

A SERIES

OF

TRACTS

ON THE

DOCTRINES, ORDER, AND POLITY

OF THE

✓
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EMBRACING

SEVERAL ON PRACTICAL SUBJECTS.

VOL. IV.

PHILADELPHIA :
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

CONTENTS

OF THE

FOURTH VOLUME.

	Page
I. The Anglican Reformation, or the Church of England but half reformed. - - - - -	5
II. History of the Early Rise of Prelacy, by the Rev. Samuel Miller, D.D. - - - - -	71
III. Permanent Sabbath Documents, or a Plea for the Sabbath enforced by Facts, by the Rev. Justin Edwards, D.D. - - - - -	117
IV. Relative Influence of Presbytery and Prelacy, on Civil and Ecclesiastical Liberty, by the Rev. T. V. Moore. - - - - -	171
V. The Duty of Prayer for Ministers, by the Rev. W. J. McCord. - - - - -	203
VI. A Plea for Presbyterianism, by the Rev. Robert Davidson, D.D. - - - - -	215
VII. A Castaway, by the Rev. R. M. McCheyne. - - - - -	251
VIII. Systematic Benevolence, by the Rev. D. V. Smock. - - - - -	259
IX. The Work of the Holy Spirit, on the Hearts of Men, by the Rev. J. S. Armistead. - - - - -	275
X. The Exclusive Claims of Prelacy stated and refuted, by the Rev. B. M. Smith. - - - - -	291
XI. Inattention to Religion Wonderful, by the Rev. W. J. McCord. - - - - -	327
XII. The Gospel Call, or Look and be Saved. - - - - -	339
XIII. What is Faith?—A letter to a friend. - - - - -	347
XIV. A Refuge from the Storm. - - - - -	351

THE
EXCLUSIVE CLAIMS

OF

PRELACY,

STATED AND REFUTED:

BY THE
REV. B. M. SMITH.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

THE
EXCLUSIVE
CLAIMS OF PRELACY.

GALATIANS 1: 6, 7.—“Unto another Gospel, which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.

WE learn from the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, that certain persons, of the early church, who had been Pharisees, and other Jews, before they were professing Christians, taught, that “except a man were circumcised and kept the law of Moses, he could not be saved.” It is generally supposed, that such had been actively propagating this error in the Galatian church, and are exposed and denounced by the Apostle, in the passage cited above.

I. The Gospel teaches two fundamental truths respecting the way of salvation: one, that the vicarious obedience and sufferings of Jesus Christ, constitute the meritorious ground of man’s justification before God; the other, that this provision is applied to our wants, by the Holy Spirit, who through the medium of God’s truth, ordinarily, “convinces us of our sin and misery, enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Christ, renews our wills, and enables and persuades us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel.” To the first of these truths, while there has been great diversity of opinion on the nature and extent, both of the evil and the remedy, there has been, among all Christians, a general assent. Though some object to the term “vicarious,” others reject “obedience,” and others incorporate something of human merit in the

“ground of justification,” yet the proposition, at least in its elementary form, “Man is a sinner and Christ is the only Saviour,” has met with the approbation of all, claiming to be Christians. The latter truth involves an answer to the question, “how does man procure the benefits of the purchased redemption?” and on this topic, in all the changes of time, the corruptions and revivals of true religion, its trials and triumphs, its defeats and victories, there has been one distinctly marked, long fought and yet unended conflict. In the defence of the erroneous opinions held on this topic, many have been led, first to question, and then deny the fundamental truths of the Christian scheme; and thus made shipwreck of the faith and hope of the gospel of God.

On the one hand, it has been held, that we derive all spiritual benefits through the direct agency of the Holy Spirit; and that while God has instituted and preserved a human and a sacramental instrumentality, for dispensing those benefits, he has given to neither, nor to both united, any inherent efficacy. Paul and Apollos were but ministers. The treasure of the Gospel is borne in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men. Christ and his apostles alike, taught to judge of ministers by their doctrine, not doctrine by ministers. The sacraments are signs of spiritual benefits and seals or marks of God’s favour. This view of the subject, from the prominence it gives to the Spirit, and the subordination in which it holds, and that scripturally, all instrumentalities, is called the **RELIGION OF THE SPIRIT**.

On the other hand, from Paul’s day to our own, it has been contended, by various sects and in various schemes, that to derive spiritual benefit, whether recognizing the agency of the Spirit or not, we must approach God by some commendatory service, and wait on some specified instrumentality, as the sole symbol of his presence, and the consecrated channel of his grace. The Jew designated circumcision; the Roman Catholic, usurping the place of the Spirit, authoritatively to instruct, and of Christ, savingly to mediate, pointed to fasts and vigils, the feasts and penances, pilgrimages and confessionals of **THE CHURCH**. The fanatic presumed that vociferous shoutings, unearthly groans, bodily contortions or fantastic evolutions would draw down God’s favour. The formalist trusted in shaved heads and unwashen faces, appointed times, prolonged services and misshapen dresses. Strange but true, that ex-

tremes in result should be identical in principle; the stubborn Pharisee, the cowed monk and veiled nun, the meditative hermit, and the ranting zealot, the bearded Menonite and the prim formalist, of whatever name, are brethren of the one greatest phase of perverted religion, the RELIGION OF FORM.

Here then, are comprehensively presented the two great divisions on the question, "how does man procure the benefits of the purchased redemption?"

There has, for centuries, existed in the pale of the visible Christian church, a class of men, setting forth a theory on this subject, whose statement enables us, at once, to assign them a place in the latter division. Through sermons, decrees, bulls, pamphlets, volumes of every size, and tracts from one to ninety; by popes, councils, cardinals, legates, archbishops, bishops, priests, archdeacons, deacons, and deans, in churches, and parliament halls, at the fireside and on the street, in counting rooms and offices, and even amid scenes of festivity; in season and out of season, from the date of papal supremacy to our day—it has been, and is maintained, that there is no efficient access to God, other than within the pale of the Church, constituted with a triple order of ministers, bishops, presbyters, and deacons, and which recognises the first, as solely authorized to ordain others and govern the house of God: that there is no channel of intercourse between heaven and earth, other than that, marked out by the corruptions of the primitive Church, dug amid the darkness of the middle ages, and filled with the stream of prelatric grace. Such a system rests on a FORM, vests all rights and privileges of the Christian scheme in man; sets aside the call of God and the call of his people for the word of a prelate, and bases the existence of the church on the canonical performance of a RITE, which however scriptural and however important in its place, confers no character; is declarative, not impressive of qualification, a form and not the substance. This scheme is ANOTHER GOSPEL. To the scriptural requisition of faith in Christ, it adds faith in *the Church*, faith in *succession*, faith in a *form*, as the Jew would have added, faith in circumcision. It is ANOTHER GOSPEL, for it even usurps the place of the true, and proclaims more virtue resident in canonical ordination, sacraments and forms of worship, than in the simple preaching of the cross of Christ. It is another gospel, and yet not another, but a pernicious error, for the trouble of

God's church, for the destruction of peace and charity, for the dishonour of Christ, for the grief of the pious, and for the joy of the devils.

II. Let none misunderstand the subject of this discussion. The extravagant pretensions now summarily stated, and presently to be more fully set forth, are not imputed to the Episcopal Church as such, either in England or America, though they are pretensions recently advanced with great zeal, and propagated with an industry worthy of a better cause, by clergymen of that church, in both hemispheres. But till formally and avowedly adopted as expository of her principles, the controversy is not with the Episcopal Church, but with all whether of Rome, Lambeth, Oxford, Raleigh, Burlington, or New York, who proclaim this other gospel. Prelacy and Episcopacy are not synonymous in usage, whatever they may be by etymology. Those who advocate the claims under discussion, teach the difference. Say the Oxford Divines, "We are of the church, not the Episcopal Church,—our Bishops are not merely *an order* in her organization, but the principle of her continuance: and to call ourselves Episcopalians is to imply, that we differ from the mass of dissenters *mainly* in church Government and form, whereas the difference is, that we are *here* and they are *there*; we in the church, and they out of it." Presbyterians acknowledge a *parochial Episcopacy*, and as designating a form of Government, might be termed Episcopalians. "They reject *prelacy* not *Episcopacy*, modern not primitive, *diocesan* not *scriptural Episcopacy*." Nor is the controversy with the Episcopal church as *now organized* as a form of government. It recognizes the prominent scriptural principles of a church government. But prelatists claim to possess the mode and the only scriptural mode of polity. Nor is this a controversy about forms of worship, rites and ceremonies. Episcopalians may use a liturgy, read prayers in a surplice, and sermons in a black silk robe; fast during Lent, and feast at Christmas, Easter, Whitsunday, and Michaelmas; observe as they please every saints'-day in the papal calendar; kneel at the Lord's Supper, and make the sign of the cross in baptism; kneel in public prayer and stand in public praise; bow *at the mention* of the name of Jesus, and consecrate churches and burying-grounds; "regenerate" infants, and confirm adults: we have only to say, that if they derive edification from such things, we shall not dispute their right to worship as

they please: to their own master they stand or fall: but we find neither scriptural injunction nor commendation for them. Nay more, if they see fit, they may follow the Oxford *divines*, and indulge to a surfeit, in the “tolerable fooleries” of papal superstition;—erect crosses on steeples and at cross roads; (it may be,) burn candles of any and all sizes, during day-light, on the *high* altar, or any other; wear four-cornered caps and parti-coloured gowns, and mimic the full routine of priestly pantomime, according to the pattern shown at St. Peter’s,—and, provided they do not insist on our conformity, *as was once done*, on pain of cropped ears, slit noses, expulsion, banishment, confiscation, torture, fiery death, and cruel mockings, we are indisposed to complain, denounce or dispute. To their own master they stand or fall. But, when the prelatist tells us and tells the world, there is no salvation out of the pale of that church, whose government he advocates, that, for all who hear him, the alternative is prelacy or perdition, we are constrained to protest, in the name of truth and holiness, justice and mercy, heaven and earth, God and man. There is a time to be silent and a time to speak. The boldness, pertinacity and frequency with which these pretensions are put forward, the comparative ignorance on the general subject existing among our own churches, in consequence of our unwillingness to engender controversy, and the general desire for information now every where existing and increasing, together designate a time to speak. There are other considerations which indicate the propriety and necessity of this discussion.

III. 1. These pretensions, if admitted, not only invalidate Presbyterian ordination, but they sap the foundation of every Christian’s hope. He has been taught to believe that “repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ,” constitute the only indispensable condition of salvation. But now he must, to be satisfied of his spiritual safety, know that he has received sacraments at the hands of the validly ordained minister, and of this fact, not one in one thousand has any means of assurance, other than a testimony, as we shall have occasion to show, far from being irrefragable.

2. There is a large class of persons, especially in our southern country, who since infidelity has become unfashionable, are unwilling to be without some kind of religion. Presbyterianism and other forms of “*dissent*” are deemed by such not “fit for gentlemen,” and without any other

than a nominal connexion, they call themselves Episcopalians. To such, a system presenting so prominently, salvation on the terms of validly administered sacraments, is a most comfortable religion.

3. To this may be added another similar observation. Among plain republicans there has come to pass in these latter days a great fondness for marks of distinction, for ceremony, pomp and show, especially in religious worship; together with an overweening propensity to do homage to rank and title. The whole tendency of these pretensions is the elevation of prelatical power. Witness, among other things, the results already secured, as read in the fact, that sixty-five protestant clergymen could be found receiving on their knees the blessing of a prelate, whose bold assumptions they had so cordially sustained.* Let the mind be once spiritually enslaved, and little need be done to effect its political thralldom. To the Episcopal church as heretofore constituted and governed in this country, we have not recognized any peculiar propriety of charging the principles, indicated in the celebrated motto of James I, "No bishop, no king," but we have read history to little purpose, if there be not fearful indications for our future welfare, in the tame submission of our people, in some places, to the dictation of papal bishops: and we know not how soon, men who claim and, unrebuked, exercise the spiritual power vested in prelates and presbyters by the dogmas under discussion, will have prepared a people for all the extremes, first of ecclesiastical, and then of political tyranny. It must be remembered, that people enamoured of pageantry and display, in religious worship, will hardly have the puerile taste thus engendered, satiated with less than the stars and trimmings, the trappings and insignia of nobility and royalty. As Presbyterians,—a people ever noted for opposition to all arbitrary rule,—it is our duty to oppose the beginnings of this evil.

4. There has evidently been latterly manifested in low churchmen, a tendency to revive and use the language and, hold a bearing toward non-Episcopal churches, which was many years ago deemed the peculiar province of high churchmen. Were there time for it, it could easily be shown, that the fathers of the English church recognized other protestant communions and their clergy as occupying an equal position with their own. When, some years

* This occurred in New York, before Bishop Onderdonk, previously to his suspension for immorality. *Editor of Board of Publication.*

since, a few ultra spirits in New York, North Carolina and other places, began to speak great swelling words of vanity about "dissenters," "*the church*," "uncovenanted mercies," "valid ordination," "episcopal grace," it was thought by many that the best way to treat such men, would be the pursuit of a course, somewhat similar to that, with which we would indicate our contempt for the pretensions of half a score of Chinese mandarins, who might appear among us, claiming to be the only gentlemen in the land. But now, where is the Bishop of the Episcopal church who will admit to ministerial communion, ministers of other churches; and yet would he deny the privilege to Roman priests? What Episcopal minister will dare acknowledge our administration of baptism to be more valid than that of physicians, male or female? We do not know that our ordination was ever acknowledged as valid in the United States, but it has been in England, in times past, yet what Episcopal bishop will now acknowledge it? We learn, to-day, from the Southern Churchman, that twenty-five years ago, children in Episcopal families were early taught the distinction between "going to church" and "going to meeting." We should be obliged to the writer for an elucidation of the facts, if it be other than a refusal to recognize, as authorized worship, that existing in non-Episcopal communions. And he intimates that such a training should be renewed; that after all Puseyism and genuine liturgical Episcopacy are very near of kin. Some have surmised as much before.

5. Public sentiment, in many parts of our country, has already received such impressions, that the progress of their high claims, must, if unrebuked, be very rapid. By some means, Episcopacy has, by many, been considered a very genteel religion. In our army and navy it is said, and yet uncontradicted, that the large majority of chaplains are Episcopalians. Our polite literature, so called, and some of the fine arts have contributed to the popularity of this church. Descriptions and embellishments in tales, annuals and magazines, representing baptisms, marriages, death beds, and burials, very generally set them forth in connexion with such symbols of Episcopacy, as clergymen in vestments, altars, and prayer books. When religious speech is introduced, we read of "the venerable liturgy," "the church," "the beautiful and impressive burial service," "dignified bishop," and the like. We do not object to all this, in itself considered. We can and do rejoice if

the gospel be preached unto any and received by any, through other churches, if they reject us ; but the class of persons who are influenced by these things, are those who, for obvious reasons, may be led, more readily to acquiesce, without examination, in a scheme of religion, which rests on a *form*, and rejoices more in regularity and canonical order, than in holiness of heart and life, and conformity to God's law.

We then repeat, that for such considerations we deem it time to speak out. Were the matters at issue mere questions about words, and did they only occasion a controversy in the Episcopal church, it would be alike needless and uncourteous for us to meddle. But the signs of the times evidently indicate the revival of the great conflict of christendom, with renewed energy. Perhaps it is "the last time." The contest may be long. Other than spiritual weapons may be used. Our mountain-caves, and recesses, may serve other purposes than amusement and refreshment to the curious or weary traveller. Like those of Scotland, they may become consecrated as the refuges of God's people, to be hallowed by their midnight worship, and stained with their blood. But the victory is sure. "Truth crushed to earth, will rise again ; the eternal years of God are hers."

The controversy is not between Episcopalians and Presbyterians, but between truth and error : the devices of man and the simple faith and simple order of the gospel of God. To be silent longer on such a subject, would be treason to the protestant cause ;—treason to our own church, mainly assailed ; treason to Christ's cross, crown, covenant and kingdom, traduced, despised and set at naught, for the claims of usurpers ; treason to the memory of martyred thousands in England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, France, Switzerland, and Holland, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and surrendered home and life itself, in a cause, in whose defence, we jeopard but a little bubble of reputation.

IV. To show that we bring no railing accusation, it may be important to present more fully the exclusive pretensions of prelacy, although to some, the summary already given might suffice. Out of a mass, whose exposition would occupy more hours than we have minutes to spare, we will select and, as far as possible, in the words of these ecclesiastical Ishmaelites themselves, present a succinct statement of their claims. They say, that there is an order of clergy

superior to presbyters, whom they call bishops, who are the lineal successors of the apostles and with whom are deposited all the treasures of ministerial order and succession; that Episcopal ordination enters into the *essence of a church*: that the order of the gospel is as important as its doctrine, and that this order is alone Episcopal. Bishop Seabury tells us, "In the church of Christ we have the governments, faith, sacraments, worship, and ministry;—out of it, we are sure of none of these things." To this we accord, but bishop Seabury says further, "Christ has *but one church*," and that being the Episcopal, there is no hope out of it. Bishop Meade has so well described these claims, that we use his language, (yet happy in the conviction that he does not sympathize in the sentiments he records,) "To dispense with Episcopal ordination is not a breach of order merely," (so we suppose bishop M. regards it,) "but a surrender of THE CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD, and the attempt to institute any other form of ordination, or to seek communion with Christ, through any non-Episcopal *association*, is to be regarded, not as a schism merely, but as an *impossibility*." This necessity for Episcopal ordination is based on the claim, "that bishops and they only have received from their predecessors and they from theirs, back to the apostles, the gift of the Holy Ghost, thus preserved in the world and transmitted; and this gift empowers them to receive into the church and exclude from it, with the assurance, that what they do is ratified in heaven.

"A doctrinal catechism of the church of England," recently published in London, contains, among other things, the following precious "milk for babes."

"Q. Are not dissenting teachers ministers of the gospel? A. No; they have never been called after the manner of Aaron." [And who have been?]

"Q. Who appoints dissenting teachers? A. They either wickedly appoint each other, or are not appointed at all; and so in either case their assuming the office is very wicked.

"Q. But are not dissenting teachers thought to be very good men?" [Such e. g. as Baxter, Doddridge, Watts, Payson, Alleine, Bunyan, and Owen.] "A. They are often thought to be such, and so were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, till God showed them to be very wicked.

"Q. But may we not hear them preach? A. No; for God says, 'Depart from the tents of these wicked men.'"

Happy children, with such instruction ! Verily may ye hope to be wiser than your teachers !

It is not surprising then, that all non-Episcopal churches and ministers, though constituting a large majority of Protestant Christendom, (in the United States the ministers as 14 to 1 and members as 34 to 1,) are branded as "pretended ministers," "sectaries," "meetingers," "schismatics," "dissenting mountebanks," "ministers of hell." Quite consistent to tell us, "wilful opposition to Episcopacy is rebellion against God, and must therefore separate from his presence : " and "they who reject this dispensation, reject themselves from God and his salvation." Quite legitimate is the inference that a clergyman of the church of England may be fresh from a ball, a card party, a mistress, or a race-field, and yet, not the holiest dissenting divine, possesses such clerical power as this abandoned scion of prelatical generation.*

Such then is more fully a specimen of pretensions which we pronounce another gospel. Were there time it were easy to refute each of the extravagant and absurd positions here presented, by both reason, common sense and scripture. But we prefer seeking the basis of them all and if this be found unsupported by scripture, the whole fall together.

V. If this air-built fabric can be said to have any basis, it is contained in these two propositions. 1. There was instituted by Christ an order of clergy superior to presbyters, called, first, apostles, then bishops, to whom alone was committed the power to ordain others.

2. That there has existed a lineal, unbroken succession, from the apostles down to the present bishops of Episcopal churches.

It is obvious, that if the first proposition cannot be sustained, the latter necessarily fails. We feel prepared to show that the first cannot be sustained, and although, therefore, the full discussion of the second is not necessary to our argument, yet since the subject has been latterly much canvassed, we offer a few summary observations.

1. Establishing the fact of a personal prelatical succession, establishes that of Presbyterian succession ; for the prelate was first a presbyter : or if this be questioned, then, since the greater includes the less, the prelate, as such, was presbyter. To us, either solution is indifferent, for we make no distinction of order.

* See note at the close.

2. Supposing every link in the chain of succession clearly proved, so far as uninspired testimony can do it, it must yet be shown by scripture, that the first link existed, i. e. that prelacy was divinely instituted. If that can be done, however gratifying a lineal succession might be, it would not be indispensable to prove it, to secure our ready submission to a prelate holding apostolic doctrine. If that cannot be done, the most irrefragable human testimony to a lineal succession, only proves succession to that order, which was divinely constituted, by whatever name known.

3. Prelatists triumphantly tell us, the succession was uninterrupted from the earliest ages to the 16th century. But the "earliest ages" do not reach to the apostles' times by at least a century. Then, say they, that early and undisputed existence, at the time, can only be accounted for, on the supposition of a divine authority. Now we are prepared, were there time, to show that the earliest existence of prelacy can otherwise be fully accounted for, and that the claims of prelacy were disputed in the earliest times of its existence. But if this famous and vaunted argument proves any thing, it proves too much, as all efforts to reason facts into existence must do. The Romanists undertake to sustain their system in the same way. Says the prelatist, there are bishops now, there were others to ordain them, and so back to the earliest age. What existed A. D. 300 must have existed A. D. 250 and A. D. 150 and A. D. 50, and so be apostolic. Says the Romanist, there are popes and cardinals and monks and nuns now, and these we trace to the earliest age, and if they existed then, they must have existed fifty and fifty and fifty years before, and so they are stretched to apostolic days.

But all this is in vain. No successful effort has yet been made to fasten the first link, nor the second, nor the third. We challenge the production of reliable evidence to the existence of a prelate, or the practice of more than one ordination, for the same person, within the first two centuries.

4. Equally untenable is the celebrated position, that the proof adduced to sustain a lineal succession of prelates, is identical in kind and as strong in degree, as that on which we rest the authority of the scriptures. On this, it may be observed, (1.) The evidence of early writers for the authority of scripture, is their testimony to the existence, in their age, of the books of the New Testament. Their inspiration is proved by independent evidences. This is

testimony to one set of facts of one date. It is confirmed by that of ancient translations of the New Testament, and by the existence of manuscripts, which though not very old, yet being of various countries, (or families,) are independent witnesses; and the continued reception of the same books, in succeeding ages, constitutes an accumulating testimony to this set of facts of one date. (2.) But according to prelatical principles, to establish the valid ordination of a prelate, we must have testimony of his valid baptism and valid ordination to the office of a presbyter. To make out each point, we must be able to prove that each person, participating in his baptism and ordinations, had received the requisite authority. This requires proof again for the third set introduced, and so on back. We observe here, that as the same persons who ordain may not have baptized the candidate or ordained him presbyter, and as three are required to unite in ordination, every remove back, multiplies the number of valid baptisms and ordinations to be established. We leave to those fond of "endless genealogies" the arithmetical calculations involved. Even imagination grows weary in computing probabilities of invalidity; fact is displaced by chance, and each prelatical generation involves us deeper and more hopelessly in the intricacies of this ecclesiastical labyrinth. For the authority of scripture, the testimony has accumulated with every successive generation, while for that of prelatical succession, its strength is inversely as the square of the distance of any given prelate, counting by generations, from the apostolical age.

Says Chillingworth, (of the English church,) "It is not improbable that among the many millions, which make up the Roman hierarchy," and we may say the same of that of the Episcopal church—"There are not twenty true." A recent writer in the London Christian Observer, truly remarks, "To trace this succession according to prelatical views, will drive one either to Rome or infidelity."

5. Difficulties in this scheme thicken as we advance. It has been denied that the church of England derived orders from the Roman Catholic church. "The Anglican church was ever independent," we are told, but it cannot be denied, that the fathers of the English church were ordained by men, who had lived and died in connection with Rome, whatever may have been their claims to an ecclesiastical genealogy, independent of the papal. Till Henry VIII. and his parliament threw off the Roman yoke,

England was, as history shows, from the entrance of the first papal legate into London, under papal dominion. It can be proved by a list of authors, six inches long, that the reformation was regarded by those who effected it, and others, as a separation. But prelatists now say, "the Roman Catholic is a church of Christ, her orders are valid;" she is hailed as a sister or mother. Here then is separation from a church of Christ, which prelatists say, "separates from Christ himself." We Presbyterians need not complain of being unchurched by men who thus unchurch their own ecclesiastical ancestry.

In this connexion it is well to observe, that the separation was effected by act of Parliament, that the ordination of bishops was confirmed by the same, the headship of the church placed in the crown, by the same; and that after all that is said about validity, succession in the English church, is succession to authority, whose prime source resides in a temporal prince or princess, as the case may be.

6. Had we time, we would enlarge on some awkward matters touching the succession in the American church. There was a considerable discussion, not to say controversy, in the "unity" church, (of which the records are in existence,) thirty-two years ago, touching an ordination of Griswold and Hobart, (yes, HOBART!!) Some words of "the book" were omitted to be "said or sung," in the process of ordination, and some said the act was invalid and some said not. Poor Presbyterians dare not discuss such "high matters;" so we pass on. There was another case, of doubts about a certain bishop's baptism.

Let it ever be remembered too, that we owe the inestimable privilege of having ever seen a bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States to the English government. It is notorious, that the first bishops in this country received their ordination from English bishops, who could not legally perform the service, without asking and obtaining permission of the English government to do so.

7. Led by such and similar difficulties, to reject the theory of a prelatical succession, it is not to be inferred, that we reject a succession.

A successor to another, is one who occupies his office and performs its duties. In their extraordinary duties, such as implied miraculous gifts, and such as pertained to the organization of the church under the Christian dispensation, the apostles could have no successors, for such gifts

have been withdrawn and such duties are no longer incumbent on any. But those now are their successors, in their ordinary duties, who preach, administer sacraments and ordain. Such power, presbyters claim: and, as we hope to prove, in the proper place, on scriptural grounds. Here we are concerned to show, that they are connected by successive ordinations with the apostles.

Ordination is not a sacrament. It is neither a sign nor a seal of imparted grace. It is not then, necessary, in tracing a succession, to find the minute conformity to canonical requisitions, the want of which, on prelatical principles, perplexes their investigations. We can satisfactorily show, that up to the period of the reformation, our ministers have been set apart by ministers, and that the reformers to whom we trace this succession, had also been set apart. It is admitted on all sides, that the orders of the Roman Catholic church were valid. Her presbyters became Protestants and thus Presbyterian ordination, (and we ask for no more,) has been transmitted. But as we shall show, ordination is a declarative act. It is setting apart men who profess to have received a call from God. Now, if in extraordinary cases, men thus professing, and by their doctrine, (which is the scriptural criterion according to Paul and John, after Christ's example,) evincing the truth of such professions, challenge our confidence, we could not withhold it. Such is our confidence in the doctrinal succession, that we have no more doubt that the reformers were providentially called to reform, than that the apostles were miraculously called to organize, the church. If any ask, who in such cases are to judge? We answer, the people of God, using his word as a guide; and we are prepared to show, that any other theory, involves either a belief that ordination imparts grace, or that infallibility is lodged somewhere on earth. But with these views we still maintain, that in ordinary cases, the ministry is continued by ministers, and that the scriptural form for expressing a public recognition of existing qualifications is important. In the cases supposed, it would be competent to those recognizing such claims, to use such a form of recognition, since God's providence would then appear to point out extraordinary methods, as he used an extraordinary method, by miraculous intervention, in conferring the Holy Ghost on Paul, by the hands of a disciple, and not by those of the apostles.

VI. We proceed to discuss the main proposition, in op-

position to which, we say,—There was but one divinely constituted order of the Christian ministry, and to that was committed by Christ, all the rights and privileges necessary to the proper government and perpetuation of the church.

1. Our Saviour, during his personal ministry, appointed but one order.

(1.) He chose twelve disciples, Matt. x. These he sent forth, and hence their name apostles, from the Greek, *apostolos*. But it is said of the seventy, whom he appointed, after recounting (Luke ix.) the appointment of the twelve, “he appointed other seventy also whom he sent forth,” *apesteilen*, (Luke x. 1.) the same Greek word, as in Matt. x. 5. Now although the word apostle was afterwards appropriated to denote the twelve, in a pre-eminent sense, here the seventy might be called apostles. Indeed, after this period, the apostles are sometimes called disciples. They do not appear then to have differed in name. Nor did the Saviour indicate any difference, in the tenor of their commissions, touching any duties, pertaining to a permanent ministry. Both preached, and in John iv. 2. it is said the “disciples baptized” and there is nothing restricting the application of the word to apostles. Hooker says of the seventy, “Their commission to preach and baptize was the same which the apostles had.” Our Saviour expressly forbade all distinctions of rank among his followers. He referred them to the “rulers of the Gentiles who exercised lordship over them and added, but it shall not be so among you.”

(2.) The commission to preach and baptize was renewed when he was about ascending to heaven, and a promise added, “Lo! I am with you always to the end of the world.” By this, He intimated the perpetuity of the ministry. Prelatists appropriate this promise to their order. But it was made to those who were authorized to “preach and baptize.” In neither commission, do we find one word about ordination or a superior order. In John xx. 22, we have, as supposed, another part of this commission, But these words were not spoken at the same time, for it appears “Thomas was not with them,” and the events connected, preceded the ascension. The words here recorded are, “he breathed on them and saith unto them receive ye the Holy Ghost, whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted, &c.” We have not time to settle accurately the meaning of this passage: but may observe; (1.) “It was not the

promised effusion of the Spirit, for Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii. 39. (2.) In any sense these words indicate the gift of the same power to disciples as apostles, some of the latter having been present. (3.) These and the words Matt. xviii. 18, evidently indicate that miraculous endowment of inspired men, which enabled them authoritatively to declare the truth. (4.) And was probably spoken somewhat prophetically of the promise, yet to be fulfilled, Acts i. 8.

2. The history and writings of the apostles, connected with the organization of the Christian church, evince the existence of only one order of the ministry.

(1.) Before proceeding to sustain this division of the general proposition, by direct proofs, it is proper to discuss the nature of the apostolic office, with reference to the oft-repeated assertion, "The apostles only might ordain," which is tantamount to another form of boldness, "this power to ordain was peculiar to their office and transmitted to their successors."

We have already seen the origin of their name. They were sent forth during our Saviour's life, in common with other disciples: now they were sent forth by a special commission to them. After speaking of his sufferings and resurrection Jesus says, "Ye are witnesses of these things."—See Luke xxiv. 48; in Acts i. 8, he repeats these words substantially, restricting the address to "the apostles whom he had chosen." Peter confirms this view by telling us it was necessary that Judas' office should be supplied by one "to be a witness with us," ii. 22. Paul was "chosen of God" xxii. 14, 15, "to know his will and to see that just one, and to be a witness unto all men:" and defends his claim to the apostleship (1 Cor. ix. 1, 2.) by, "Have I not seen the Lord Jesus?" It is true that he was seen of five hundred, but these were specially selected as witnesses, confirming by signs and wonders, what they said and taught. Here then was an extraordinary office, clearly marked, to which none can now succeed, for the duties cannot now be performed: to which none did ever succeed, for those who performed it, were "chosen of God," by special revelation. To perform this office, the apostles were clothed with miraculous powers, (Heb. ii. 4;) among others, was that of communicating the Holy Ghost.—Acts ix. 17. It is true Ananias laid his hands on Paul, and announced that he was sent, that "he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost." But it is evi-

dent that he acted under a special, and not as the apostles, under a general commission. Whether, however, the gift was restricted to the apostles or not, it was a peculiarity of inspired men, and not an office to be transmitted, or a qualification pertaining to the ordinary and permanent ministry. There is no evidence that the apostles conferred the Holy Ghost, as part of their ordaining act, and if they did, no others than inspired men could or can do so. The form of ordering priests, and that "of ordaining bishops" has, however, put into the mouth of the presiding bishop the words, "Receive the Holy Ghost," language which is either unmeaning or presumptuous, unless they who use it can show the "signs of apostles."

The apostles were also invested, by inspiration, with authority to establish church polity, and superintend the churches, in all matters needing inspired direction, the scriptures being then incomplete, while in other matters, they claimed no exclusive jurisdiction, and clearly recognized the authority of the ordinary ministers. With these too, they shared in the ordinary duties of preaching, dispensing sacraments, and ordaining. But not one word can be found, to show, that they alone were authorized to ordain. The word apostle is sometimes used in its literal signification, one sent, a messenger, or missionary. Thus of Epaphroditus, Phil. ii. 25, and of Titus and others, 2 Cor. viii. 23. So we understand Barnabas and Paul, who are called apostles, Acts xiv. 14, were the messengers or missionaries, in allusion to their special mission recorded, Acts xiii. 1—3. Barnabas is never afterwards, though often mentioned, called an apostle. Paul's claims rest on other grounds. Indeed such was the importance of the apostolic office, that we have special accounts of the call of Paul and Matthias, and the former frequently urges the evidence of his apostleship. The mere use of a title, which may mean nothing more than messenger or missionary, for some special purpose, cannot, under such circumstances, justify the interpretation sometimes claimed for the case of Barnabas. As to certain, who are said to be apostles, because we read they "were of note among the apostles," it is enough to observe that a man may be "of note" among kings, or judges, or senators, without being therefore a king, judge or senator.

(2.) Our proposition is sustained by considering the names or titles of church officers, mentioned in the Acts and Epistles.

(a.) One of these, deacon, deserves a special notice, giving name as it does, to the "third order" of the prelatic scheme. The appointment of deacons is recorded, Acts vi. 3—7, from which it appears, they were chosen and set over a certain business, that the apostles might give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. Now this "business" is called "serving tables;" and comparing the Greek word, translated "tables" with that for "exchanger," (Matt. xxv. 27,) and for "bank," (Luke xix. 23) this phrase means, attending to pecuniary concerns. This view is sustained by the preceding context. Paul describes the qualifications of a deacon, (1 Tim. iii. 8—13,) but does not mention one, from which we might infer that he was a spiritual officer. Stephen, "one of the seven," confounded his accusers in argument, and Philip, another of "the seven," afterwards became an Evangelist. But, in the face of the account above given, these cases cannot be cited to prove, that either was then engaged in the peculiar duties of the office of deacon. We dismiss the subject with these remarks, sufficient to show, that this title has no claim, in its restricted use, to denote a spiritual officer.

(b.) The titles of spiritual officers, besides apostle, were minister, evangelist, prophet, pastor, teacher, preacher, steward, ambassador, bishop and presbyter. We also read of "helps and governments," general terms, rather than titles, indicative of officers known under their appropriate titles.

Of these, "minister" is very general, and is the translation of the word elsewhere rendered deacon. It means a servant. The restricted sense in which it is applied to deacon, strengthens the view already given, that the word denotes a "servant of the church," not an order of her spiritual officers. In a general sense, "minister" was applied indiscriminately to any, whether apostles, presbyters, prophets, or others.

(c.) The remaining titles, except bishop and presbyter, are, by general consent, acknowledged to be merely indicative of the various ministerial offices, suggested by the usual meaning of the words used. No one pretends that they distinguish the order or rank of such officers.

(d.) Presbyter (or elder,) *presbuteros*, literally means an old man. Such, in patriarchal governments, were rulers, by virtue of age. Hence the word was adopted to denote rulers generally, and was so used by the Jews. It does not express the functions of the office, but the quali-

fications of the officer, real or supposed, incidental or acquired, the authority and power, from which the functions flow. It exactly answers to the Latin, senator, and the English, alderman, and signifies the rank or order of the officer.

(e.) Bishop, (*episkopos*,) literally means overseer, a term indicating the duties of the office. These duties were the instruction and government of the people and not of ministers. Hence no rank or order of a superior character could pertain to the bishop, by virtue of his relative position. It is used five times, (Acts xx. 28. Phil. i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 1. Titus ii. 7. 1 Peter ii. 25,) in neither of which is there the slightest indication of superiority to other officers, except 1 Pet. ii. 25, where it is applied to Christ. As a title, it may rank with pastor, teacher, and others indicative of the functions of the officer and not the order.

These titles then, of themselves, indicate no distinction of order, as they are, by prelatists, now employed to indicate. On the contrary, presbyter is the only title, expressive of rank or order, by its derivation, while bishop, like other titles mentioned, is, by derivation, expressive of the duties of the officer. The history of the apostolic church corroborates this view. Presbyter is the only title applied to those who were ordained. We read of ordaining presbyters, (or elders,) but never of ordaining bishops, pastors or ministers.

(f.) The existence of only one order is established as a fact, by the application of the title indicative of order, and that indicative of the duties of office, to the same person. Paul, (Acts xx. 17,) calls the "elders (presbyters) of the church" and, in ver. 28, addresses them as "overseers," or bishops. In Titus, (i. 5—7,) he directs Titus "to ordain elders," (presbyters,) and proceeds to give their character by saying, "for a bishop," &c. The Syriac translator of the New Testament, before A. D. 150, renders the Greek word for bishop (Titus i. 7. Phil. i. 1,) by a word meaning presbyter, and that for "office of a bishop" (1 Tim. iii. 1,) by "office of a presbyter," proving, as Burnet observes, that these terms were used promiscuously by writers of the first two centuries. Bishop Marsh alluding to the Syriac translator, says, "he understood the original [Greek] and made the proper distinction between the language of the primitive and that of the hierarchal church." We prefer the language of the primitive. This application of these terms, presbyter and bishop, is illustrated by our use of the

terms, magistrate and justice of the peace, when applied to the same person, or of senator and legislator; indicating the rank of the officer, by one, and the duties by the other. So clearly do these views establish the parity of bishop and presbyter, that prelatists have been forced to acknowledge, in the words of Dr. Onderdonk, that "all we read in the New Testament concerning bishops is to be understood of that middle grade," (i. e. presbyters.)

(g.) The existence of only one order, and that the order of presbyters is deducible from the fact, that the apostles (1 Pet. v. 1. 2 John 1. 3 John 1.) call themselves presbyters. In respect of their extraordinary duties, as already seen, they were apostles, sent forth on a special mission, but as part of an ordinary ministry, they were presbyters. No apostle ever calls himself bishop. Peter (Acts i. 20,) calls the apostolic office a bishopric or "office of a bishop." By reference to the passage quoted, (Psa. cix. 8,) we find the word so translated, to be one of extensive application, denoting any office whatever. But in the restricted sense, here allowed, the passage in Acts i. 20, supposing it to prove the identity of the apostolic and episcopal offices, which it does not, would not establish a separate order for either, nor in the least affect the argument, already made, for presbyterial order.

Presbyter, then, is the only title expressive of order, by its derivation. It is the only title applied to those who were ordained. Presbyters were bishops and bishops no more than presbyters. There is and can be but one order, deduced from examining the ministerial titles occurring in the Acts and Epistles. But we are told, this is all verbal sophistry: we "seek in scripture for the sacred offices, independently of the names given them." And then is repeated the assertion, that the apostles appointed certain persons their successors, who alone could ordain, and these persons were called,—some say, apostles, some bishops, and some designate their office as "the episcopal office:" but all unite, in denying ordaining power to presbyters and restricting it to this "other order."

(3.) We then proceed to show that, presbyters performed all the offices, performed by apostles, those excepted, which involved the possession of supernatural powers. It being conceded that presbyters preached and dispensed sacraments, it remains for us to show that they governed the church and ordained.

(a.) That they were governors of the church is proved

by 1 Tim. v. 17. "Let the elders (presbyters) that rule well, &c." By Paul (Acts xx. 28,) and Peter (1 Pet. v. 2,) they are exhorted "to feed the flock." "Feed" is the translation of a Greek word, derived from pastoral life, denoting, in that primary use the whole duty of a shepherd, both governing and feeding the flock. That it here has the similar meaning of governing and instructing the people, is evident, because in both addresses, the presbyters are reminded of their duty as overseers or inspectors. Pastor is a name derived from a similar source, with a similar allusion, and expressive of the duty of governing; and pastors are distinguished from apostles in the enumeration of officers, Eph. iv. 11, given "for the perfecting of the saints."

In Acts xv. 23. presbyters are expressly associated with the apostles in the most important act of government recorded in the history of the primitive church.

(b.) Presbyters ordained. The scriptural argument is pointed and brief. Before presenting it, however, we offer a few remarks on the general subject.

(1.) Ordination is not a sacrament. There is, then, no consistency in denying to presbyters, who may dispense sacraments, the power to perform a rite. The deep-seated impression that ordination conveys grace, or, in some mysterious manner, confers some kind of virtue, or character, has been derived from the papal view of its sacramental nature, and the papal faith in the intrinsic efficacy of sacraments.

(2.) Ordination is then, either an act of government or it pertains to the office of preaching, inasmuch as the ordaining person is, in the act of ordination, engaged in fulfilling the great commission. In either case, authority to ordain devolves on presbyters.

(3.) To the same conclusion we are led, by examining the meaning of the word "ordain," and the form of ordination. "Ordain" occurs five times in an ecclesiastical sense, and in each instance, represents a different Greek word, meaning literally, (Mark iii. 14,) "to make," (Acts i. 22,) "to be," (Acts xiv. 23,) "to extend the hands," (or to elect,) (1 Tim. ii. 7,) "to place," (Titus i. 7,) "to appoint," neither of which can be tortured into any thing more significant, than "to set apart" or "appoint" or "place in office." Now were this service a rite, not to say a sacrament, we would, from scripture usage, expect

to find some word uniformly used, appropriate and expressive.

In neither of these cases is the form of ordination alluded to, and it cannot be proved that the Saviour used any form (unless "breathing on them" be so construed,) in ordaining the apostles, and we might here raise a question, on the divine authority for any uniform mode of ordination, not easily settled. But since, in at least one case, "laying on hands" seems to be clearly recognized as the form, we proceed to discuss its meaning. Let it be remembered, that prelatists claim to "impress character" in ordination. We consider the "form" scriptural, and always worthy of observance. "Laying on hands" was used in pronouncing benedictions, conferring the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit, performing miraculous cures, and investing men with office. It is, of course, with the latter alone we are concerned, since prelatists do not yet assume to impart miraculous gifts or work miraculous cures. In Num. xxvii. 15—23, we learn that God specially designated Joshua as the successor of Moses, because "the Spirit" was in him, and then adds, "and lay thy hand upon him." In Acts vi. 2—6, the brethren chose seven men "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" and "set them before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them." In both these cases, the qualification for office clearly existed, before the form of investiture was used. The form then could not be used to communicate mysteriously, what already existed, but was a public recognition, declarative not impressive of authority already conferred by God. We might examine the connexion of this, with the other uses of this form, showing that in all, the possession of something is declared. In other uses, inspired men not only declared but communicated. In ordination, uninspired men can only declare their belief, that the person ordained, possesses what he professes, and what God imparts, in the ordinary operation of his Spirit, through the ordinary means, as qualifications for the ministry.

Paul sustains this view, by describing to Titus the qualifications necessary for those who might fill the office of presbyter; and by admonishing Timothy, not to "lay hands suddenly on any man," he intimates, that he must find them first possessed of the proper character and not expect to impart it. Indeed, with the scriptures before us, we cannot believe otherwise, than that both character or fitness for the office, and authority, are the call of God;

providentially but no less really made, than was that of Aaron. The work of man is merely declarative. Is it said, we are liable to err, to be deceived? So we are on any scheme; more so, when the ordaining power is vested in one man, removed perhaps, far from a candidate whom he has never seen till he comes for orders, than when it rests with several, some personally and intimately acquainted with him. Since nothing is imparted by "the laying on of hands" nor so implied in the use of the word, expressive of ordination, we see no reason, why those trained to the ministry may not admit others to their own rank and office. But whatever confidence we may have in the deductions of our reason, we rely ultimately on scripture and that only. In 1 Tim. iv. 14, the apostle says, "Neglect not the gift which is in thee"—or your gift—"which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Apart from all controversy, here is a clear case of presbyterian ordination. Could but one such case be found for prelacy, or were the word bishop here instead of presbytery, with what indignation, would our expression of the slightest doubt be received, and with what terrific denunciations, or charitable consignments to "uncovenanted mercies," would our temerity be rewarded! Yet, as it is, the passage has been made the subject of all manner of doubts from the suggestion that "presbytery" means the office of presbyter, based on a retracted opinion of Calvin's youth, to the assertion, that the passage does not refer to ordination at all! For statements and refutations we must refer you to more minute investigations. We have no difficulties in so plain a case.

It may be proper to reconcile with this, 2 Tim. i. 6, "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands." Timothy was pointed out by inspired men—"by prophecy"—to be called and qualified for the ministry. For the speedy propagation of the gospel, and to supply the want of a complete revelation, men were frequently clothed with necessary qualifications in a miraculous manner. The mode of imparting such was by apostolic intervention. To this then Paul probably alludes in the latter text. He here says the gift was by him. In the former its extraordinary origin was indicated by the words "by prophecy." To the fact of Timothy's possessing the proper qualifications the presbytery attested. No prelatie view of the subject can be consistent with their principles. If the two passages teach one ordination, then

was Timothy a prelate by presbyterian ordination, which is vastly uncanonical, though some Scotch and English prelates have been so miserable. If two ordinations are supposed, then Timothy was made a presbyter by presbyters, and this is equally *monstrum horrendum!*—unavailable. It is altogether a very hard case for prelatists, and very clear for presbytery.

If Timothy was a presbyter, then of course, as a presbyter he might lay hands on others, (1 Tim. v. 22,) and although we have no account of the ordination of Titus, yet since he is directed to perform the same duty, we are at liberty to suppose it was in the same character.

In Acts xiii. 1—3, we have an account, which in all its circumstances appears to have been a case of ordination. It represents three men, by prayer and fasting, with laying on hands, setting apart two others, of whose existing qualifications and special call, the Holy Ghost gave evidence. Some thirty or more, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and others, contend that this was clearly a case of ordination. It serves our purpose, whether it be so regarded or not. These men, Saul and Barnabas, were publicly recognized or set apart by prophets and teachers. It does not fully comport with modern ideas of ordination; for the grade of the five was the same, for all that we know, since “prophets and teachers” is applied to all. But as a case of the exercise of a very similar power, it may be taken to strengthen our position, otherwise conclusively established, that presbyters ordained.

VII. We close this discussion with a brief notice of some positions taken by prelatists, not properly falling within the scope of our previous remarks.

1. “That Timothy, in Ephesus, and Titus, in Crete, alone had power to ordain;” in proof of which, several unquoted texts are referred to; as 1 Tim. v. 22. 2 Tim. ii. 2. Titus i. 5. This is a very common method of proving their positions. The texts cited certainly prove a part of the claim, viz: that Timothy and Titus had power to ordain: and this is cheerfully admitted. But that they alone had this power, which is the material part of the position, is not so much as inferable from these texts.

2. That Timothy was ordained bishop of Ephesus, or that he was an apostle as some contend. The end of each claim, is to ascribe his ordaining power, to his apostolic or diocesan-episcopal, and not his presbyterial order. To prove his episcopal order, we have the admitted fact of his

ordination, and 1 Tim. i. 3, "I besought thee to abide at Ephesus," and, (by some,) the subscription at the close of the last chapter of the second epistle. But the assumption of episcopal ordination is disproved by the argument already offered showing he was ordained a presbyter and no more. It cannot be proved, that he was ever in Ephesus, more than once. When Paul was called into Macedonia, he left Timothy in Ephesus for a short time, since we find he joined Paul before his return to Asia, Acts xx. 1—4. Paul went over Macedonia and was three months in Greece, during which time or before, Timothy came to him. After this, Acts xx. 17—28, Paul charges the Ephesian elders, and does not once allude to this, their superior bishop. Timothy otherwise appears to have been his constant travelling companion. He is not mentioned nor alluded to, in the epistle to the Ephesians, but in those to the Philippians, (ii. 19.) 1 Cor. (iv. 17,) and 1 Thess. (iii. 2,) Paul speaks of sending him to those churches, and after all, he may as well be called bishop of either of them, as of Ephesus. Paul calls him, "brother," "minister," "fellow-labourer," but never "bishop of Ephesus:" speaks of his release from imprisonment (Heb. xiii. 23,) but never of his diocese. As to the subscriptions, no well informed scholar assigns them any inspired authority. They were appended, no one knows when, where, or by whom.

"But he was an apostle, for Paul (1 Thess. i. 1,) joins him in the salutation, and then ii. 6, says 'we as apostles of Christ.'" Granting this will not invest Timothy with more than presbyterial order, nor fix him in Ephesus. But the whole weight of proof rests in the use of the plural personal pronoun. Now (1.) Paul uses this for himself in some cases; (see 1 Thess. iii. 4, 5.) (2.) And in ii. 2, says, "We were shamefully treated at Philippi," when (Acts xvi. 10—24,) it appears Timothy was not with him. (3.) He (iii. 6,) says, "Timothy came from you to us." If "us" here includes Timothy, then may "we" (ii. 6,) also include him.

That Timothy may have been invested with extraordinary power as an "evangelist," (2 Tim. iv. 5,) we have no doubt, and that he was the chief or president of the presbytery in Ephesus is possible, but no scriptural authority can be found to prove, that he was either an apostle, or bishop (diocesan) of Ephesus.

3. "That the angels mentioned Rev. ii. iii. were diocesan bishops." 1. They may have been parochial bishops,

if the word "angel" indicates a person. We have no evidence that the word church was used in a collective sense, for in the New Testament it is never, elsewhere, so used, with an adjunct of locality. The "angel of the church of Ephesus," &c. was then in this view, the pastor. 2. If it be said, that in such large cities the pastoral care was too great for one man, it must be proved that there were several churches organized in cities. We do not know what was the precise mode of organizing and governing churches, but supposing the difficulty relevant, it may be removed on the supposition, that for each city, there were collegiate pastors; to the senior of whom pertained the chief place. But this implies no distinction of order or any authority over the rest. (3.) If the collective sense of "church" be granted, then we see not why the idea of Stillingsfleet and others may not be adopted; that "angel" is symbolical of the clergy as a body. Especially is this idea worthy of attention, since in the addresses, no allusion is made to the "inferior clergy." (4.) It may deserve consideration whether the word "angel" or "messenger" is not susceptible of literal interpretation. The churches may have sent to John, the last surviving apostle, perhaps at his request, to receive his parting admonitions, and he, by divine direction, addressed these epistles to the representative or "messenger" of each church, and recorded them for the permanent use of the church to which they were really addressed through the messenger. This is merely offered as a novel mode of explaining what even prelatists have not yet settled to their satisfaction. We profess not however to speak "*ex cathedra*."

VIII. We here close this discussion of scriptural testimony on the points involved in the proposition combated and that sustained. The testimony of ancient writers to facts, of which they were personally cognizant, when clearly ascertained, is certainly valuable. We do not fear it. Prelatists have challenged us from the days of Hooker to the present, to "show one church not ordered by episcopal regiment, since the times of the apostles." We are prepared to show, that the church of Alexandria, those of Gaul, Britain, Ireland, Iona, and others, planted by the Culdees, of the Waldenses, (so called, not from Peter Waldo, but from locality,) and of the Paulicians, were essentially Presbyterian, some for a part, and others, for the whole period, covered in this boasted challenge. Nay more, we retort the challenge, and we defy any man to

show us reliable testimony for the existence of a prelatical church, before A. D. 200, any where in the whole world. In the lists of bishops so triumphantly paraded, A. D. 100, is the earliest assigned date, and the interval of one or two generations to connect with the apostles, is filled with "probablys" and other indications of suppositions. Nor can it be shown, that for 150 years after this date, any one claimed as a bishop (diocesan) was more than bishop parochial. Admitting the genuineness of Ignatius, his quoted testimony proves, what we knew before, that bishop, presbyter, and deacon, are names of church officers, but it does not prove, they indicated separate orders, nor does he ever intimate that such was the fact.

But we are asked, "if Presbyterian polity is apostolic, how can you account for such a change, for the change in the use of the term bishop, and the duties of deacon? Does not the early and universal prevalence of Episcopacy prove its divine origin?" Will prelatists account for the change in the use of the Latin word "imperator," from its designation of a general, to that of an emperor? Will they account for the change in the spirit and bearing of the Episcopal church in this country as indicated by comparing the venerable White's "case of the Episcopal church in the United States," published in 1786, and the various exhibitions of bishops Hobart, Ravenscroft, Ives, and Doane, not to mention some of the "other clergy" and laity nearer home? An ancient writer once admonished bishops that they were above presbyters, "more by the custom of the church, than the true dispensation of Christ." We can show, that the change grew by little and little. Thus it was thought desirable in early times to have a visible head, or permanent moderator or president, more effectually to crush error. From this, aided by a gradual conformity of church to state polity, by the naturally paramount influence of metropolitan churches and their clergy, by one assumption after another, grew up first the prelacy and then the papacy. For if a province needed a head, so did a state, and so did the world. We are sometimes twitted with the want of a head. Where is the head of Episcopacy? Is it the triennial convention of bishops and other clergy and laity? Ours is similar. In England, Queen Victoria is head of the church. But it was not remembered, that this human expedient of one personal head, might be as efficient to suppress truth as error, of which the history of popes, of Henry VIII., Charles I., of Laud,

and of Sharpe, affords abundant evidence. From all such heads, we say, in the words of the Litany, "Good Lord, deliver us."

But we cannot follow prelatists further into this their favourite field of discussion. While the testimony of ancient writers to facts of their personal knowledge is valuable, their traditionary interpretation of scripture is not always reliable. Even, however, into this department of testimony, we might fearlessly enter. But in the bogs, fens, and quagmires of patristic lore "we find no end, in wandering mazes lost." We have no fancy for the miasmatic vapours of tradition, while we are permitted to breathe the pure atmosphere, and stand on the solid rock of the mountain of God's eternal truth. Some of the fathers were wise and good men, and some, especially the latter, were very much addicted to nonsense and fable; some very stupid; some drugged with the poison of heathen philosophy; some drunk with the adulation of the ignorant; and some giddy with their elevation after the downfall of heathenism, and the unnatural connexion of the church with the state. No! we will drink from no stream, muddied with the polluting footsteps of man, while we may imbibe the pure water of that clear and sparkling fountain, which issues from the hill of Zion. We will tread no waste and howling wilderness, traverse no scathed and barren desert, thread no thorny labyrinth, and scale no rugged cliffs, while we may range the verdant pastures, and repose amidst the refreshing shades, which are watered by that fountain of heavenly truth. Our "faith stands not in the wisdom," and much less, the folly "of men, but in the power of God."

IX. We add a few reflections, suggested by this discussion.

1. We here see the proper distinction between prelatic and scriptural exclusion. The prelate teaches, that "rejection of Episcopacy, rejects men from God and his salvation:" the scriptures teach, that "he that believeth not" in Jesus Christ "shall not see life." The prelate divides mankind into two great classes, those who assent to the institutions of "the church" and those who wilfully discard them; appointing the one to salvation, the other to perdition. The scriptures also recognize two classes, the one, included in God's covenant with his Son, the other "fore-ordained to wrath for their sins." We may cavil, without blasphemy, at the doctrines of the prelate; we must acquiesce, in humility, with the instructions of God's revela-

tion ; adore, where we cannot understand, and repress each rising doubt and discontent by, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

2. Their "Rock is not as our rock," says a "tract," not of Oxford, nor Rome, nor Burlington, but of "the Episcopal Tract Society," No. 153. "The great characteristic" of prelacy, "is reverence for antiquity." We offer a contrast, "The great characteristic" of Presbyterianism is reverence for scripture. Well may prelatists rely on the fathers. Some one undertook to "test Episcopacy by scripture" and after conceding the scripture "bishop" was only a "presbyter," accounts for the scriptural application of the term to diocesan bishops, by saying "it was after the apostolic age" that this name "was taken from the second and appropriated to the first order, as we learn from Theodoret"—and he was a writer of the fifth century. So then, "testing by scripture," for 1700 years and more, "the only true churches"—the Episcopal—have imposed on the world, by their own confession, a scriptural name, and with it, in popular estimation, scriptural authority, for an office of human device or at least of such small "note among the apostles," that they omitted to furnish it with a name! What has become of the scriptural name for this first order? Why not continue it, as well as the scriptural name for the second? Is it so, as Mr. Keble says "the scriptures do homage to tradition?"

3. We thank God, on the other hand, that the evidence is so clear, that prelacy stands on tradition, that it hangs its destiny on not one text of his word, that he has not staked the salvation of millions on the observance of a rite, by some apostate or drunken prelate, some vicious, debauched and ignorant priest of the dark ages. If the whole system falls, we are sustained by God's word. If the external form of the church be wrecked, we lay hold on the anchor of eternal truth. We may be excommunicated by Rome, by England, and "her American daughter," we are not, therefore, cut off from hope, aliens from the body, the church of Christ. If Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not, yet "the Lord knoweth them that are his." If "not good enough for prelates," we are content "to be good enough for Christ." If they deny our ordination, we will accept it from Paul. If driven from the Episcopal "throne," blessed be God! we may yet "come boldly to a throne" of heavenly grace. If, lacking the unity of form, we scandalize prelacy by our "contending

for the faith," we rejoice more in our shame, than in a union, cemented by such indifference to truth, that "with a Calvinistic creed, a papal liturgy, and an Arminian clergy," "the church" opens her doors alike to the highest-toned Antinomian and the deepest stained Pelagian.

4. We may not, Christian reader, tender you fables and self-contradictions of fathers, speculations of schoolmen, endless chains of ecclesiastical genealogies, which "minister questions," nor "commandments of men," which turn from the truth; but we offer you the "words which make wise to salvation," the doctrines "which minister grace to the hearers," "the exceeding great and precious promises," which sustain in the time of tribulation, the consolations of the Spirit, which cheer in the hour of sorrow, that hope which is an anchor to the soul, amid the buffetings of Satan and the whirlpools of temptation, and that light which shall illumine, and that rod and staff which shall guide and sustain in the dark valley and shadow of death. We have no prelatic grace to bestow, no pomp and pageantry of consecrations to excite the romance of religion, no costly robes, no crosiers, no mitre, no lawn, no vaulted cathedral "to allure to" church, nor crosses to "point the way:" no sacramental signs, but those of Christ's institution; but we have "the treasure" of the glorious grace of the gospel of God, "borne," it is true, "in earthen vessels," but so borne, that the "excellency of the power, may be of God and not of man." Fear not, if despised, rejected or persecuted, by the vain talkers, especially "them of the" modern "circumcision:" if in Christ Jesus, "neither circumcision" Jewish or prelatic, "availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision." If in his keeping, no man, nor pope, nor prelate can pluck you out of his hands for the want of prelatic baptism or confirmation. If God be for you, who can be against you? "Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities," of earth or hell, "nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

5. Fellow sinner! We have invited you, to no controversial festival between churches; but to the exposure of error and defence of truth: the error more dangerous, because pleasing to your carnal heart; the truth more unpopular, because unadorned with the trappings of human device. Believe no scheme, which rests your eternal all on a form. Be beguiled by no loud boastful pretensions, no insinuating plea, no captivating show. If out of Christ,

it will not save you to have been in "the church." If out of Christ, it matters not, when, where, nor by whom, you received the sign and seal of his covenant, or the emblems of his body and his blood. If out of Christ, confirmation by all the bishops of christendom will not confirm you for heaven. If out of Christ, you are without hope, without refuge, without God, without holiness, and can never see the Lord in peace.

"Not all the outward forms of earth,
Nor rites which God has given,
Nor will of man, nor blood, nor birth,
Can raise a soul to heaven."

Accept then, we beseech you, the offer of mercy through Christ Jesus. Come, not to a form, but to Christ; not to sacraments, but to Christ; not to a deacon, priest or bishop, but to Christ; not to signs and symbols, but to Christ; not with the sacrifice of service nor the will-worship of forms, but with the sacrifice of "a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart." Come to Christ, weary and heavy laden, and he will give you rest. "He is able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him." Come, just as you are; come one; come all; come now!

Behold then our foundation,—God's word; behold our guide,—God's Spirit; behold our gospel,—Jesus Christ and him crucified, "the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

NOTE.

SINCE preparing the foregoing pages for the press, the Author's attention has been called to an "address by the Rt. Rev. William Meade, to the convention of the Episcopal Church of Virginia:" designed to prove, "The doctrines of the Episcopal church, not Romish." The title of this paper, its expressed purpose and general tenor, indicate the design of its author and indeed his wish that it should meet other eyes and ears than Episcopal. Its source entitles it to great weight, and for our part we receive it as an authoritative document. This is no place to discuss the question how far bishop Meade has succeeded in sustaining his position. We ask the reader's attention to a few remarks, (suggested by a careful perusal of the address) in connexion with those passages of this discourse which exhibit the exclusive claims of prelacy.

1. Bishop M. sustains our distinction between the Episcopal church as heard by the public in her articles and standard writers, and that exclusive system sounded out from Oxford and echoed in New York, Burlington and Raleigh. While he yields to none in the distinct expression of his preference, he denounces those who, "going beyond" and resorting to a "still stronger argument" (?) such as our fathers never used, "deny other churches the name of churches and the right to covenanted mercies." He apologizes for those who attempt to meet such unwarrantable claims, and acknowledges that there is now, for the third time, a disposition on the part of some of the English clergy to approximate, as near as possible, to Rome, in certain doctrines and practices. On the other hand he avows his preference for the doctrines and spirit of Scott, Newton, Simeon, and others, as expository of the Episcopal church.

2. He speaks of the "other churches of the reformation" as sister churches, and adds, "for I love to call them such;" of "the church of Scotland," "of France," "of Belgium," the "Presbyterian churches" and the "Congregational churches of America." He even so entitles some, which have separated from the English church since the Reformation. It may be very impudent, but is not surprising that those seeking information on the true position of the Episcopal church with regard to others, should on reading passages containing such expressions as these, venture such enquiries as the following, to the Rt. Rev. author.

1. Since bishop Meade knows too well the natural interpretation of his using such expressions, to suppose any reader will doubt his recognition of the non-Episcopal communions as churches,

does not such recognition require also his recognition of the validity of their ministry and sacraments? There can be no church without a valid ministry. But bishop Meade knows that he does not officially recognize our ordination when he reordains such of our ministers as join his church.

2. He calls ours, sister churches, and yet excludes our ministers from ministerial communion in his church. Would he exclude Romish priests, supposing them pious men? Yet he writes a long address to prevent the supposition that his church is Romish—such is his horror of antichrist. Oh consistency!

3. Appreciating duly his account of the reasons for the “three times” vergency of the Episcopal church to Romanism, we are constrained to question his theory. He tells us that it is because the Episcopal (English) church has not been called to conflict with Rome as others. Now we dare say neither the Scottish, Danish, Swedish, or Prussian churches have since the year 1650, been even as much brought into conflict with Rome as that of England has been called to be, and yet have they not remained distinctly Protestant?

4. While bishop Meade impliedly recognizes the Methodist church as one separating from the English since the Reformation, how is it that one of his other clergy in an “Inquiry into the origin of American Methodism” so clearly avows his disbelief in the validity of its ministry, and more than insinuates his denial of its claims to be called a church?

THE END.