, in relation to particular doctrines, as held by the Episcopal church, retain all their force. We inquired, formerly, what that church held concerning the 17th article. The bishop does not tell us; but affirms, without the shadow of proof, that on this subject, her doctrine is what it always was. But what is this invariable doctrine? "It is not calvinistic;" says the bishop. Well then, what is it? Until the bishop shall answer this question, we have a right to assume, that he is unable to do it. And, whatever may be the doctrine held by the church of England at present, we are prepared to prove that Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Parker, Grindal, Whitgift, and the great body of English bishops, to the end of the reign of James I. held sentiments, which are now called *calvinistic*. We have no room here to adduce the evidence, by which these facts can be established. But, should any one hesitate as to the truth of the statement, we pledge ourselves to put the matter beyond all reasonable doubt.*

As for Baptismal regeneration, we refer the bishop for a refutation of his opinion to Scott, Biddulph, and other Episcopal writers, who have recently agitated that question.

And in relation to the general subject of Calvinism, the bishop's Caricature of the doctrine, reminds us of bishop Horsley's advice to men very much like our diocesan, *Take care that you know what Calvinism is before you oppose it.*—We have only to say farther, that

* Our readers may, perhaps, know something of the famous *Lambeth Articles*. They were drawn up at Lambeth palace, under the eye of Archbishop WHITGIFT, in connexion with Bancroft, then of London, and afterwards of Canterbury; Vaughan of Bangor; Tindal dean of Ely, and Whitaker queen's professor of Divinity. They are in these words.

1. God hath, from eternity, predestinated certain persons to life; and hath reprobated certain persons unto death.

2. The moving, or efficient cause of predestination unto life, is not the foresight of faith, or of perseverance, or of good works, or of any thing that is in the persons predestinated: but the alone will of God's good pleasure.

3. The predestinate are a predetermined and certain number, which can neither be lessened, nor increased.

4. Such as are not predestinated to salvation, shall inevitably be condemned on account of their sins.

5. The true, lively and justifying faith, and the Spirit of God justifying, is not extinguished, doth not utterly fail, doth not vanish away, in the elect, either finally, or totally.

6. A true believer, that is, one who is endued with justifying faith, is certified, by the full assurance of faith, that his sins are forgiven, and that he shall be everlastingly saved by Christ.

7. Saving grace is not allowed, is not imparted, is not granted to all men, by which they may be saved if they will.

8. No man is able to come to Christ, unless it be given him, and unless the Father draw him: and all men are not drawn by the Father, that they may come to his Son.

9. It is not in the will or power of every man to be saved.

Of these famous articles, the Archbishop of Canterbury thus expresses himself, "*I know them to be sound doctrines, and uniformly professed in this Church of England, and agreeable to the articles of religion established by authority.*" The Archbishop of York (Hutton) gave his testimony in their favor.—And these very articles were sent to the University of Cambridge with a letter from Whitgift, in which it was desired that "nothing be publicly taught to the contrary."—What was the doctrine held by the church of England then?

the bishop shows himself greatly to need this advice. Disclaiming utterly all resemblance between the doctrines reprobated by this writer, and those of the christians called *Calvinists*, we do not feel ourselves called on to say a word more on this subject.

The question urged by the bishop, (pa. 113.) "in what method we would proceed to produce the conversion of a fallen being, absolutely unregenerate?" is noticed here as a theological curiosity.

Our next objection to the bishop's rule is, that it is contrary to the *fundamental principle of the Reformation*.

On this point we do not feel the necessity of making many remarks. If any one knows not, that the sole *authority of Scripture* to settle questions of religious controversy is the fundamental principle of the Reformation, it is necessary for him to study ecclesiastical history. We have before said, that if bishop R. means that the *testimony of the ancient church*, as far as it can be clearly ascertained, and the expositions of the *fathers*, are to be taken as helps, to be used according to our best judgment, there is no difference between us on this point: but if they are to be taken as *authority*, to which private judgment must submit, then we are forever against him: and what is more, the principles of the Reformation are against him.

His error arises from this. The great men, who conducted the Reformation, had to maintain their ground against those who had been accustomed, for ages, to submit to the authority of the church. The influence of this authority was very great. While, therefore, they adopted, as their first principle, the *sufficiency of the Scriptures* and made them the sole judge of controversy, they were not slow to take their adversaries on their own ground; and were not unwilling to appeal to the testimony of the fathers, and the judgment of the primitive church. Many would have given them no credit at all, had they not pursued this course. Accordingly it would be perfectly easy to fill a folio volume with references to the judgment of the ancient church, and the expositions of the fathers, made by the Reformers. But this by no means disproves our position.—Notwithstanding all this, the rock on which the Reformation rested, was the sufficiency and exclusive authority of the Bible. The references then made by the bishop to particular writers, and to the *Confessions* of different churches, proves nothing to his purpose. "The Helvetic Confession of 1536" expresses precisely the thing we have been aiming at. Articles 2 and 3, quoted by bishop R. pa. 120. "The interpretation of Scripture is to be sought *only from Scripture itself*, that thus Scripture may be its own interpreter; under the directing rule however of charity and faith."—"So FAR AS the holy fathers have adhered to this species of interpretation, we not only accept them as interpreters of Scripture, but venerate them as beloved instruments of God." This is the true Presbyterian, Protestant rule. But we judge in every case how far they have adhered to this rule.

The method pursued by many Protestants, however, of referring to the fathers often made their work extremely embarrassing. The remarks of bishop Hurd, quoted in part in our former Review, place this subject exactly on the right ground. Bishop R.'s attempt

to get over this by his usual cry of misrepresentation only shows that he was "hard run." See pa. 139, note. Let any man read bishop H.'s book, and if he has no prejudice to warp his mind he will see that we fairly expressed the sense of that ingenious author. The only pretence offered by bishop R. to support the very serious charges of *unfairness* and *falsehood* is that we placed in capitals, what, as bishop Hurd's book is printed, was inclosed in hooks or brackets. School boys learn in their elementary books, that a parenthesis consists of words introduced into a sentence, not material to the sense. And they who never advance farther in knowledge, suppose, whenever they see the marks usually indicating a parenthesis, that something is introduced not material to the sense. But when we read with the understanding of men, we soon learn that, very often, words which are intended to be very emphatical, and on which great stress is laid, are thus marked. It is easy to give an illustration of this, which bishop R. will feel to be very plain. If we could permit ourselves to descend to personalities, and say in relation to the style and manner of the book we are reviewing—men of coarse minds, of furious passions and violent prejudices, (and bishop R. is one of these) always substitute abuse for argument,—would the bishop say that the words in the parenthesis were immaterial; had little meaning, or none worthy of notice? On the contrary would not he and his friends cry out against us, as violaters of the courtesy which ought to distinguish christians and gentlemen? Let our readers understand that we make no assertion of this kind respecting bishop R. We only wish him to see that in this case he has very unwarrantably brought *heavy charges* on us, because we have taken one method, (and that which we are in the constant habit of using) of showing the emphasis of a sentence, while the author from whom we quoted adopted another.

The bishop employs several pages to show that in attempting to invalidate the *authority* of the fathers, we do, as far as our little influence extends, unmeasurable mischief, besides contradicting ourselves.

We aim a blow at the foundation of all religion! Indeed!—This is truly mischievous; and worse than mischievous. But how? Why it is on the *testimony* of the fathers that we believe that the Bible is the word of God. But here the bishop talks loosely. *Authority* is that to which, without question, we are bound to submit. *Testimony* is that of which we are to judge. When we weigh it carefully, judge of its credibility, and see that it is good, our understanding is fully convinced. When it applies to facts concerning which there can be no deception, is uniform and consistent, doubt is utterly unreasonable. This is the case with the testimony of the fathers respecting the important matter involved in this question. But the bishop does not state the point on which this testimony of the fathers bears. *They* do not directly prove that the Bible is the word of God: they prove that Matthew, Mark, Luke, &c. wrote the books ascribed to them; and that these books were *believed* by them to be the word of God. A number of steps more are necessary to make us believe it. The testimony of the fathers then to the fact of authorship is a very different thing from *authority*, in the only sense in which this word is relevant to the subject.

As to our inconsistency, we have already shown the weakness of the charge. Testimony may be fully sufficient to convince us that such an action as the baptizing of infants was performed—and yet the testimony of the very same men may be utterly insufficient to show that a book containing ten thousand distinct propositions, means *so and so*, and cannot mean any thing else. While therefore we attribute not a jot or tittle of *authority* to the fathers, we value their *testimony* exactly according to its worth. And we cheerfully acknowledge our obligations to D'Aille for the assistance which we have derived from him—Other Protestants have done the same. We admit indeed that he pushes his argument too far; yet he was a very great, learned and good man. Has bishop R. ever read his book? Respecting this man, universally esteemed in the Protestant world, bishop R. thinks himself warranted to speak thus. (Pa. 124.) “The pupil of D'Aille declares his teacher; but it requires *Corinthian assurance* to assert, that his work, on the right use of the fathers, was useful to the men you name.” *Corinthian assurance!* This, in plain English is, *brazen impudence*. Well what have we done? Stated nothing but historical facts. It is undeniable that lord Falkland sent D'Aille's book to Chillingworth, and that it was the means of extricating that admirable man from the entanglements of Popery. We do request our readers to procure bishop Hurd's “*Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies*,” and read from page 329 to pa. 333, Amer. Edition. Lest, however, this should not be in their power, we give the following extract. The author had previously shown, that Protestants had disavowed and deserted the principle, that the SCRIPTURE IS THE SOLE RULE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH; and that great evils had resulted from this error. He then proceeds thus.

“The inconvenience was sensibly felt by the Protestant world. And, after a prodigious waste of industry and erudition, a learned foreigner (M. D'Aille) at length showed the inutility and folly of pursuing the contest any further. In a well considered discourse *on the use of the fathers*, he clearly evinced, that their authority was much less than was generally supposed, in all points of religious controversy; and that their judgment was especially incompetent in *those points*, which were agitated by the two parties. He evinced this conclusion by a variety of unanswerable arguments; and chiefly by showing that the matters in debate were, for the most part, *such as had never entered into the heads of those old writers, being, indeed, of much later growth*, and having first sprung up in the barbarous ages. They could not, therefore, decide on questions, which they had no occasion to consider, and had, in fact never considered; however their careless or figurative expression might be made to look that way, by the dextrous management of the controversialists.”

“This discovery had great effects. It opened the eyes of the more candid and intelligent inquirers: and our incomparable Chillingworth, with some others (Lord Falkland, Lord Digby, Dr Jer. Taylor, &c.) took advantage of it to set the controversy with the Church of Rome, once more, on its proper foot; and to establish forever, the old principle THAT THE BIBLE, and that only, (inter-

preted by our best reason) IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS." This *Corinthian assurance* which the bishop so courteously assigned to us, then, must be transferred to bishop Hurd! How could any thing be more unfortunate? It is always safest to know something of books, before one writes about them.*

In pages 126, 127, the bishop amuses us by his argument to show that we in company with our reverend brother, Dr Miller, take the same ground with the Unitarians. Mr Sparks and we speak highly of the learned D'Aille. So also does bishop Hurd; so do many others. Let the bishop deal out the same measure to all.

Again. Dr Miller, Mr Sparks and the Reviewer reject the authority of the epistles of Ignatius. And what then? Dr Miller, Mr Sparks, bishop R., Mohammed, and the Reviewer believe that there is one God; and reject the authority of the Pope. *Most fearful!*

One word as to the charge of inconsistency in the reference made to the epistles of Ignatius. They are not quoted by any Presbyterian as *authority*. The case is just this. It is much questioned whether these writings are *genuine* or not; nevertheless they are very ancient. But as the controversy respecting them is not settled, let us hear what they say.

1. In relation to the form of the church, they are against *diocesan*, and in favor of *parochial* episcopacy.

2. In regard to the Unitarian controversy, they are altogether on the side of the orthodox.—Whatever opinion, then, may be formed of the value of their testimony, it is all for us. There surely is no inconsistency here! As they are very ancient writings, they show at least what was the opinion of the author respecting these matters of controversy; and as far as the judgment of one man goes, they throw light on the opinions of the church, at the time when he lived.

We cannot persuade ourselves to prolong this Review, by following bishop R. through his quotations from Chillingworth and Hooker for the purpose of showing that we have not fairly exhibited the sentiments of those great men. The whole argument is one, which we used, not because we thought it of any importance in itself, but because bishop R. called for *authority*; and we wished to suit his taste. The only point in which we can possibly feel any interest in the subject now, is the refutation of the charge of misrepresentation brought forward by the bishop. This would be easy enough, if it were of any importance. As for Chillingworth

*Bishop R. was rash enough to accuse us with unfairness and falsehood (we sicken at the very thought) because in formerly quoting this passage, it was printed differently from the book from which it was taken, as we have explained above. We however gave exactly the words of bishop Hurd. Bishop R. undertakes to give them "*exactly* as they stand" in Hurd's work, letter for letter, yet behold he has them printed in a very different form, as may be seen.

Bishop R. gives them thus.

And to establish forever the old principle, that the Bible, and that only (interpreted by our best reason) is the religion of Protestants.

Bishop Hurd's book is thus printed.

"And to establish, forever, the old principle THAT THE BIBLE, and that only, (interpreted by our best reason) IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS."—How careless!

we could quote page after page to show that he did conduct his controversy with the Roman Catholics on the principles which he learned from D'Aille, and that he gave *authority* to the Bible alone. And we hold ourselves able to prove that, as for Hooker, bishop R. has yet to learn the fundamental principles, on which his work rests. But after all, it would amount only to this; that we are not chargeable with doing that, which we are as incapable of doing as bishop R. is of acknowledging Dissenters to be christian brethren. If there is any such thing, as knowing definitely what men mean by their words, we are able to prove that the founders and fathers of the Church of England think with us concerning the *authority of the scriptures*, and their full sufficiency as interpreted by themselves. Should there ever appear any necessity for showing that these are not mere *boasting words*, we will not be slow to engage in the work.

Our Reviewer had said that bishop R's. rule was worthless; and in support of his assertion appealed to the state of the Church of England. The rule does not produce uniformity there. This fact is unquestionable. The History of the Bible Society proves it.—The state of religious controversy proves it. The bishop says that it is because the minority in the church refuse to submit to the rule. Here his information is not correct. For while the best men in the English Church maintain the sufficiency and sole authority of the scriptures, in their controversies, they are very desirous to show that the articles of the church, and the fathers, are on their side. So then it is manifest that there is a dispute about the application of the rule. And it is found just as difficult to determine in whose favour the rule works, as what doubtful passages of scripture mean. What is a rule worth in this case?

While on this subject we are bound, in justice to ourselves, to offer a remark or two, on some observations of our Reviewer in relation to the established Church of England. He had urged the fact just adverted to respecting the divisions in the Church of England, as proof positive that the bishop's rule is worthless and remarked, that in that establishment, there were high and low churchmen, Deists, Arians, Socinians, Calvinists, Arminians and Swedenborgians: and that this not only proves that the bishop's rule *won't do*; but that great injury is done to a church, when government encourages bad men to seek a living in it. Now these remarks have been sadly misinterpreted by the bishop. Our design was, simply to state the evils of an establishment. It "allures ambition, cupidity, and infidelity." It affords opportunity of simony. It makes the church subservient to the government. When has it happened that a British prime minister could not command the vote of the bench of bishops? When the government supports the church, will not that government take care that the church will answer its purposes, and promote its views? This is the whole amount of our meaning. And all history proves, that establishments do afford encouragement to bad men to seek a living in the church. We do not pretend however that the *object* of the establishment is, to induce bad men to enter the church. We speak only of the effect.

But here, again, the bishop is grievously offended, because in speaking of the valueless character of his rule, we adverted to the fact, that clergymen of different sentiments in the Episcopal church subscribe their articles with different views. There are probably at this time between five hundred and a thousand clergymen in the English church, who in a classification of religious opinions are called Calvinists. There may be fifty Swedenborgians. There are very many Arminians. These cannot all subscribe the articles in the same sense. Some subscribe *ex animo*, that is, because they really receive the articles in their plain grammatical sense. Others, because they are *articles of peace*. The distinction has long been made; and is perfectly familiar. They who subscribe in the latter sense, never dream that they are committing perjury, or any thing like it. As little did the Reviewer ever think of making such a charge. This is altogether the invention of bishop R. Our readers, then, may consider all that he has said on this subject as entirely wide of his mark. It is true, the Reviewer thinks it strange that any man can persuade himself that the articles of the church are anti-calvinistic. But he has no doubt that some men may so believe. Yet that multitudes subscribe them as *peace articles* he has no doubt. Of them, he has said nothing beyond the mere fact; and he meant to make no use whatsoever of the fact, but in the way of argument against the bishop's favorite rule. We have said this, because we do utterly abhor the practice of railing against whole bodies of men, and charging them with wickedness, because they differ from us. We cannot suffer ourselves to lie under any such imputations.

That the articles of the Church of England are Calvinistic appears evident from this; that no *Arminian* ever was known to frame such articles. When Mr Wesley separated from the Church of England, and drew up his system, how many of the doctrinal articles of that church did he omit? When the dispute arose between the Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants in Holland, what was the judgment of the English church respecting the five points? What *unfettered* Arminian ever was known to subscribe the articles of the English church? But let any man take the articles and compare them, in their plain grammatical meaning, with the Confessions of the Reformed churches; and he will not fail to see that they all teach substantially the same system. As for the consistency of this system with the gospel offer, it is no part of our present work to make it out; and we are utterly unwilling to prolong the controversy. Let bishop R. seek information from writers in his own church. Let him go to Scott and Newton. Or if the authority of these men is not sufficient, let him go to Hooker, to Beveridge, to Usher, to Hall, to Davenant, to Whitgift, to Grindal, to Parker;—from such writers as these, he may perhaps learn something.

In the mean time, we must set him right as to the reason why *Evangelical clergymen* are objects of our affectionate regard.

“That for the *Evangelical* Clergy of England (and I doubt not for those of America likewise) in this novel acceptance of the word, Dr Rice ‘entertains the highest regard,’ and the sincerest affection, needs not to be disputed; nor yet, that he rejoices at their increase. Strange indeed is

would be, when men think alike, and act as near as possible by the same rule, that the bonds of fellowship should not be strengthened. In this case, there is but the mere trifle of Episcopacy betwixt them; and as observation has taught me, so doubtless it has not escaped Dr Rice, that where the principles of Calvin are entertained, the revealed order of the Gospel, is proportionably, lightly regarded. Hence the flattery which this description of persons receives from the Presbyterians, and the high gratification all classes of Dissenters manifest, at receiving countenance from any portion of the Episcopal Church."—pp. 143, 144.

Here the bishop errs greatly. We have two reasons for loving the evangelical clergy of all denominations. 1. They appear to embrace the great truths of our common christianity with all the heart, and live under their influences. 2. They love these truths so much, as to recognise as brethren, and co-operate with those, who embrace them, notwithstanding differences in form and order. And if this is, indeed, the effect of embracing the principles of Calvin, it affords some pretty good evidence that these are also the principles of the gospel.

But as for the flattery of which the bishop speaks, he is entirely out. We love truly evangelical men of all denominations; because they have the spirit of Christ. But when we see, as unhappily we do see men of this character, allowing themselves to be screwed up to high-church principles, we hesitate not to withstand them to the face. We ask the bishop seriously to consider what spirit is indicated by the declaration that *Dissenters* manifest "high gratification at receiving countenance from any portion of the Episcopal church?" Alas! how little he knows of Dissenters. They rejoice when their Episcopal brethren evince sincere, humble, devoted piety:—it is the joy of christian benevolence.

As for bishop R's pleas for the English establishment, we let them pass for just what they are worth. We advert to the subject only for the purpose of entering a solemn protest against the insinuation, that we designed to bring odium on the Episcopal church of this country, by referring to the establishment of England. And we hereby publicly declare our full and firm belief, that there is not an evangelical denomination in the United States, at all desirous to be brought into alliance with the state. Nay more: we do verily believe that the churches of Christ among us, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Congregational, would each one severally, oppose any such measure for themselves. So deeply, and deadly do they believe the injury done to vital piety by these unholy mixtures. We have inquired much into this subject—and such is our full conviction. All then, that bishop R. has said on this subject goes entirely for nothing as far as we are concerned.

But we cannot dismiss the subject of the progress of popery in the present day, quite so easily. We had forewarned the bishop that his rule would not do, to enable him to maintain a conflict with the man of sin; and that, let the trial come when it may, he would find himself obliged to resort to the great Protestant principle of the sufficiency of the scriptures. The History of the Reformation according to the bishop's own showing, proves this. Did the Reformed churches adopt his rule? Whence then, their want of

uniformity? Why do Episcopal, and Presbyterian, and Lutheran churches in their varieties exist? And why are interminable contests carried on respecting the form and doctrine of the primitive church? And why do the most learned and skilful papists uniformly resort to the Fathers, for a decision of controversy? And how can the Fathers decide controversies which have arisen long since they were born? The bishop may rely on it, that a controversy which cannot be settled by scripture, interpreted on the plain principles of common sense, just as we interpret other books, cannot be settled at all. But this subject need not now be followed.

That the Holy Alliance does use the corruptions of religion to sustain their evil purposes we doubt not: that with this view they support the Pope and the Jesuits, and priests as wicked, the course of events renders very clear. And we hope to be pardoned for relating a personal anecdote. It was our fortune once to encounter Dr B., a man distinguished for talent and science, but unhappily a determined infidel. He attacked the Bible Society on the ground, that it was a mere tool of the Holy Alliance, and expressed great surprise that Americans and republicans should imitate Europeans in a case like this. We defended the Bible Society on the principle, that the dissemination of the holy scriptures is favorable to the interests of genuine liberty. Our antagonist made the remark, which bishop R. makes in a note pa. 147, that Alexander of Russia, the head of the Holy Alliance, was the greatest friend of the Bible Society in the world. To which we replied,—*He does not know what he is doing*—But mark these words: *as soon as Alexander shall be made to understand what is the proper effect of the Bible generally distributed among the people, he will put down the Bible Society in his dominions. And our great fear is, that, through the activity of the Jesuits, he will make the discovery before the Bible can be fully circulated among the Russian peasantry.*—This conjecture was verified by the event. Despots, political and ecclesiastical, regard the Bible as their greatest enemy.

And we regard bishop R.'s reflections on our Reviewer, and his "*jesuitical arts,*" with perfect indifference. But at the bottom of pa. 148, (note,) there is a query proposed, which we feel it to be our duty to notice. "Is the attention of the religious world directed so constantly to the march of popery, in order to call off its observation, from the strides of presbytery to a similar domination?" This question was proposed immediately after a censure of our Reviewer, repeated about the tenth time, for endeavoring to excite prejudices against the Episcopal church. So much for consistency! But as to the injurious reflection on the Presbyterian church here made, we have little to say, except that we are very sorry that any one, for whom we feel compassion, should *expose* himself by making it. It is much about as wise, and as well founded, as to say that the Constitution of Virginia or North Carolina is *monarchical*, or that the *people* are making strides to overthrow republicanism. If bishop R. had not shewn himself lamentably uninformed in regard to the Presbyterian church, we should be constrained to say, that in this case, he knew better. But he "knows not what he says, nor whereof he affirms." And the world knows little of what

this country owes to Presbyterian principles, in giving "an impulse to the ball of the revolution;" or to the hardy valor of the sons of the church; or to the pious patriotism of her ministers. Some future *Robertson* will rise up and do her justice. The world knows not how the principles of liberty are engraved in the constitution of that church: nor that domination, if exercised at all, must be exercised by the people over themselves. We cannot here do justice to this subject. But this we fear not to declare as an unquestionable fact, that there is no body of men in the United States, of equal intelligence and standing in society, who meddle so little with political questions, and mingle so little in the strife of party politics, as the Presbyterian clergy.

As the bishop advances, he waxes warmer, and we find him making on pa. 149 the following declarations:

"And in Bishop R.'s opinion (which he has no desire to conceal) it is not a matter of much, though it is certainly of some, importance—whether the victory be gained against the *faith*, or against the *order* of the Gospel. Those are *equally* the Revelation of Almighty God to the world, and *alike* fundamental to the hope, limited on the observance of them, as divine appointments. Nor can the Bishop conceive, upon what principle of justice, or fair reasoning, a corrupt and erroneous view, as to the *order* of the Gospel, is less an offence against God, than a corrupt and erroneous view as to the *faith* of the Gospel. In other words—why an *honest Unitarian* is less excusable before God, than an *honest Presbyterian, Congregationalist or Independent*. When Dr Rice can solve this spiritual problem, and shew by warrant of Scripture, that a *schismatic* is in a less dangerous condition than a *heretic*, as respects the righteous judgment of God, there may be some excuse for the dogmatism of this Reviewer, *against Unitarians as to the faith of the Gospel, and in favor of Unitarians as to the order of the Gospel.*"

This caps the climax! This single extract shows why high-church delusions are to be exposed, and high-church principles put down if possible. And we have copied it here, principally for the purpose of showing why we have felt it our duty to subject the bishop's work to a strict scrutiny. One of the striking distinctions between christianity and every other system of religion, is that it lays so little stress, comparatively, on matters of outward observance; while it makes the *truth* supremely important. It is by the truth, that we are sanctified and saved. And if any one truly believes the gospel, relies on the atonement and obeys the commands of the Lord Jesus; in other words, if he becomes a truly holy man, he shall be saved. The gospel makes this as plain as daylight. The whole *order* of the gospel is founded on this general principle. And therefore the office of teacher was instituted—and the sacraments were appointed. The specific object of the whole is the conveying of truth to the understanding and conscience: when this is done so as to produce faith and holiness, the work intended by Christ is done. Yet bishop R. is so deceived as to believe and teach, that besides all this, there is something else of *nearly* equal importance, which he calls the *order* of the gospel; something entirely distinct from doctrinal truth and its influences; something possessed by him, his Presbyters and deacons, as necessary to constitute one a christian, as belief in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord our Saviour! He cannot, if it were to save his soul, draw out from the scriptures,

clearly and unequivocally, the form of the church polity, which he connects with the mercies of God; and yet on account of this form, which he mistakes for a positive institution of God, he divides the church, and separates from the great body of the faithful, and turns and denounces them as heretics or schismatics. And thinks that he is "set" for this purpose. He makes that to be essential to the being of a church, and the hopes of man, which he cannot prove from the Bible; and his system is in this part, at war with the true genius of our religion.

The following pages to 160 are mere *crambe recocta* a saying over, of what was said before. We remark here only this, that we have purposely avoided any formal discussion of the calvinistic tenets attacked by bishop R. for two reasons.

1. We hold every man, who adopts the 39 articles, as fully bound to vindicate the doctrines of predestination and election, as we ourselves are.

2. While we never mean, on any proper occasion, to shrink in the least degree from a support of the doctrines which we have derived from the word of God, we cannot consent to undertake a work of this sort, when circumstances utterly forbid our going through with it. We have a great repugnance to the naked statement of any doctrine of the scriptures: it is not so in the Bible. There we find the truth so exhibited as always to show us the practical reason why God has revealed it to us. When we are taught that God knows now, and knew from all eternity, every thing that he will know in the day of judgment; that he will form no new purpose in the day of final decision; that is no purpose which he has not formed from all eternity; when we learn that God is a sovereign, who ordereth all things after the council of his own will, we learn the whole from the Bible in such a way as to lay a foundation for the exercise of pious affections. When one falls and breaks a limb; or is made sick by *malaria*; or is injured by his fellow-men; or is bereaved by the death of friends; when one has religious privileges, and pious, benevolent feelings, and holy purposes, he, as taught by the word and aided by the spirit of God, sees the hand of God in all these events, and exercises suitable affections towards God; and the government of God is felt to be desirable. But when the naked metaphysical truth is brought forward, men are sure to cavil and find fault. The same remarks apply to the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity. The naked proposition; that a person really and truly possessing a divine nature, died in shame on a cross in this world, is stated, the reason of every man is staggered. But when this doctrine is presented as it is in scripture, in connexion with the depravity and ruin of man; and the sinner is made to see and feel his condition, and understand all that is necessary for his pardon and sanctification, and everlasting salvation; and is commanded to trust in Jesus to do all this for him, he finds it impossible to exercise this faith, and cherish hope through Christ, without believing that he is a Divine and Almighty Redeemer. Sooner might one depend on an infant of a month old, to raise a millstone that was crushing him to death; than depend on a *mere man* to do, what Jesus Christ has undertaken to do for sinners in the gospel.--These remarks will justify us we hope to our friends,

in passing over many things said by bishop R. against those Christians who are called Calvinists.

We come now to the bishop's concluding paragraphs. And it is with emotions felt by the *ten thousand*, in their famous retreat (immortalized by the pen of Xenophon,) when after many a weary step, through a parched and burning land, they came in sight of the sea, and the whole army at once shouted *Θαλασσα! Θαλασσα!*

Two subjects here claim attention one respecting the political as well as religious influence of the opinions which we oppose, the other a letter written by bishop R. to the Editor of the Literary and Evangelical Magazine.

As to the first; bishop R. makes our Reviewer "bring forward the serious charge of the surrender of the Episcopal Church in America, to the views of a foreign influence, alike hostile to our civil and religious institutions." We confess that after all the proofs which the bishop had given of rash and bold assertion in the previous parts of his work, we read this sentence with utter amazement. We did not suppose that any ingenuity, however perverse, could ever have brought this conclusion out of any thing uttered by us; especially, when we absolutely disclaimed the belief that the bishop saw the consequences of his own opinions; and distinctly declared the conviction that the Episcopalians of the country are as much attached to our political institutions, as any citizens of the United States.

It is one of the vile arts of controversy, to attach odium to a man by consequences derived from opinions, which he disavows. We feel ourselves to be immeasurably above any such tricks as these; and hold them in utter contempt. But it is entirely fair to oppose opinions by stating consequences, which we think to be legitimately deduced from them. This we never hesitate to do. And in this way we mean to oppose high-church notions.

In regard to the particular matters now before us, to which the bishop with that regard to decorum which characterises him, has allowed himself to apply the epithets, "*slandrous and false*," we solemnly declare that we were actuated by no feeling but that of *good will* towards the Episcopal Church. How this was we beg leave to explain. But first we must premise, that although we are thoroughly, and decidedly, under the fullest conviction, *Presbyterians*; and although we wonder much, that all who have the opportunity of making a fair examination, are not Presbyterians too, yet we never could conceive of any reason, why we should quarrel with any man for being an Episcopalian. We never once thought of hostility to the Episcopal Church: because we recognise it as a branch of the church of Christ and its pious members as Christian brethren. But we see a palpable distinction between an Episcopalian and a high-churchman. He may certainly be reckoned an Episcopalian who thinks it expedient that the church should be placed under the care of bishops, (diocesans) and on the whole prefers that form of government; but yet acknowledges as brethren all who receive the fundamental *doctrines* laid down in the 39 articles. He may even think this sort of Episcopacy to be of divine institution, yet not essential to the being of the church: and so hold communion with

non-episcopal brethren. But he is a high-churchman, who so holds Episcopacy to be of divine right, that there can be no church without prelacy; who calls himself the accredited agent of heaven, the substitute for Christ on earth; who thinks that all the power which the Saviour has committed to his Church, is vested in the ministry, and transmitted by succession; who regenerates man by baptism, negotiates his pardon, and gives him assurance of salvation, by the Lord's Supper, who binds the source of all grace to the fulfilment of his engagements, and brings the authority of the church to interpret the scriptures. Now we are most fully convinced,

1. That claims like these are contrary to the spirit of the Gospel.

2. That, as far as they are admitted, they are injurious to the interests of true religion.

3. And that they are hurtful to the cause of civil liberty.

They form the basis of that stupendous system, which when fully erected, showed forth the *Man of Sin* in complete revelation.—Allow this power to the Clergy, and they are at once placed on vantage ground, and nothing can prevent their ultimately gaining a complete ascendancy, but the expedient of making the church dependent on the state. It is in vain to say, that this authority is only allowed to the Clergy in *matters of faith*. When man surrenders himself up to a vicar of Christ, in regard to all matters which concern faith, and conscience and salvation, it will not be long before he will yield still farther; and farther still, until every thing will be obliged to submit to an uncontrolled ecclesiastical domination. The growth of papal authority affords abundant proof of these truths. And as liberty cannot exist, so piety cannot flourish under high-church influences. It soon becomes a matter of parade and show; religion loses all its spirituality and purity: its pomp fills the imagination, its ceremonies satisfy the conscience, while the heart remains completely unimproved. And then it is that men

“HATE THE GOSPEL, WHILE THEY LOVE THE CHURCH.”

Here is the reason why we set ourselves, not in opposition to the Episcopal church, but to high-church principles. We perceive that vigorous efforts are made to promote these principles in this country, and we feel that the times call for vigorous opposition. Now we did not, in the least degree, intend to attach, even to a high-churchman, the odium of consequences which all history teaches us to deduce from his principles, and therefore we stated again and again, that we did not at all believe that bishop R. saw through his own opinions; and of course we held that he could not design to produce these evils. We did intend to give him a warning which, if taken in the spirit in which it was given, might be salutary. Our Reviewer is not the first whose kind intentions have been spoken of in evil terms. But our benevolence went still farther. The great body of Episcopalians in this country, do not approve these high-church notions. They think them illiberal; and only submit to them because they do not like to quarrel with their Clergy. In the meanwhile, the high-churchmen are steady to their purpose, and the attempt is perseveringly made to diffuse their principles.—Nor is the attempt unsuccessful. Every observer can mark the change. Fully believing, that complete success

would do unspeakable injury to the cause of religion in general, and to our *sister church* (for so we thought and felt in relation to it—) in particular, we designed to alarm the people, by pointing out consequences, which though undesigned, we believed certain. For the purpose of exciting a greater alarm, we adverted to certain facts, which at the time were fully before us. It had been published in all the newspapers, that the Pope had added *twenty-four thousand dollars* to his *annual* appropriation for supporting and extending the Catholic religion in this country; we heard on good authority that popish propagandists were alert and active; that a zealous Missionary Society in Paris affords very extensive aid to the Missions of the Jesuits in this country; we saw in the *Christian Observer* an address to christians in Great Britain, stimulating them to assist in building up the Episcopal church in this country, by this consideration that there was danger lest the Roman Catholics should occupy the ground before them. And in these circumstances, with our full conviction that high-church principles are *akin to popery*, our determination was to do our humble part in awakening public attention and public feeling to such a degree, that the people when about to settle a Minister, would first ascertain whether he was a high-churchman, or a low-churchman. In doing this, we were sure that we should do great kindness. The principles which we oppose, we do conscientiously believe will ruin any church, and any country: and the opposition made by us, was benevolent, in its object; it was intended to be urbane, respectful and christian in its manner. The bigots of all parties cannot conceive of the strength with which we felt the common bond of brotherhood; nor of the degree to which we identified ourselves with all who love the Lord Jesus, and are willing to co-operate in promoting his cause: they are incapable of forming any idea of our abhorrence of a proselytizing spirit; and of our carelessness, whether, if one were a christian, he united with *this society or that*; and therefore this statement will appear to them incredible.

Nor will they be able any better to appreciate our motives, in holding back a part of the letter which bishop R. sent to the Editor of our Magazine. That letter contained the following words:—When the rule of interpretation shall be settled “it will be time enough to notice in detail, the fallacies which abound in the piece in question, and to thank you for holding me up to religious and political odium, while with characteristic Presbyterian cunning, a protest is entered against drawing the only fair meaning from your language.” CHARACTERISTIC PRESBYTERIAN CUNNING! It was once written by a wit of great celebrity; and a keen observer of human nature.

Is he a *churchman*? then he's fond of *power*.
A *quaker*? sly—a *presbyterian*? *sour*.

Whatever changes may have taken place, we believe that high-churchmen retain their old nature: and as for the Presbyterians, we have never known evidences of their sourness, except when they were brought to encounter the followers and retainers of worldly power. Then indeed, they are sometimes a little caustic; but they have been diluted from the concentrated sourness of the

sturdy old Cameronian to the mild *subacid* of our Reviewer. And really and truly, it was this gentleness which prevented our publishing the whole of the bishop's letter. He had there spoken of the Presbyterian body in very unbecoming terms. "Characteristic Presbyterian Cunning!"—There are twelve hundred Ministers of the Gospel, and more than two hundred thousand professing christians, in the United States, of whom the bishop of North-Carolina permits himself thus to speak. 'We thought that the language was so bitter, so illiberal, in a word so misbecoming the Episcopal character as drawn by the Apostle Paul, that we would not let the world hear it. In tenderness to the bishop's character we withheld it, believing that he wrote in anger what he would repent of in his cooler moments. This, if there is truth in man, was our reason for forbearing to publish that which bishop R. does not hesitate to bring before the world.

We neither, then, were actuated by hostility to the Episcopal church nor any unfriendly feeling to bishop R. in any thing written by us. On the contrary all was kindness and goodwill. And now we declare ourselves to be utterly incapable of unfriendliness to any who bear the name, and exhibit the spirit of Jesus Christ.—And we do fully believe, that high-church principles are so at variance with the meek and humble spirit of the Gospel; with pure christian charity; with the primitive constitution of the church; with the real interests of the country; that the people, every where, ought to require of a Minister of the Gospel a formal and utter renunciation of such principles before they afford him their support.—But we are perfectly willing; nay, earnestly desirous that all intelligent, well trained, pious, humble men, who have consecrated themselves to the work of the Ministry, and are devoted with all their hearts, not to the building up of a party, not to the narrow interests of sectarism, but to the glory of God and the salvation of men, may be received in love, wherever they go, and be very highly esteemed for their works' sake. Such men, we shall ever delight to recognise as brethren;—while we shall ever consider ourselves as set for opposition to the opinions of those who set up to be vicars of Christ on earth.

APPENDIX TO THAT PART OF THE REVIEW OF BISHOP RAVENSCROFT'S
BOOK, WHICH TREATS OF THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS.

EPISTLES OF IGNATIUS.

Ignatius was pastor, presiding presbyter, or bishop of the Church at Antioch. He was celebrated as a man of great piety, and fervent zeal; and, having been conversant with the Apostles, he must have known well what was the order and discipline of the Apostolic Church. His testimony therefore would be of very great importance, if we could devise any means of coming certainly at it. In our Review, we have not appealed to this Father, because we regard him as a corrupted witness. They who take an interest in this subject have a right to be informed of our reasons. We here give them as briefly as possible.

In the reign of *Trajan*, Emperor of Rome, Ignatius was put to death for his attachment to the cause of Christ. It is related by Eusebius, iii. 36, that he was made prisoner at Antioch, and conducted by a circuitous journey to Rome, where he was thrown to wild beasts, in the year 107; but some say 116. It is farther said that on his journey to Rome, he wrote seven epistles; to the *Ephesians*, the *Magnesians*, the *Trallians*, the *Romans*, the *Philadelphians*, the *Smyrncæans*, and to *Polycarp*. *Jerome*, also, in his catalogue mentions these seven letters, and no others. It seems therefore undeniable that in the days of *Jerome* and *Eusebius*, there were extant seven letters ascribed to this pious and holy man. But it is a question, greatly disputed in former times, and not yet decided, whether Ignatius really wrote these letters, *as we now have them*. A very brief history of these famous writings, will show the ground of the doubts entertained as to this matter.

For a long period, there was reason to suppose that the letters of Ignatius had been irrecoverably lost. But nearly at the close of the 15th century, three Letters in *Latin*, ascribed to this Father, were printed at Paris. A few years afterwards, eleven letters in the same language were published at Strasburg. Shortly another edition was printed, with three additional letters. Finally the number was raised to fifteen, of which, twelve were in *Greek*, and three in *Latin*. These last were soon universally regarded as spurious: and at length five of those in *Greek* were rejected by most men of learning. There then remained only seven, addressed to the same persons that were mentioned by *Jerome* and *Eusebius*. But of these letters there are two very different sets of copies, distinguished by the terms *larger* and *smaller*. They differ not only in size, but also in sentiment and doctrine. The greatest number of learned men, who favor the genuineness of the *Ignatian* writings, reject the larger, and vindicate the smaller. A few have adopted the contrary opinion, and have maintained it with such learning and ingenuity, as to render it somewhat difficult to decide between them. If the larger epistles are genuine, the smaller may be regarded as an epitome of them; and on the contrary, if the smaller be assumed as genuine, they must have been sadly interpolated in making out

the larger. This circumstance throws considerable suspicion on the whole affair. Somebody must, one way or another, have made very free with the reputed writings of this celebrated Martyr. But on the whole we are convinced that, on a comparison of the two sets, the smaller are to be preferred. We cannot here assign our reasons. The larger letters then may be dismissed as corrupt by interpolation. This is placing the matter on ground chosen by the most learned Episcopalians. The great and good archbishop *Usher*, and the learned bishop *Pearson* have put out their whole strength in vindicating these *smaller letters*. If the question could have been decided by the learning and ingenuity of any men, that have ever adorned the English Church, it would have been done by *Usher* and *Pearson*. After all, however, that diligent and learned historian *Mosheim* was obliged to express himself in the following terms. “*Antiquissimas esse has literas, certissimum est; non totas esse confictas, tam credibile, ut nihil credibilis fieri possit; quantum vero pro sinceris haberi debeant, id inenodabile arbitror.*” It is most certain that these letters are very ancient; that they are not entirely forged is as credible as any thing can be: but how far they are to be held as genuine (or uncorrupted) is an inextricable difficulty. *Com. De. Reb. Christ*, pa. 161.

Some of the reasons which have prevented our relying on them as authentic documents of the Apostolic Church are as follows.

1. The manner in which these letters speak of the officers of the church, is widely different from that of all the undisputed authors of the first two centuries.—We have already shown that in the New Testament, the words *bishop* and *presbyter* were used indiscriminately; and that this mode of speaking was kept up until near the year 250—And that then a change took place in the use of terms, because a distinction was made between bishops and presbyters. When this distinction however was made, and for some time afterwards, the bishop presided over a single congregation.

Now although *Ignatius* was an apostolical man, and of course would naturally have expressed himself on this subject in conformity with the usage of his time, yet in the letters ascribed to him, he always distinguishes between bishops and presbyters; yet it is evident that the *Ignatian Prelate* is the bishop of a single congregation. No man of common candor can read these letters, and not acknowledge this truth. Hence they appear, from internal evidence, to have been written after the time when a distinction of office was made between bishop and presbyter, yet before the *bishop* was changed from a *parochial* minister to a *diocesan*. The conclusion to which this argument leads is, that these letters were put into their present shape, more than a hundred years after the Martyrdom of *Ignatius*.

2. These letters speak of episcopal dignity and importance, in a manner entirely different from that of the Apostles. Let the reader recollect the language of Jesus Christ and his apostles in reference to this subject, and compare it with the expressions put into the mouth of this Apostolical man by the writer of the *Ignatian epistles*. In the epistle to the Ephesians, (v. vi.) he is made to say, “It is written, *God resisteth the proud*. Let us therefore study not to

resist the bishop, that we may be subject to God. And the more silent one sees a bishop to be, let him reverence him so much the more. For whomsoever the head of a household sends to govern his family, him we ought to receive as we do the one who sends him: it is manifest therefore that we ought to regard the bishop as we do the Lord himself!" In the epistle to the Trallians, (ii.) he is made to remark, "For since ye are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ, ye appear to me not to live according to the fashion of men, but according to Jesus Christ." Epist. to Philadel. iii. "For as many as are God's and Christ's, they are with the bishop." Ep. to Smyr. viii. "Do ye all follow the bishop as Jesus Christ does the Father; and the Presbytery as the Apostles: and reverence the Deacons as the command of God, &c." And even when writing to Polycarp of Smyrna, he is made to turn suddenly from his brother clergyman to address the people of his charge in this most extraordinary language, ch. vi. "Attend to the bishop that God also may attend to you. I pledge my soul for those who are subject to the bishops, presbyters and deacons!" Is this the language of a man who had been a disciple of Peter and Paul, and had imbibed their spirit? Let the reader judge.

To these internal evidences may be added others. We think that the eager desire of martyrdom expressed in these letters belongs to a later age than that of the true Ignatius. Peter and Paul were ready to sacrifice life for the honor of their Saviour; but they used all lawful means to preserve and prolong life, for the benefit of the Church. But Ignatius is made to express a passion for martyrdom, and to attribute a merit to it, much unlike any thing to be found among the Apostles. The truth is that at one time there was a high degree of enthusiasm in regard to martyrdom; christians sought for it eagerly; offered themselves to heathen magistrates, and refused to escape from prison when they had it in their power. But we do not find any evidence of this in the age of Ignatius—Yet these letters are replete with aspirations to this honor; and that to the Romans, (iv.) while it affords evidence of this fact, contains some strange expressions of apprehension lest the Roman brethren should prevent the wished for consummation. "I shall die voluntarily for God, if only you do not prevent it—I pray you do not exercise this unseasonable benevolence to me."—And more of this kind; after which he tells his brethren how he intends to irritate the wild beasts, when he shall have been thrown to them, so as to cause them to devour him immediately.

3. In this same letter to the Romans, the writer is made to give an account of his situation which renders it difficult to understand how he could write so many Epistles to the churches. "From Syria to Rome, I contend with wild beasts, by land and sea, night and day, being bound to ten leopards; that is a band of soldiers." By this it is commonly understood, that Ignatius was committed to the charge of ten fierce and brutal soldiers; and that, according to the usual custom, he was fastened to them with chains. If this was the case, how was he at liberty to write to his friends? Is it to be supposed that a prisoner of so much importance as Ignatius, who was transported from Antioch to Rome to be executed, would be allowed

to write what he pleased to his brethren in any part of the empire? It is said, too, that this illustrious martyr, instead of being conducted directly from Syria to Rome, was made to take a circuitous route through many cities of Asia, that his arrest, his condemnation, his certain death, might be known generally to christians, might strike terror into them, and bring them off from this new religion. But if this were the design, would Ignatius have been allowed to write letters, glorying in his sufferings, and exhorting all christians to constancy? To this it is replied that these soldiers might have been gained over by money, to allow this liberty to their prisoner—If so, how does it comport with the language just quoted. “I am on the whole of this journey, by land and sea day and night fighting with wild beasts”—“I am chained to ten leopards?” True; it is no great proof of human kindness, for a soldier to sell to his prisoner the privilege of writing letters to his friends; but it is proof of extreme indiscretion in a prisoner to insert in a letter thus written, that his keeper was a brutal savage—And if Ignatius was so intent on martyrdom that he did not wish to escape; yet he *did* wish to write letters; and he scarcely would revile his keepers, when they might so easily know all that he had written; and would be ready enough to find a pretext for depriving him of this privilege.

We just notice here, in passing, the argument of the learned Borchart, in his *Hierozoicon*, against the genuineness of these epistles. He says that the word *leopard* (*λεοπαρδος*) did not come into use until about the time of Constantine the Great, and that therefore these letters must have been written at least two hundred years after the death of Ignatius.

4. Learned men have maintained that these letters make direct allusions to heresies which broke out in the church after the death of Ignatius. We are inclined to the opinion that there is truth in this allegation; and if so the objection is perfectly decisive. To examine this question fully would require a volume. If one will read *D'Aille* on the one side, *Pearson* on the other, and *L'Arroque's* observations on *Pearson*, it will enable him to form a just judgment on this much disputed subject.

5. There is no sufficient evidence that any of the Fathers were acquainted with these letters before Eusebius. The reference made to Ignatius by Irenæus is merely to a saying of his, so short that it might easily be remembered. The passage is in Lib. v. ch. 28. *ὡς εἶπέ τις τῶν ἡμετέρων*. K. T. A. “As one of us said, when condemned to the wild beasts as a martyr to God, ‘I am God’s wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread.’ Jerome reports this as a saying of Ignatius, when he heard the roaring of the lions. Cum jam damnatus esset ad bestias, et ardore patiendi rugientes audiret leones, ait, frumentum Christi tum, dentibus bestiarum molar, ut panis mundus inveniar. “When he was now condemned to the wild beasts, and heard the lions roaring, in his ardour to suffer, he said, I am Christ’s wheat,” &c. There can be no doubt that Ignatius spoke thus. The saying was thought a very striking one, and was often repeated. And hence it might very well find a place in letters forged in the name of Ignatius. Accordingly we see it in the letter to the Romans, written, as is pretended, when Ignatius was far from Rome.

The reader cannot help observing that Irenæus speaks of this as a *saying* of some christian, and not as any thing *written*. Jerome's words do not admit of any other interpretation. It is also worthy of notice that although Irenæus was a disciple of Polycarp, the most intimate friend of Ignatius, yet he does not seem to know who made this celebrated speech—Very possibly when once made, it was frequently repeated. But had Irenæus known that it was the saying of his master's old friend, he in all probability would have so reported it.

Another remark may also be here offered. It was the object of Irenæus in his work to confute the heretics of his day. In doing this he very frequently refers to the succession of Presbyters from the Apostles down to his time, and shows that all taught a doctrine different from that which he opposed. But although the letters ascribed to Ignatius make several allusions to these heresies, yet Irenæus in no instance uses the testimony of Ignatius. This is certainly a circumstance of some weight against the writings in question.

6. Origen has been much relied on as a witness in support of the Ignatian letters; but the testimony of this Father is only found in *Latin* works, which many very learned men have held to be spurious; and that without any reference to this controversy.

7. It might have been best to mention before this, the testimony of Polycarp. But it is not material whether it comes first or last. For there is strong internal evidence that it is a forgery. It is not found in the Greek copy, which has been preserved; and it contains a plain contradiction of what Polycarp had written before. This Father exhorts the Philippians to follow the example of Ignatius, Zozimus, Rufus, Paul, &c. speaking of them as already dead; but in the part which we believe to be spurious, he requests the brethren of Philippi to send him word what they knew, respecting Ignatius, and those who are with him—*de his qui cum eo sunt*—as though they were alive.

On the whole, we are convinced that if Ignatius did write to the churches on his way from Syria to Rome, that his letters have been so tampered with, and interpolated, or mutilated, that their testimony is worth nothing. But while we maintain this opinion, we are sure that the cause of diocesan episcopacy can derive no support whatever from these writings. The bishop of Ignatius was a *parochial bishop*, the pastor of one church, (and that perhaps not a large one,) differing not, so far as we can see, in *order*, but only in *office* from his fellow presbyters.

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